



Department of
**Mental Health &
Substance Abuse Services**

Collegiate
Recovery Initiative

Space Recommendations

After conducting an informal survey of university staff as well as a review of all available online materials, the following guidelines and key takeaways were developed regarding the utilization of dedicated space for collegiate recovery programs as funded by Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

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Space Guidelines

- Dedicated, space should be utilized solely for the purpose of supporting a peer driven recovery support community.
- Consistent, space should be the same location each academic year except for upgrades in overall size.
- Size should **not** be a limiting factor in locating space initially, anecdotal evidence tells us that programs have started with as little as a one room office and as much as an entire building. Larger space does not directly correlate with positive outcomes of the program.
- Commonly, space is in a building that can accommodate after-hours access and keyed entry, Startup spaces can include, but are not limited to residential halls, rec centers and health services buildings.

To date, there are three (3) Collegiate Recovery focused programs in the State of Tennessee. The oldest of these is Vanderbilt University, and a tie for second is University of Tennessee, Chattanooga and Knoxville campuses. Historically, a collegiate recovery program has been defined as having a peer support component, dedicated staff, and dedicated space. To date, both University of Tennessee Chattanooga and Vanderbilt University have a dedicated space.

Important Things to Note.

Currently, there are 137 collegiate recovery programs nationwide, as identified by their membership with the Association of Recovery in Higher Education. Nearly every program has encountered the issue of finding space and each program has resolved this issue in varying ways. The guidelines set forth in this document are intended to be succinct and applicable summarizations of pitfalls to avoid and solutions to utilize.

The incorporation of space within the collegiate ecosystem emboldens and empowers students by allowing them to feel as though they have their own autonomy in seeking support for their mental health and substance use needs. With space being easily accessible, students do not have to go through the process of seeking support and then going through a potentially lengthy referral process before finding the support that they need. Lastly, it is important to remember that collegiate recovery programs are part of an ever-evolving landscape that seeks to meet the needs of students where they are at. Thinking outside the box in order to fulfill this need is welcomed and strongly encouraged.

“Dedicated space communicates pride and belief in the value of the recovery identity” – *ARHE Association of Recovery in Higher Education, Standards and Recommendations*

Short Term Recommendations for Space

With consideration of the above guidelines the following recommendations are made for a startup space

- Safe and dedicated, and consistent location to hold recovery meetings, facilitate peer support services and allow for students to destress in between classes.
- Include seating arrangements, permanent and or semi- permanent.
- Accessibility between the hours of 7am- 10pm
- Place to display recovery resources.
- Locking storage closet to store materials.
- Signage and or branding on the door that allows students to identify the space.

** Comparable Spaces: Interfaith Community Space

Long Term Recommendations for Space

In addition to the above mentioned, ideal, long-term components of space would include*.

- Classroom space to facilitate workshops for program students as well as entire student body.
- Printing Station for members of the Program.
- Office Space for Program Coordinator
- Community Space with accessibility to games or other leisure activities to help students unwind.
- Kitchenette
- 24/7 access

*Comparable Spaces: Veterans Success center or Pride Center

Helpful Links

[Association of Recovery in Higher Education](#)

[Texas Tech Center for Students in Addiction Recovery](#)

[Kennesaw State Center for Young Adult Addiction and Recovery Support](#)

[Vanderbilt Recovery Support Services](#)

[Ohio State Collegiate Recovery Community](#)

[Mississippi State Collegiate Recovery Program Replication Model](#)

[University of Alabama Collegiate Recovery Program](#)

[University of South Carolina Collegiate Recovery Support Community](#)

[Safe Campuses: Collegiate Recovery Program Startup Guide](#)