

Recovery Friendly Workplace

Designation Application

The Mississippi Recovery Friendly Workplace (MS RFW) designation recognizes Mississippi employers that approach substance use disorder (SUD) as a treatable health condition and support employees in recovery. It is administered by the Mississippi Business Alliance (MSBA) Recovery Friendly Workplace Coalition and is open to any employer with at least one worksite in Mississippi.

The criteria mirror the National Recovery Friendly Workplace Institute's certification categories and point values, adapted to Mississippi law, state agencies and community partners. A Mississippi designation is designed as a stepping stone: employers that earn the Mississippi designation will already have the documentation needed to complete the national application.

In-person training and support

Every applicant is paired with a designated MS RFW representative who provides in-person help until the employer reaches designation.

Employers are encouraged to complete and submit the full application even if some criteria are not yet met. The representative then meets with the employer in person to:

- Review the criteria already met and identify what remains
- Identify the criteria that best fit the employer's size and industry
- Schedule on-site training for leaders, supervisors and employees
- Help draft or update the RFW policy, fair chance hiring and return-to-work policies, and the Mississippi Resource List
- Follow up until the employer reaches designation

Employers who would like guidance before submitting can request it at any time.

How to apply

1. Complete this application and check every criterion your organization meets. You do not need to meet the designation threshold before applying.
2. Attach the supporting documentation requested under each criterion.
3. Submit the application, documentation and fee to the MSBA RFW Coalition (see Attestation, Fees & Submission).
4. Meet with your designated MS RFW representative for an in-person application review, training plan and next steps.

An application is complete when the Coalition has received the application, supporting documentation and fee. Coalition staff review each application for eligibility and score it from 0 to 115 points.

*Please contact your representative for NON-PROFIT fee schedules.

Designation levels

Level	Requirement	Term
MS RFW Designated	40+ points, with points in all 4 categories	2 years
MS RFW Designated, National-Ready	40+ points, with points in all 4 categories	2 years

Applicants that do not yet qualify receive a written list of recommended next steps and may reapply at any time. Designated employers may renew through an abbreviated recertification at the end of their term.

Employer Information

Name of employer

Mississippi headquarters or primary worksite
(city, county)

Number of Mississippi worksites

Counties where Mississippi worksites are
located

Number of employees in Mississippi

Total number of U.S. employees

Industry

Safety-sensitive or federally regulated
positions (e.g., DOT)?

Select

MSBA member?

Select

Already nationally RFW certified?

Select

Contact person

Contact name

Contact title

Contact email

Contact phone

Alternate employer email (in case of
personnel change)

Culture

25 points available

Check all that apply.

- ☐ **RFW Policy.** The employer has adopted and distributed a written RFW statement or policy affirming that: 5 pts

- SUDs are treatable health conditions, comparable to other chronic health conditions;
- SUD recovery is common;
- Federal law requires health plan coverage of substance use and mental health disorders to be in parity with physical health coverage, and the employer makes its best efforts to comply;
- To the extent permitted by law, the employer strives to make it safe to ask for help and supports recovery; and
- Industry-specific factors, and any testing done under Mississippi's employee drug and alcohol testing law (Miss. Code Ann. § 71-7-1 et seq.) or federal rules such as DOT, are addressed in the employer's drug-free workplace policy.

Attach: a copy of the RFW statement or policy. A Mississippi sample policy is available from the Coalition.

- ☐ **Resource Group.** The employer provides space for recovery-focused meetings and recognizes a recovery-focused employee resource group that includes an employee or consultant holding a peer recovery credential, such as a Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) Certified Peer Support Specialist, a professional recovery coach, or a similar credential. 5 pts

Name of resource group

Participant's SUD-related certification

- ☐ **Substance-Free Options.** When alcohol is present at work functions, the employer provides non-alcoholic options and publicizes that they are available. 5 pts

Attach: a policy, announcement, or photo of signage at a work function. A sample policy is available from the Coalition.

- ☐ **Highly Placed Ally.** A senior executive within two levels of the CEO, or the owner of a small business, is a visible ally for the recovery community. 5 pts

Name of senior executive

Executive title

Link to bio or LinkedIn page

- ☐ **Charitable Support.** In the past 12 months, the employer has given significant financial or in-kind support to a Mississippi organization or event serving people in recovery or affected by SUDs, such as a recovery community organization, a drug or intervention court graduation, a reentry program, or a Recovery Month event. 5 pts

Name of organization or event

Month and year of contribution

- ☐ **Culture Other.** Describe any other actions that promote a recovery friendly culture, such as active participation in the MSBA RFW Coalition. Supporting documentation is welcome.

Description

Hiring, Retention & Advancement

30 points available

Check all that apply.

- ☐ **Fair Chance Hiring.** Consistent with federal and Mississippi law, the employer allows people with SUD-related criminal records or debt to compete for jobs. Background checks are not used to bar applicants before the interview and offer stages, and there is a documented process for individually considering a candidate's record. Employers may cite use of the Federal Bonding Program or the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), both available through the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES). 10 pts

Attach: a copy of the fair chance hiring policy. A sample policy is available from the Coalition.

- ☐ **Contingent or Return-to-Work Agreement.** Unless industry-specific factors addressed in the drug-free workplace policy apply, a candidate or employee with problematic substance use is offered screening, assessment, and conditional or continued employment under a contingent employment or return-to-work agreement. 10 pts

Attach: a copy of the contingent or return-to-work policy or agreement. A sample is available from the Coalition.

- ☐ **Proactive Recruiting.** The employer actively recruits people in recovery or affected by SUDs. 5 pts
Examples include partnering with Mississippi second-chance and reentry programs, stating in job postings that applicants in recovery are welcome, and stating on its website and LinkedIn profile that it is a Mississippi Recovery Friendly Workplace.

Mississippi partners include:

- Drug and intervention courts in the employer's circuit district
- AccelerateMS and local community colleges
- MDES and the Prison-to-Paycheck Pipeline
- Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) Work Release Program (Rankin, Harrison, Lee and Hinds counties)
- MAGCOR Industries reentry preparation
- Goodwill Industries of Mississippi
- Paroled2Pride

Recruiting partners and methods used

- ☐ **Flexible Work.** The employer provides reasonable accommodations, such as flexible scheduling or leave, so employees and their families can attend treatment, recovery meetings, court or probation appointments, and other health needs. 5 pts

Attach: a copy of the flexible work policy. A sample policy is available from the Coalition.

- ☐ **Hiring Other.** Describe any other actions that support hiring, retaining or advancing people in recovery. Supporting documentation is welcome.

Description

Benefits

40 points available

Check all that apply. Employers that do not offer a group health plan can still earn points under No-Cost Assistance, Resource List and Other.

- ☐ **Credible Medical Guidelines.** The employer's health plan covers: 10 pts
- SUDs, using The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Criteria to inform placement, continuity of care and coverage appeals; and
 - Mental health disorders, using the Level of Care Utilization System (LOCUS) to inform placement, continuity of care and coverage appeals.

Attach: the relevant portion of the health plan contract or benefit description.

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Reliable Health Insurance. Under the employer's health plan:

10 pts

- Covered SUD and mental health treatment is available as directed by the participant's provider, without prior authorization, step therapy or similar delays;
- SUD and mental health network adequacy meets the federal and state standards for small business marketplace plans;
- Licensed providers of covered services are paid on time at market rates; and
- The employer troubleshoots participant concerns about access, network adequacy or provider payment within two business days of notice.

Attach: the relevant employer policy, or a description of the troubleshooting process.

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Independent Review. Within the past 12 months, the employer has had its health plan contract and benefit description reviewed by a qualified independent party, such as a health care attorney or former health insurance executive (not an active broker). The review identifies and removes features that delay access to care ordered by providers.

10 pts

Date of review

Name of reviewer

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No-Cost Assistance. Employees have access to a recovery-informed service provider, such as an employee assistance program (EAP) or member assistance program (MAP), that offers no-cost help to employees in recovery or affected by SUDs.

5 pts

Attach: the relevant portion of the provider contract or benefit description.

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Mississippi Resource List. The employer maintains and posts a list of crisis, treatment and recovery resources near each Mississippi worksite. At minimum the list includes:

5 pts

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call or text 988)
- DMH Helpline, 24/7: 1-877-210-8513
- Stand Up, Mississippi (standupms.org) for treatment locations and free naloxone
- The regional Community Mental Health Center and its mobile crisis response team
- The local county health department (Mississippi State Department of Health)
- Nearby Federally Qualified Health Centers, recovery community organizations and mutual aid meetings

Attach: a copy of the list and a description of how it is shared with employees. A Mississippi template is available from the Coalition.

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Benefits Other. Describe any other recovery friendly benefits. Supporting documentation is welcome.

Description

Education & Awareness

20 points available

Check all that apply.

- ☐ **Employee Awareness.** The employer or recovery program leader tells employees, at orientation and at least twice a year after, about the RFW statement or policy, the Mississippi Resource List and, if applicable: 10 pts

- The EAP or MAP and its no-cost help for employees in recovery or affected by SUDs;
- Workplace recovery supports, such as a recovery-focused employee resource group; and
- Health plan coverage of SUD and mental health benefits in parity with physical health benefits.

Contents, methods and frequency of communication

- ☐ **SUD and Recovery Education.** At least one leader, supervisor or HR staff member has completed education on: 5 pts

- SUDs as treatable health conditions from which recovery is common;
- Reducing stigma and using compassionate, person-first language; and
- Employee rights and employer obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- ☐ **Education for All Supervisors.** The education above is recommended for all supervisors and available to all employees. MSBA RFW Coalition supervisor and employee training satisfies both criteria.

Title of educational program

Name of education provider

Number of personnel trained in past 12 months

- ☐ **Naloxone Access.** At least two employees at each Mississippi worksite are trained in overdose recognition and reversal, training is offered to security staff, and naloxone is readily accessible at every worksite. Free naloxone and training are available through DMH, Stand Up, Mississippi and the Mississippi State Department of Health. 5 pts

Number of Mississippi worksites (naloxone)

Number of employees trained in past 12 months

Where naloxone is located at each worksite

- ☐ **Education Other.** Describe any other recovery friendly education or awareness activities, such as Recovery Month observances or Overdose Awareness Day (August 31) events. Supporting documentation is welcome.

Description

Attestation, Fees & Submission

By signing below, I declare that I am an authorized agent of the employer named above, and that I have made reasonable efforts to verify that the information and supporting documentation in this application are accurate and complete.

Signature

Name of authorized agent

Title of authorized agent

Date signed

Participation fees are non-refundable and based on the number of Mississippi employees on the date of application.

Number of Mississippi employees	Participation fee
Fewer than 50	\$1,000.00
50–100	\$1,500.00
101–250	\$2,500.00
251–500	\$3,500.00
More than 500	\$5,000.00

Fees may be paid by ACH, check or credit card. After an application is received, the Coalition sends the contact person an invoice with payment instructions.

Submit to: Mississippi Business Alliance, Recovery Friendly Workplace Coalition • Questions: Kimberly McRoy, Program Director, kimberly.mcroy@msba.com

Sources: National RFW Certification Application (rfwinstitute.org/certification/application, last updated October 2026); DMH Helpline & Resources (dmh.ms.gov/help); Stand Up, Mississippi (standupms.org/overdose-naloxone).