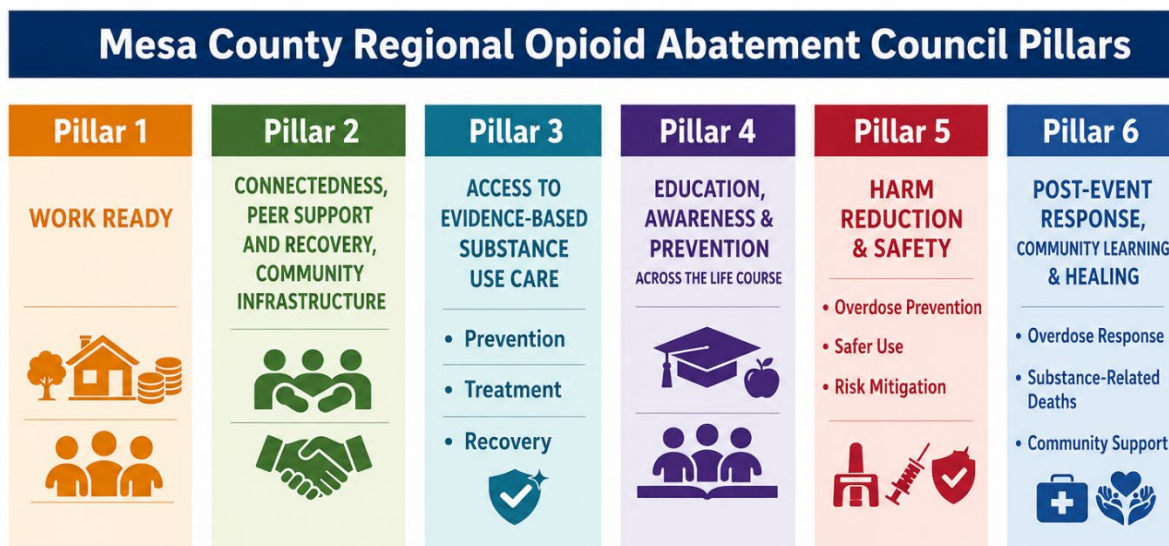


Mesa County Regional Opioid Abatement Council Pillars Information

The MCROAC continues its efforts to combat the opioid epidemic with the announcement of a new round of grant funding through the Colorado Opioid Crisis Recovery Fund Settlement. Since January 2023, the MCROAC has allocated over \$3.7 million to 15 local agencies to support recovery, treatment, prevention, and education efforts across the region.

The new grant cycle emphasizes supporting projects that fall under the six MCROAC identified pillars. The MCROAC facilitated focus groups composed of community experts and individuals with lived experience who formed the community projects under each of these pillars.



Pillar Projects:

Pillar 1: Work Ready

- **Project:** Intensive Case Management

Colorado Works is Colorado's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. This program is intended to be an employment and training program. While most Colorado Works participants can be effectively served through Workforce Center case management and career development services, a smaller group faces significant barriers that require a level of intensive case management beyond the Workforce Center's current capacity. These individuals often experience substance use disorders, mental health conditions, domestic violence, or involvement with Child Protective Services, making it difficult to consistently engage in services, comply with program requirements, and progress toward employment. Of the Workforce Center's current caseload of 259 participants, the Workforce Center estimates that 30–40 individuals would benefit from this higher level of support to address barriers and achieve long-term economic stability.

To assist in closing this service gap, the MCROAC is seeking to support a specialized provider to deliver intensive, holistic case management for these high-barrier clients who have an Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) or a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and co-occurring mental health conditions. The provider would serve as the primary point of contact, coordinating mental health and substance use treatment, housing and transportation assistance, life skills development, and hands-on accountability, including accompanying clients to appointments when needed. They would also ensure compliance with Colorado Works requirements while maintaining communication with Workforce Center staff. Once participants have stabilized and addressed their primary barriers, the provider would coordinate with the Workforce Center to assess job readiness and transition clients into career development services, with short-term support during the handoff to promote long-term success.

Pillar 2: Connectedness, Peer Support, and Recovery Community Infrastructure

- **Project:** Pro Social Activities
 - Examples: Substance-free groups, events, recreation, etc.
- **Project:** Peer Placement
 - Examples: Placement in schools, ER/medical facilities, resource hubs.
Funds to cover: Compensation, supervision, accountability. Cross-organizational approaches are preferred. Peer Collaborative Establishment suggested.
- **Project:** Reduce Barriers to Recovery

- Examples: Stipends, pet boarding/care, phones/communication, transportation, storage, outreach and marketing

Pillar 3: Access to Evidence-Based Substance Use Care

- **Project:** Establish care navigation teams and centralized intake
- **Project:** Standardize referral workflows across ED, inpatient, and outpatient settings
- **Project:** Launch pilot bridge clinic using existing infrastructure

Pillar 4: Education, Awareness, and Prevention

- **Project:** Expand practical crisis response and de-escalation education throughout the community (Making basic crisis education as common as CPR and First Aid training) (Expanding youth involvement by including youth as active contributors in designing prevention programs rather than simply recipients of services)
- **Project:** Develop centralized and easy-to-use resource navigation systems to help individuals locate prevention, treatment, recovery, and support services
- **Project:** Strengthen collaboration among organizations, recognizing coordinated systems, community events, and informal engagement opportunities improve prevention outcomes and community awareness.

Pillar 5: Harm Reduction and Safety

- **Project:** Increase access to harm reduction services and supplies in everyday community settings while reducing barriers and stigma to obtaining lifesaving resources.
- **Project:** Integrate harm reduction into routine healthcare conversations and primary care settings so these services become part of standard healthcare practice.
- **Project:** Expand age-appropriate youth education that introduces practical, nonjudgmental safety information before problems escalate.

Pillar 6: Post-Event Response, Community Learning, and Healing

- **Project:** Two large community-wide events annually that focus on healing, remembrance, education, and hope coordinated by a trusted, neutral organization that is recognized as a safe and welcoming convener for all perspectives. Should be large-scale, stigma-free events that bring together individuals in recovery, family members, healthcare providers, first responders, behavioral health professionals, harm reduction organizations, educators, and community members in one welcoming space to strengthen community connections, increase awareness of

available resources, and reduce stigma surrounding substance use, recovery, and mental health.

- Examples: Reel Night and Suicide Prevention Night of Remembrance