



TO: Conference Committee SF 4399  
FROM: Matt McLane, Interim-Executive Director of Refocus Recovery  
RE: RCO Accreditation Date & Independent Contractor  
Date: May 1, 2024

Dear conference committee members:

I appreciate the hard work it has taken to get to this point in session with this bill. Thank you for your work and attention to the many issues that face Minnesotans.

There are two items I would like to draw your attention to in the bill:

- Requirement for all recovery community organizations to be certified or accredited by January 1, 2025.
  - Oppose both House and Senate position.
- Prohibition for peer recovery specialists to work as independent contractors
  - Support Senate position. Oppose House position (Article 5, sec. 12&19)

### **Issue 1 - Require recovery community organizations to be certified/accredited by 1/1/2025**

I am deeply concerned with the premature date the legislation has prescribed for this requirement for the following reasons:

- The state assigned certifying body, the Minnesota Alliance of Recovery Community Organizations (MARCO), has not fulfilled its contract requirement to establish a certification application. Contractually, the certification process and application were to be completed by August 2023. **As of today the certification application is still not available to organizations who want to apply for state certification.**
- MARCO held high level information sessions on how they envision the certification process working at the end of March 2024. Numerous questions that arose during the sessions from prospective applicants remain unanswered more than one month later.
- The national Alliance for Recovery Centered Organizations (ARCO) is the other potential certifying entity named in law. This organization has stated it is not accepting applications for certification and has not declared a date when they will.

To require organizations to get a certification by a specified date there needs to be a venue for them to acquire the certification. Which today there is not. There are nearly 30 recovery community organizations awaiting the opportunity for certification. It will be nearly impossible for them all to get certified by 1/1/2025 under these conditions.

#### Requested Action:

**I respectfully request that the committee please push the date of required certification out to January 1, 2026.**



## **Issue 2 - Prohibition for peer recovery specialists to work as independent contractors**

Peers who work as independent contractors do not want their right to employment choices taken away from them. The proposed House language would prohibit ***any*** peer recovery specialist from working as an independent contractor. There are diverse circumstances that peers and their families are managing. Working as an independent contractor works for some people and does not for others, but they should all have the right to choose for themselves.

There is a petition provided to the committee with over 130 peers who demand the right to choose and request the committee oppose the House position on this matter.

### Requested Action:

**I respectfully request, regarding Article 5, sec. 12&19 of the house bill, that the committee please insist on Minnesota Senate position of making no changes for the rights of CPRS to choose their work classifications.**

Thank you for your work and careful consideration of my testimony.

Very Truly Yours,

*Matthew McLane*

Matt McLane- Interim Executive Director  
Refocus Recovery