



## Colorado Opioid Abatement Council (COAC)

### Meeting #25

October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025  
9:00am – 10:30am

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**Appointees:** Aaron Miltenberger, Dave Frank, Nancy Rodgers, Racquel Garcia, Terrence Gordon, Terry Hofmeister, Brandi Freeman, Josh Blum, KC Hume, Andy Kerr

**DOL Staff:** Jamie Feld, Jack Patterson, Natalie Sandoval, Christian Dykson

**Guests:**

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#### Welcome and Introductions

Opioid Response Unit (ORU) staff opened the meeting, welcomed participants, and confirmed quorum.

The agenda included: review of the September 15 regional funding requests, approval to release funds, decisions on the Round 4 Infrastructure Share launch and funding amount, and updates on the upcoming statewide conference.

ORU staff summarized the previous meeting minutes. No edits were requested.

*Dave Frank moved to approve the August 2025 minutes*

*Nancy Rodgers seconded*

*Unanimously approved*

#### September 15<sup>th</sup> Funding Requests (Voting Item)

ORU staff provided an overview on the September 15 Regional Share funding submissions, noting that this is one of two permanent annual opportunities for regions to request the release of their allocated settlement funds. Staff informed the Council that:

- All funds must be allocated to Approved Purposes as outlined in Exhibit E of the MOU.
- Regions are at different stages of planning and implementation, and periodic reallocation or rollover adjustments are included.
- The September 15 cycle included funding requests from seven regions totaling nearly \$7.5 million.

Each regional request was accompanied by a slide summarizing the proposed expenditures, projected spending through 2026 (and in some cases 2028), and any unique circumstances or adjustments.

The following regions submitted requests:

- Region 1 – Northwest
- Region 6 – Boulder
- Region 9 – Arapahoe

- Region 14 – Southwest Central
- Region 17 – SOAR / Southwest
- Region 18 – San Luis Valley
- Region 19 – Southeast (Pueblo and surrounding areas)

ORU staff emphasized that all proposed uses in these plans aligned with Exhibit E purposes and that additional detail was available in the Excel workbook distributed to Council members in advance.

#### ***Region 1 – Northwest***

ORU staff reported that Region 1 (Northwest) requested approximately \$28,000 in new funds as part of a broader reallocation of over \$500,000.

#### ***Region 6 – Boulder***

Region 6 (Boulder) requested just over \$2 million. ORU staff explained that this request contributes to a projected total of about \$4.55 million in planned spending through 2026.

#### ***Region 9 – Arapahoe***

Region 9 (Arapahoe) submitted a request of approximately \$78,000 for recovery services and \$7,000 for syringe services. ORU staff explained that this request reflects a technical correction: the region had previously rolled over too much funding into its 2025–2026 plan and later realized, after finalizing 2024 expenditures, that it had over-requested. Rather than reducing the future-year plan and re-rolling funds, the region opted to submit this request to “back-request” the amounts needed for current services.

#### ***Region 14 – Southwest Central***

Region 14 requested just over \$778,000, bringing its total projected spending to approximately \$2.8 million through 2028.

#### ***Region 17 – SWORD/Southwest***

Region 17 (SWORD/Southwest) requested approximately \$751,000, resulting in total planned spending of about \$2.6 million across four approved purposes.

#### ***Region 18 – San Luis Valley***

Region 18 (San Luis Valley) requested approximately \$254,000, bringing its projected spending through 2026 to around \$638,000.

#### ***Region 19 – Southeast***

Region 19 requested approximately \$3.5 million. With this request, Region 19’s total projected spending through the end of 2026 reaches approximately \$9.7 million.

After reviewing the regional summaries, ORU staff asked if there were any questions.

To streamline voting and avoid conflicts, ORU staff recommended a batch motion for those regions without recusals, followed by individual motions for the remaining regions.

***Batch Motion – Regions 6, 9, 17, and 19***

*Dave Frank moved to approve the release of requested funds to Regions 6, 9, 17, and 19*

*Brandi Freeman seconded*

*Unanimously approved*

***Region 1 – Northwest***

*Terry Hofmeister moved to approve the release of requested funds to Region 1*

*Racquel Garcia seconded*

*Unanimously approved with KC Hume abstaining*

***Region 14 – Southwest Central***

*Brandi Freeman moved to approve the release of requested funds to Region 14*

*Aaron Miltenberger seconded*

*Unanimously approved with Dave Frank abstaining*

***Region 18 – San Luis Valley***

*Dave Frank moved to approve the release of requested funds to Region 18*

*Terrence Gordon seconded*

*Unanimously approved with Aaron Miltenberger abstaining*

ORU staff thanked the Council and noted that, with these approvals, total Regional Share funds released to date are approaching \$120 million, not including State Share, Local Government Share, or Infrastructure Share funds.

***Round 4 Infrastructure Launch & Dollar Amount (Voting Item)***

ORU staff then moved to discussion of Round 4 Infrastructure Share. Staff reminded the Council that:

- COAC had previously authorized ORU staff in August to prepare Round 4 for a mid-October launch, pending final funding and policy decisions.
- The current Infrastructure Share fund balance is approximately \$18.8 million.
- That balance is projected to increase to about \$23.8 million by January 2026, accounting for ongoing settlement payments.
- The State Share “DOL Resilient Colorado Opioid Grant” is also planned to launch in mid-October with \$12 million available.

Staff further noted that in Round 3, COAC received approximately \$21 million in requests across 46 applications, far exceeding the \$5 million that was made available. Given this high demand, along with deep cuts to Medicaid and other behavioral health funding sources, staff recommended that Round 4 be larger than \$5 million and presented options ranging from \$8 million to \$12 million.

Dave Frank expressed support for a mid-range or moderately high funding level, noting the importance of balancing robust investment with maintenance of a sustainable fund balance for future cycles.

Racquel Garcia shared that Medicaid will be cutting peer services for some providers as of December 31, which will create additional pressure on providers, particularly in rural regions such as the San Luis Valley.

Aaron Miltenberger emphasized that the structure of the settlement was designed to be front-loaded, with higher funding early on to respond aggressively to the opioid crisis and then tapering over time. Aaron suggested that COAC should not undermine this intent by holding back funds unnecessarily and recommended releasing as much as possible.

Josh Blum, Racquel Garcia, and Brandi Freeman expressed support for the larger funding options (Options 3 or 4), citing the ongoing overdose epidemic.

KC Hume noted he initially favored Option 3 (\$10 million) but was comfortable supporting a higher funding ceiling, particularly given COAC's ability to review applications critically and award less than the full amount if proposals do not align with needs or priorities.

ORU staff reiterated that the amount set by COAC represents an upper limit; the Council retains the discretion to fully fund, partially fund, or not fund specific applications.

After discussion, ORU staff suggested \$11 million as a compromise level between the higher options, which would meaningfully increase available funding while preserving some future capacity. Council members expressed support for the \$11 million amount.

*Aaron Miltenberger moved to approve launch in mid-October with an award amount of up to \$11 million*

*Dave Frank seconded*

*Unanimously approved*

#### **Indirect Costs for Round 4**

ORU staff presented the remaining decisions needed to finalize Round 4 Infrastructure Share. They clarified that:

- Administrative costs are capped at 10% in the MOU and relate to oversight and management of settlement funds by governments.
- Indirect costs are organizational costs needed to operate programs but not tied to one specific project (e.g., facilities, HR, leadership, general operations), but the MOU is silent as it relates to indirect costs.

In earlier rounds, administrative and indirect costs were combined under one cap. Going forward, COAC agreed to treat indirect costs separately, but a couple questions remain.

### **1. Indirect Cost Cap**

ORU shared examples of indirect cost caps from other states ranging from 0-15%.

Three options were considered:

- *Option 1: 5%*
- *Option 2 : 10% (staff recommendation)*
- *Option 3 : 15%*

### **2. Basis for Calculating Indirect Costs**

Two options were considered:

- *Option 1: Apply the 10% rate to total all direct costs*
- *Option 2: Apply the 10% rate to total personnel costs only (staff recommendation)*

Nancy Rodgers expressed support for Option 2 for question #1 but noted that the COAC can modify this guidance at a later point if this doesn't serve the Infrastructure Share well.

Dave Frank and Brandi Freeman expressed support for Option 2 for both questions.

Aaron Miltenberger noted that some organizations may rely on greater use of contractor services in lieu of personnel services so restricting calculations to only personnel costs may negatively impact some smaller organizations.

Racquel Garcia noted that smaller organizations are often hit hard when it comes to indirect costs.

*Dave Frank moved to approve Option #2 for both questions*

*Nancy Rodgers seconded the motion*

Josh Blum shared that larger organizations may also be impacted by caps on indirect costs as they have greater overhead costs, noting that Option 1 on Question #2 would provide greater flexibility.

Aaron Miltenberger encouraged the Council to consider alternative combination of options to give greater flexibility to applicants.

*Dave Frank modified the previous motion, instead moving to approve Option #2 for Question #1 (10% cap on indirect costs)*

*Nancy Rodgers seconded the motion*

*Motion passes 9-1*

Racquel Garcia asked whether contract-based staff would be considered personnel. ORU staff clarified that contracted staff would likely not fall under personnel in the budget categories in the budget template.

Josh Blum noted that having the higher amount provides more flexibility to applicants but that the COAC as reviewers may still review budgets and raise flags if there are particularly large requests for indirect costs, and thus expressed support for a more flexible option.

*Aaron Miltenberger moved to adopt Option #1 for Question #2 (apply the 10% rate to total direct costs) with the ability of the reviewers to determine the appropriateness of indirect costs*

*Josh Blum seconded*

*Unanimously approved*

### **3. Federally Negotiated Indirect Rates (NICRA)**

ORU staff asked whether federally negotiated indirect rates (NICRA) should be recognized. Some NICRA rates can exceed 50–60%, which could significantly reduce funds available for direct services. Dave Frank recommended the COAC adopting its own stance rather than adopting federal rates. COAC agreed not to recognize NICRA for Infrastructure Share. The COAC-defined 10% cap and calculation apply to all applicants.

#### **2025 Conference**

ORU staff provided an update on the Colorado Opioid Abatement Conference on October 27 in Loveland.

The event will bring together COAC members, regional partners, state agencies, awardees, and people with lived and living experience, with opening remarks and a trauma-and-addiction plenary moderated by Attorney General Phil Weiser with Terrence Gordon, as well as a lived experience panel Racquel Garcia. Sessions will cover Medicaid changes, inclusive grantmaking, 101 sessions for newer participants, peer coaching, youth leadership and recovery (including session with students from 5280 Recovery High School, which received funding through Infrastructure Share and State Share), family supports, regional operations, re-entry and continuity of care, additional funding opportunities, and an “Awardees in Action” showcase.

ORU staff requested that members register separately for the conference and evening reception, invited volunteers for closing reflections—especially from rural and underrepresented communities.

#### **Opioid Response Unit Updates**

ORU staff reported that they remain on track to complete required local government outreach for the Purdue and secondary manufacturer settlements ahead of established deadlines and noted that a more detailed update will be brought to a future COAC meeting. Staff also confirmed that the State Share “DOL Resilient Colorado Opioid Grant,” with \$12 million available, will launch in mid-October alongside Round 4 Infrastructure Share. Based on actions taken at this meeting, staff estimated that more than \$30 million in settlement funds will be released or made available through the Regional share, Infrastructure Share, and State Share combined.

#### **Public Comment**

Council member Racquel Garcia invited members to the Recovery Along the Rockies Masquerade gala hosted by the HardBeauty Foundation on November 14, featuring national advocate Ryan Hampton.

#### **Adjourn**