



## Colorado Opioid Abatement Council (COAC)

### Meeting #20

February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
9:00am – 10:30am

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**Appointees Attending:** *Phil Weiser, Aaron Miltenberger, David Frank, KC Hume, Nancy Rodgers, Scott Weaver, Lori Laske, Josh Blum, Racquel Garcia, Terrence Gordon, Terry Hofmeister, Andy Kerr*

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

**Guests:** *Mary Beth Puckett, Marie Curran*

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#### **Welcome and Introductions**

The Colorado Opioid Abatement Council (COAC) convened on February 6, 2025. ORU staff opened the meeting by greeting members and confirming quorum, expressing appreciation for the council's continued dedication. They acknowledged recent retirements, including Josh Blum and Chief Terrence Gordon, and welcomed new attendees.

Opioid Response Unit (ORU) staff highlighted the recent national settlement agreement in principle with Purdue Pharma and the Sackler family, totaling \$7.4 billion, of which Colorado was projected to receive over \$78 million with timelines for disbursement still forthcoming.

Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser acknowledged the council's progress and commended the collective state efforts in opioid response. He mentioned the next annual conference, likely to be held again in Loveland in fall 2025.

#### **2-Year Plan Certifications & Roll-Over Funds**

The council held a detailed discussion regarding the Two-Year Plan Certifications and Roll-Over Funds. ORU staff reported that 17 of the 19 regions had submitted updated plans to reflect actual expenditures from 2022–2024, with many carrying forward unspent funds into the new planning cycle. On average, approximately 52% of the funds were rolled over into 2025–2026 plans. ORU staff clarified that while spending had increased notably in 2024, most regions had not expended all planned funds during the previous cycle.

Council members discussed what successful compliance should look like moving forward, especially as this would be the first cycle requiring official certification. There was consensus that early years should be approached with grace, as regions build capacity and systems. However, members also emphasized the importance of long-term sustainability and responsible pacing of expenditures.

ORU staff indicated to members that the roll-overs were expected given the timing of the settlements and initial ramp-up needs. The Council agreed that these insights would be shared with the Review Committee and full COAC to inform future planning and monitoring.

#### **Infrastructure Award Amendments**

The Council received an update on Infrastructure Award Amendments from Terrence Gordon, who presented on behalf of the Review Committee. Two amendments were brought forward for council awareness and discussion which had been approved by the Review Committee.

The first amendment involved Arapahoe County Public Health, which had come in under budget for their mobile harm reduction unit project. The county submitted a request to reallocate the remaining funds toward expanding its harm reduction services. Specifically, the funds would support the purchase of additional harm reduction supplies and staffing resources to enhance ongoing programmatic efforts. The Review Committee reviewed the request and determined that the reallocation fell within the original scope and intent of the award. The committee acknowledged the county's fiscal responsibility and affirmed that the adjustment would strengthen the program's overall impact.

The second amendment pertained to Fremont County and the Boys & Girls Club, which had previously been awarded funds to acquire a facility to support opioid-related prevention and recovery efforts. After purchasing the building, the organization decided to sell the property in order to pursue a different facility that would better meet their operational and programmatic needs. They requested approval to use the proceeds from the sale and the remaining unexpended funds to acquire the new, more suitable facility. The Review Committee found that this approach reflected thoughtful stewardship of resources and ensured alignment with the MOU's requirement that infrastructure investments continue to serve opioid response purposes.

The Review Committee unanimously approved both amendments from their last call, concluding they met the necessary criteria and reflected responsible and effective use of Infrastructure dollars. The council received the update without concerns and expressed appreciation for the regions' flexibility and commitment to maximizing impact.

### **Administrative Costs**

The council received an update on Administrative Costs from Nancy Rogers, who presented on behalf of the Administrative Committee. Nancy introduced a proposed clarification to how "allocation" should be defined when calculating the 10% administrative cost cap outlined in the MOU. This clarification was intended to ensure consistency across regions, local governments, and infrastructure award recipients.

The proposed definitions were as follows:

- For Regional Councils: "Allocation" would be defined as the total amount of planned expenditures outlined in the certified two-year plan.
- For Local Governments: "Allocation" would be defined as the current balance of available funds.
- For Infrastructure Award Recipients: "Allocation" would be defined as the total amount awarded through the COAC infrastructure process.

Nancy explained that the purpose of this clarification was to reinforce fair and transparent practices across all funding recipients, while also supporting ease of interpretation and compliance tracking. She noted that administrative costs, when monitored accurately, could ensure that the majority of opioid settlement dollars continued to go directly toward programmatic impact.

Following the presentation, the council held a brief discussion and expressed support for the proposed clarification.

*Nancy moved to approve the definitions about allocations as proposed.*

*Dave Frank seconded*

*Unanimously approved*

### **Conflict of Interest Forms**

Nancy Rogers continued her report on behalf of the Administrative Committee by addressing the requirement for Conflict-of-Interest Forms. She reminded council members that, in accordance with the COAC's Conflict of Interest Policy, all voting COAC members were required to complete and return the official Conflict of Interest form by February 28. This requirement was intended to ensure transparency and accountability in decision-making processes, particularly as the council continued to make funding and policy recommendations tied to opioid settlement funds.

Nancy emphasized that completing the form was not only a procedural requirement but also a meaningful step toward maintaining public trust in the council's work. She highlighted that the opioid crisis had deeply affected communities across the state, and it was essential that council decisions be made with the highest standards of integrity and impartiality.

She also shared that ORU staff had proactively distributed the Conflict of Interest policy during the Regional Learning Forum held the day before the COAC meeting. The policy was provided as a best practice tool to support regional councils in developing or refining their own governance procedures. Feedback from the forum indicated that regional partners appreciated the opportunity to revisit and strengthen their local conflict of interest policies, seeing the resource as timely and helpful.

No questions or concerns were raised by council members regarding the requirement. Nancy encouraged any members needing assistance or clarification to reach out to ORU staff directly.

### **Expenditure Reporting Extension**

Nancy Rogers concluded her Administrative Committee report by presenting a proposed extension to the expenditure reporting deadline, marking it as a voting item for council consideration. She explained that the current deadline for submission of expenditure reports was set for February 7, but several regions had expressed challenges in meeting this timeline due to ongoing data gathering, staff transitions, and internal review processes.

Nancy noted that shortly after the original deadline was communicated, the National Opioid Abatement Trust announced its own deadline extension from February 14<sup>th</sup> to February 18<sup>th</sup>. To maintain consistency and relieve administrative pressure on regional partners, the Administrative Committee proposed that COAC formally extend the reporting deadline to match the new national timeline.

The Council discussed the proposed extension and expressed support, recognizing that alignment with the national deadline would minimize confusion and ensure that regions had adequate time to compile accurate reports. Several members noted that reporting burdens could vary across regions depending on local capacity, and they appreciated the flexibility offered by the extension.

ORU staff confirmed that the majority of regions had already submitted their reports ahead of the original deadline, with 61% of reports received at the time of the meeting. However, the extension would offer necessary leeway for the remaining regions without delaying COAC's broader review and monitoring processes.

*Nancy Rodgers moved to approve the new expenditure reporting deadline of February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025.*

*Aaron Miltenberger seconded*

*Unanimously approved*

### *Expenditure Reporting Extension*

ORU staff provided a range of updates to the Council including

- Notification that Region 3 had withdrawn their pending fund request that was intended for law enforcement related expenditures
- Some COAC member terms will expire on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. ORU staff will be working to obtain re-appointments from the appropriate bodies.
- The State has recently contracted with a data consultant with funds from the State Share to help develop a competitive funding opportunity for the statewide data system.

### *Public Comment*

No public comments made at this time.

### *Adjourn*