

Center of Excellence for Tobacco Free Recovery

Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community Charter

Reducing rates of tobacco use among people with mental health and/or substance use conditions

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) has awarded Cicitelli Associates Inc. (CAI) funding to administer the [National Center of Excellence for Tobacco-Free Recovery \(CoE-TFR\) from September 2023 through August 2028](#). Broadly, this initiative aims to reduce commercial tobacco use among people with mental health and substance use conditions.

THE ISSUE – Addressing Tobacco Use Among People with Behavioral Health Conditions (mental health and/or substance use disorders) is a National Priority

People with behavioral health conditions represent 25% of the U.S. adult population but account for nearly 40% of all cigarettes sold. Half of all tobacco-related deaths were for persons who received behavioral health services. Over the last decade, states have identified and made “low-cost, no cost” investments that have resulted in dramatic reductions in tobacco use for people with behavioral health conditions (e.g. adopting and implementing a tobacco-free/tobacco limited facility/grounds policies, behavioral health providers routinely asking their clients if they use tobacco and providing evidence-based tobacco use treatment, integration of addressing tobacco in a case management plan)

THE OPPORTUNITY – State Leaders Peer-to-Peer Learning and Action

There is more to do, and we can’t do this work alone. There is a unique opportunity for State leaders to learn from each other and from experts in the field and then take steps together to build on lessons learned to get next level outcomes. To help you take these steps State/Territory/Native Nation teams are invited to participate in a Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community. The Learning Community experience will support teams in mobilizing internal and external partners and people with lived experience to develop and implement an action plan to continue to reduce the rates of commercial tobacco use among persons with behavioral health conditions.

Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community Structure

The Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community includes two components:

1. **Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community**: Four state/territory/native nation teams will meet over 18 months through a combination of **in-person and virtual convenings** to work together to use a partner and community-engaged process to develop, implement and measure the impact of an action plan to reduce rates of tobacco use by people with behavioral health conditions. Through this experience teams will:
 - Foster peer to peer learning and leadership

- Identify actions to take, and lessons learned, to advance policy, systems, and people change to reduce tobacco use among people with behavioral health conditions
 - Plan and convene a State/Territory/Native Nation-Specific TFR Leadership Academy to develop action plans to reduce tobacco use among people with behavioral health conditions
 - Develop meaningful partnerships (including people with lived experience, their families, and communities) to inform and implement tobacco-free recovery action plans
 - Strengthen systems to use data and information to monitor progress toward achievement of tobacco-free recovery action plan goals
2. **Tobacco-Free Recovery Leadership Academy** With ongoing support from the CoE-TFR, each participating team will design and facilitate their own 1.5-day Tobacco-Free Recovery Leadership Academy. This includes:
- a. Convening a **1.5-day Leadership Academy** that brings together people with lived experience, providers, payers, public health administrators across divisions and departments, and other identified stakeholders to participate in the Leadership Academy.
 - a. Day 1 (full day): All partners
 - b. Day 2 (half day): Core team and any partners who self-identify to contribute to finalizing plan, measures, and systems to execute the plan
 - b. Using an inclusive process to develop a **Tobacco-Free Recovery Action Plan** during the Leadership Academy

How Will We Measure Our Success?

To measure our success, we will work together to determine the extent to which each participating state, territory, native nation team:

- Convened their Tobacco-Free Recovery Leadership Academy as planned
- Engaged people with lived experience, behavioral health and supportive service providers, payers, public health administrators, and other stakeholders in the Leadership Academy convening, action planning, and follow-up activities
- Established a Tobacco-Free Recovery Action Plan
- Implemented structures and processes to execute their Tobacco-Free Recovery Action Plan
- Implemented systems to measure and monitor progress in implementation of the plan and outcomes associated with reducing rates of tobacco use
- Demonstrated reductions in use of commercial tobacco products by people with behavioral health conditions over 5-10 years using the CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data or other data

Funding Considerations for Participation

All costs associated with state participation in leadership academy will be funded by the CoE-TFR. In addition, we will cover costs associated with state teams convening their own Tobacco-Free Recovery Leadership Academy. As available, funding to support Tobacco-Free Recovery Leadership Academy implementation of action plans can be requested, as well as funds to support attendance at conferences to present results associated with participation in CoE-TFR activities.

REQUIREMENTS – For Participation in Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community

Participation is a competitive process and includes submission of a brief application and interview. Before applying, consider the requirements described below.

1. Eligibility:

- State Departments, Offices, or Programs of Tobacco Control, Mental Health, Substance Use Disorder/Addiction Services, Behavioral Health, or Health Equity or Minority Health.

2. Complete a Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community Application

- The application should take 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

3. Participate in a Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community Interview

- A 30-minute interview will be scheduled following submission to review and discuss your application.

4. Establish Tobacco-Free Recovery Leadership Academy Team

- Identify and convene a multidisciplinary team, comprised of 4 to 6 individuals to participate in all Learning Community and Leadership Academy activities.
- Indicate organizational "sponsorship" for the application by an individual with authority to support the team in all activities associated with participation.
- Each team will be unique to your state. **We suggest representative(s) from:**
 - State Tobacco Control Programs
 - State Offices of Behavioral and Mental Health, Substance Use Programs
 - State Medicaid Offices or that oversee state health insurance plans
 - State Offices of Health Equity or Minority Health
 - Surveillance, Research or Evaluation
 - Organizations that represent people with lived experience (e.g. NAMI)

5. Commitment to participate in all Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community Activities (see Table 1. Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community Timeline and Key Activities)

- Two in-person Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community Sessions:
 - 2-day in-person learning community opening session in NYC
 - 1-day in-person closing session in NYC
- Three virtual Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community Sessions (2 hours/each)
- Monthly pro-active TA session with CoE-TFR team and SMEs (30-60 min/each)
- On-site Tobacco-Free Recovery Leadership Academy design session
- Convene 1.5 day in-person Tobacco-Free Recovery Leadership Academy
- Develop state/territory/native nation-specific Tobacco-Free Recovery Action Plan
- Develop and implement structures and systems to execute TFR Action Plan
- Collect, report, and use readily available data and information to monitor progress and promote continuous improvement
- Periodically share updates on Action Plan implementation progress with the CoE-TFR staff.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

- Free, individualized technical assistance from experts in tobacco and behavioral health policy, systems and social norms change to promote tobacco-free recovery.
- Opportunity to learn and share with peers from other states, territories, native nations.
- Accelerate implementation of existing plans to promote health equity and strengthen integration of tobacco-related services into behavioral health and supportive services provision
- Reduce the economic burden of tobacco on people, families, communities, and the health care system.
- Strengthen relationships and identify opportunities to achieve a shared vision of improving and saving lives and treatment outcomes for people with behavioral health conditions who use tobacco across your state.
- Identify strategies that advance health equity by meaningful inclusion of people, families, and communities affected by tobacco and behavioral health conditions.
- CoE-TFR funding support for participation in local and national conferences to share learning and results

Who to Contact:

If you have any questions about this charter, the TFR Learning Community application or your eligibility to participate, please contact CoE-TFR Project Director, David Davis, at ddavis@caiglobal.org and Project Manager, Nicole Filion, at nfilion@caiglobal.org

TIMELINE OF KEY ACTIVITIES – Cohort 2

Over 18-months, state/territory/native nation teams will convene and work together, and alone, to plan and implement tobacco-free recovery action plans to reduce tobacco use among people with behavioral health conditions. Key activities and timelines associated with participation in the TFR Learning Community are described below. **Please review and ensure you are available during the dates listed in blue.**

Table 1. Tobacco-Free Recovery Learning Community Timeline of Key Activities

Activity	Month	Time
Dissemination of Learning Community Application	December 16, 2024	3pm ET
CoE-TFR Learning Community Overview and Application Process Webinar	January 14, 2025	2-3pm ET
Applications Due	February 14, 2025	5pm ET
Review of applications including 30-minute interviews	February 15- March 1, 2025	TBD
Selection of states/territories/native nations announced	March 3rd	5pm ET
Learning Community Kick-off Orientation Webinar	March 12, 2025	3-4pm ET
Completion of Pre-Work Assignments	March 12 - May 15, 2025	5/15/2025, 5pm ET
Learning Community In-Person Opening Session	June 11-12, 2025	2 full days in NYC
Learning Community Virtual Session 1	September 18, 2025	2-4pm ET
States Convene State/Territory/Native Nation-Specific TFR Leadership Academies	October-December 2025	TBD
Learning Community Virtual Session 2	January 14, 2026	2-4pm ET
Learning Community Virtual Session 3	March 11, 2026	2-4pm ET
Learning Community In-Person Closing Session	May 12, 2026	9-5pm ET in NYC
TA to plan Leadership Academy	March 2025- December 2025	Monthly virtual huddles
TA (on site) toward Leadership Academy design session	July – December 2025	TBD
TA toward implementation of TFR Action Plan	January-June 2026	TBD
Leadership Academy Learning Community Summative Congress (All Cohorts - 12 states/territories/native nations)	20283	TBD

