

SB270/HB931 Workgroup on Recovery Residences
Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

Minutes – Meeting One
August 24 2026; 1:00 pm – 3:00 p.m.
Virtual

Workgroup Members Present

Dev Nair, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS)
Nicole Gore, DBHDS
Emmaline Herring, Office of Senator VanValkenburg
Paul Stevens, Oxford House
Robert DeTriquet, Virginia Association of Recovery Residences
Matthew Conner, Virginia Association of Recovery Residences
Honesty Liller, McShin Foundation
Michael Tillem, Journey House Recovery Foundation
Charles Wilcox, Virginia Association of Addiction Professionals
Chrissy Chow, Virginia Association of Addiction Professionals
Anika Richburg, SAARA Virginia
Michael Sizemore, SAARA Virginia
Stacey Lawson, Fairfax-Falls Church CSB
Jody Rogish, Henrico County
Michael Schnurman, Henrico County
Michael Finmel, Henrico County
Tiffany Wells, Department of Medical Assistance Services
Tiffany George, Department of Medical Assistance Services
Nathan Mitchell, CARITAS

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Dev Nair, Assistant Commissioner of the DBHDS Division of Provider Management, welcomed participants and led the group in sharing names, positions, and organizational affiliations.

Overview of SB270/HB931 Workgroup Charge & Regulatory Process

Dr. Dev Nair reviewed the legislative directive for the workgroup to convene and report recommendations for the creation of a process through which the Department can provide oversight of all recovery residences in the Commonwealth and ensure transparency

SB270/HB931 Workgroup on Recovery Residences

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

regarding the certification of each recovery residence, including certification requirements, results, and inspections. He reviewed the current state certification and credentialing structure and code changes effective July 1, 2026 that require the State Board of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services to amend regulations governing operation and certification of recovery residences.

Mary Broz-Vaughan, Director of the DBHDS Office of Regulatory Affairs, provided an overview of the state regulatory process. She noted similarities and differences between the legislative and regulatory process. She emphasized that the regulatory process is intentionally designed to be much slower to permit more time for public input on regulatory language that is generally more specific and detailed than legislation which provides a broader, more general governance framework within which regulations are created. Ms. Broz-Vaughan reviewed the stages of the Standard Regulatory Process defined in the Administrative Process Act (APA) including the Notice of Intended Regulatory Action, Proposed, and Final stages which cumulatively provide for 120 days of public comment. She noted that Executive Branch Review occurs within each stage which includes review from the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Planning and Budget, the Secretary's Office, and the Governor's Office. Finally, she instructed participants on how to access draft regulations and engage in public comment through the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall including how to register for email notifications.

Presentation of Initial Draft Regulations, Process for Informal Public Comment and Workgroup Review at October Meeting

Ms. Broz-Vaughan informed the workgroup that initial draft regulations would be published as a General Notice on Town Hall for a 30-day public comment period starting August 25th. The General Notice is an informal public comment in that it occurs prior to the start of the Standard Regulatory Process. The workgroup will review and discuss comments received from the General Notice at the next meeting in October. The Department plans to request that the State Board approve the NOIRA for this regulatory action at their December meeting.

Susan Puglisi, Regulatory Research Specialist in the DBHDS Office of Regulatory Affairs, presented the initial draft regulations to the workgroup. The draft may be accessed on town hall here: <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewNotice.cfm?gnid=3452>.

SB270/HB931 Workgroup on Recovery Residences

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

Group Discussion

Dr. Nair facilitated Group Discussion. Workgroup members asked DBHDS staff questions to confirm their understanding of the regulatory process. Members also requested clarification on when the new legislative provision for DBHDS to create a pathway for residences to complete certification with the Department without using a third-party credentialing entity would be operationalized. Staff responded that regulatory action would be required to operationalize and it may take a couple of years to complete the Standard Regulatory process as required by the APA. Members asked what enforcement mechanisms would be used to verify compliance with new legal and regulatory requirements. DBHDS staff noted that the legislation and regulations authorize DBHDS to conduct announced and unannounced inspections to assess compliance and to investigate complaints.

Members requested that the regulations be reviewed and adjusted to account for residences operating under the Oxford House model without staff. DBHDS staff welcomed members to provide comments and suggested revisions for reducing administrative burden while meeting legislative requirements. Staff noted certain sections of the regulatory draft were modeled after existing structures for DBHDS licensed providers defined in Chapter 105 of the Virginia Administrative Code. Members noted concerns that it would not be possible for Oxford Houses to meet the draft requirement for residences to be legal entities. Members also requested that the draft requirements for physical space for residents be reviewed to confirm alignment with the Virginia Building Code.

Public Comment

Dr. Nair provided an opportunity for members of the public to share comments. No comments were received.

Next Steps/Adjourn

Dr. Nair thanked members for their participation and concluded the meeting noting that the next meeting of the workgroup would be hosted virtually on October 15, 2026 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm.