



Colorado Opioid Abatement Council (COAC)

Meeting #23

June 5th, 2025
9:00am – 10:30am

Appointees: Aaron Miltenberger, Dave Frank, Nancy Rodgers, Lori Laske, Terrence Gordon, Terry Hofmeister, Racquel Garcia, Dr. Brandi Freeman, Miles Lucero

DOL Staff: Jamie Feld, Jack Patterson, Natalie Sandoval, Christian Dykson, Mindy Baumgardner, Gina Cannan

Guests: José Esquibel

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting commenced with a welcome from Opioid Response Unit (ORU) staff, who thanked Council members for their time and commitment.

COAC Responsibilities & Governing Laws Review

Gina Cannan with the Department of Law delivered a training session on governing legal frameworks relevant to the COAC. She explained the Colorado Open Meetings Law, the Open Records Act (CORA), the Code of Ethics, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), emphasizing that these laws were applicable to COAC through the MOU. Gina highlighted the requirements for public meetings, accessibility of records, the importance of advanced notice and detailed agendas, and the distinction between casual gatherings and public business.

Gina Cannan clarified the responsibilities of Council members, particularly with regard to conflicts of interest. Members were notified of the expectation to recuse themselves in situations where their organizations might receive direct financial benefit from COAC decisions. Gina also emphasized the importance of maintaining accessibility in public meetings and communications and discussed recent updates to state accessibility standards. She concluded by offering to answer questions outside the meeting and encouraged Council members to reach out as needed.

May 2025 and August 2024 Minutes Approval

ORU staff presented the May 2025 and August 2024 COAC meeting minutes for review by the Council.

Aaron Miltenberger moved to approve the two sets of minutes

Miles Lucero seconded

Unanimously approved

Additional 2025 Funding Request Deadline (Voting Item)

Nancy Rodgers presented a request to establish an additional 2025 regional funding request deadline of November 14, 2025. It was explained that this proposal was submitted by a regional representative and reviewed by the Administrative Committee, which supported the addition without reservation.

The new deadline would supplement the existing March 15 and September 15 deadlines, offering regions additional flexibility for submitting funding proposals. The motion reflected COAC's ongoing commitment to meeting local needs and reinforcing access to opioid abatement resources statewide.

Nancy Rodgers moved to approve the additional funding request deadline of November 14, 2025

Dave Frank seconded

Unanimously approved

Supplantation Guidance (Voting Item)

ORU staff next presented finalized guidance on supplantation, clarifying the appropriate use of opioid settlement funds. The guidance stated that funds must be used to create, maintain, or expand programming, not to replace existing funding streams or backfill budget shortfalls.

The document included an updated definition of supplantation, drawn from state fiscal rules but expanded to reflect local government operations and opioid-related expenditures.

Several real-world examples were reviewed to illustrate both appropriate and inappropriate uses of funds. These included instances such as redirecting existing public safety budgets to unrelated areas, which would constitute supplantation, versus maintaining a successful treatment program following the expiration of temporary federal grant funding, which would not. Council members expressed strong support for the inclusion of these examples and emphasized their utility for grantees seeking clear, actionable guidance.

Lori Laske moved to approve the supplantation in the context of opioid settlement funds guidance document for publication and distribution

Aaron Miltenberger seconded

Unanimously approved

Expenditure Reporting Follow-Up

Terrence Gordon from the Review Committee provided an update on expenditure reporting, with a focus on five expenditures identified as falling outside of the national settlement's Exhibit E guidelines. These expenditures, associated with drug interdiction activities, had been made by two regions and one local government.

The Review Committee recommended that formal communications be sent both to the three parties involved and more broadly to all funding recipients notifying them that further future expenditures for non-allowable uses may result in further action. The Administrative Committee, represented by Nancy Rodgers, agreed with this strategy but emphasized the importance of a supportive tone. The goal, they explained, was to promote compliance through education and collaboration rather than punitive action, especially given the transition from Exhibit A in the Colorado MOU to Exhibit E from the national settlements.

ORU staff committed to revising the draft communications and bringing the final versions back to the Administrative Committee for approval before distribution. Several Council members echoed the need for clarity and consistency moving forward, particularly to avoid confusion as the settlement enters later phases of implementation.

Infrastructure Awards Update

ORU staff provided an update on the progress of infrastructure awards, beginning with Round 1 awardees who had recently submitted final reports.

Success stories included Valley Hope of Parker, which expanded services and eliminated waitlists, and the San Luis Valley project, which opened a first-of-its-kind treatment and recovery center in the region. Three Round 1 awardees have been approved previously for extensions on their awards.

These projects were praised for delivering measurable community impact and effectively utilizing settlement funds.

Two Round 2 awardees were reported to have received extensions to their award cycles, enabling them to complete work aligned with their original goals.

Additionally, all Round 3 awardees had accepted their funding offers and were preparing to launch their projects. ORU staff shared that preparations for round four were already underway, with a focus on improving process efficiency and strengthening evaluation metrics based upon feedback and experience from previous rounds.

Council members expressed deep appreciation for ORU staff, particularly for the efforts to track, communicate, and support infrastructure recipients throughout the award process.

Opioid Response Unit Updates

Registration for the COAC Annual Conference, scheduled for October 27, 2025, in Loveland, had opened the day before the meeting, and Council members were encouraged to both register and share the opportunity widely.

ORU staff requested suggestions for speakers and session topics. Council member Racquel Garcia recommended highlighting peer collaboration models to break stigma and improve outcomes, particularly in justice-involved populations. She cited successful programs in Fremont County as an example.

ORU staff also announced the publication of the 2024 expenditure data on the Dashboard. This tool showcased \$44 million in settlement spending through 12/31/2024, reported down to the line-level vendor detail. The dashboard was praised for its comprehensiveness and transparency, and ORU staff noted that national partners were already reviewing it as a model for other states. Future enhancements would include more qualitative data and visual summaries to ensure accessibility for the broader public.

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

Adjourn