ADVOCATES FOR HUMAN POTENTIAL

ACCESS TO RECOVERY (ATR)

AND

"RECOVERY READY" WORKPLACES INITIATIVE

Presentation to the **M**assachusetts **W**orkforce **A**ssociation

11/16/21

ACCESS TO RECOVERY (ATR) IN MASSACHUSETTS

A grant funded program to help people in early recovery from substance use disorders

- Funded by MA DPH/BSAS (Bureau of Substance Addiction Services), through a federal SAMHSA grant

- BSAS contracts with Advocates for Human Potential (AHP) to implement and manage ATR and provide oversight of the program and its service providers.

High volume program- Approximately 4,000 participants enrolled per year across the state in 5 cities

- Since we began in 2010, we have enrolled over 30,000 individuals

Service Areas:

Boston – New Bedford – Springfield/Holyoke – Worcester - Lowell

WHAT IS ACCESS TO RECOVERY?

- **Recovery support services** for individuals in early recovery from SUDs
- **Six-month duration**
- Services from **community partners** coordinated centrally by an ATR Coordinator
- **Participant-driven** through a collaborative and continuous **recovery planning approach**

Menu of Services Offered

- **BASIC NEEDS**
- **PEERS:** Recovery Coaching
- **HOUSING:** Sober Home rental assistance
- **EMPLOYMENT: Job Training**
  - Career Building services

WHO REFERS TO ATR?

Referrals to the ATR program primarily come from BSAS funded programs

Recovery Homes
(Residential treatment)

Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) programs

Other substance use treatment programs

A minority come directly from:

- Criminal justice/ reentry programs
- Community-based organizations

ATR SERVICE FLOW

ATR HAS A LASER FOCUS ON EMPLOYMENT

WHY? Work is one of the best predictors of positive outcomes for people with SUDs

- Lower rates of resumption of use
- Higher rates of abstinence
- Less criminal activity
- Fewer parole violations
- Improvements in quality of life
- More successful transition from treatment to the community

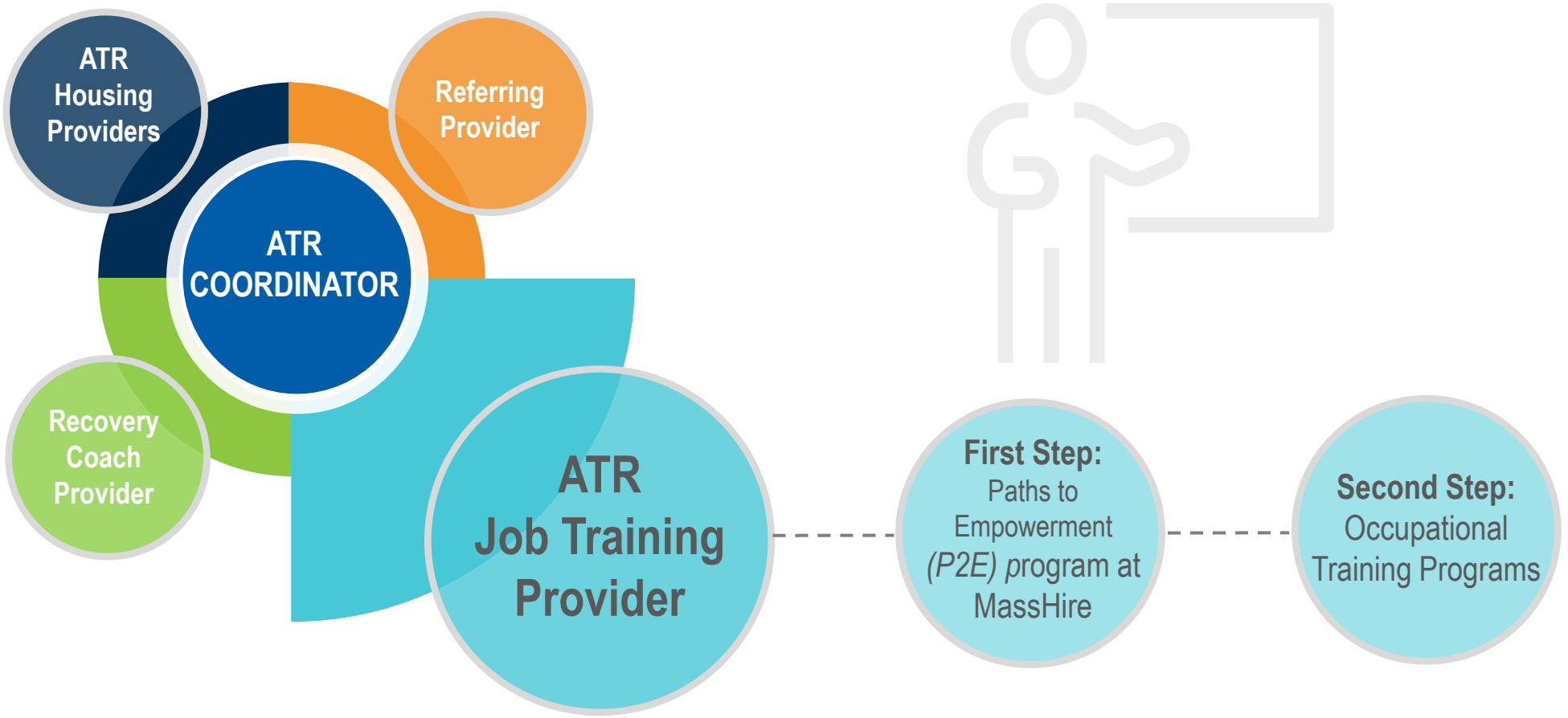
Journal of Substance Use Treatment- 2018-2019- SAMHSA

> Prime age men who are out of the labor force report that they experience notably low levels of emotional well-being throughout their days, and that they derive relatively little meaning from their daily activities.
>
> — Alan Krueger, labor economist and top economic advisor to President Obama, 2017

ATR partners with occupational training programs who meet the following guidelines:

- Training program can be completed within **4-5 months**
- Training program offers an industry recognized **credential** and/or certificate
- Program trains participants in industries/occupations that are **receptive to CORIs**
- Industry/Occupation has **entry-level opportunities** that pay a sustainable living wage
- Training provider offers **job search support and placement** to participants

ATR'S JOB TRAINING SERVICES



ASSESSING CLIENTS FOR CAREER READINESS

- Expressed intent to work as part of the recovery goal planning
- Successful engagement with *Paths to Empowerment* program *(hosted by MassHire)*
- Active career action planning & job search
- Engagement with Occupational Training

BENEFITS COUNSELING

- Required for anyone receiving SSI/SSDI who wants to attend a job training program
- Proof of benefit amount required for those with SSI/SSDI being referred to sober home services
- If declined, participant cannot move forward with job training or sober housing

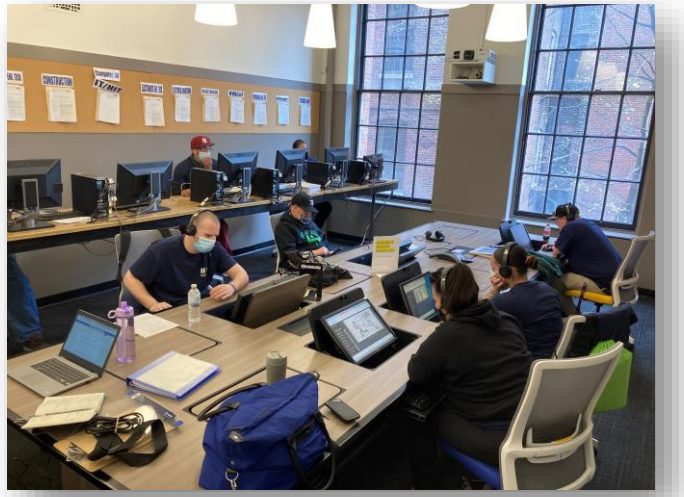
WorkWithoutLimits
PUTTING ABILITIES TO WORK

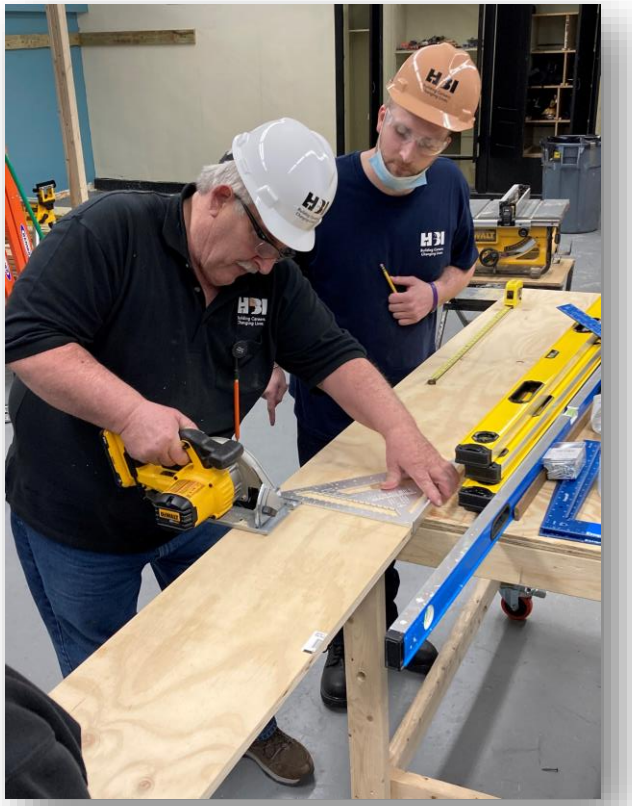
EVOLUTION OF ATR'S JOB TRAINING SERVICES

- Constantly pursuing **expansion** of job training options in all five cities
- Outreaching to job training providers in sectors with high labor demand and major **growth potential**
- Offering **online and hybrid** programming
- Incorporating **Recovery Coaching** into job training programs with high need
- Hiring a **Job Developer** to build a pipeline from job training directly to employment solely for ATR participants

BEST PRACTICES LEARNED FROM ATR (SO FAR)

- Contingency Management
- Document, document, document
- Don’t sweat the small stuff
- Use the VARK system for learning
- Language Matters!





ATR Participants engaging in classroom learning and hands-on teaching at the Home Builders Institute (HBI) Carpentry Program in Boston

WHAT'S THE FLIP SIDE OF THE COIN?

We can train individuals to be marketable to participate in today's labor force

ATR

&

We need employers willing to hire people in recovery

RRW

RECOVERY READY WORKPLACE

MISSION STATEMENT

To create a *culture of support* for employees on the journey of recovery from substance use and addictions.

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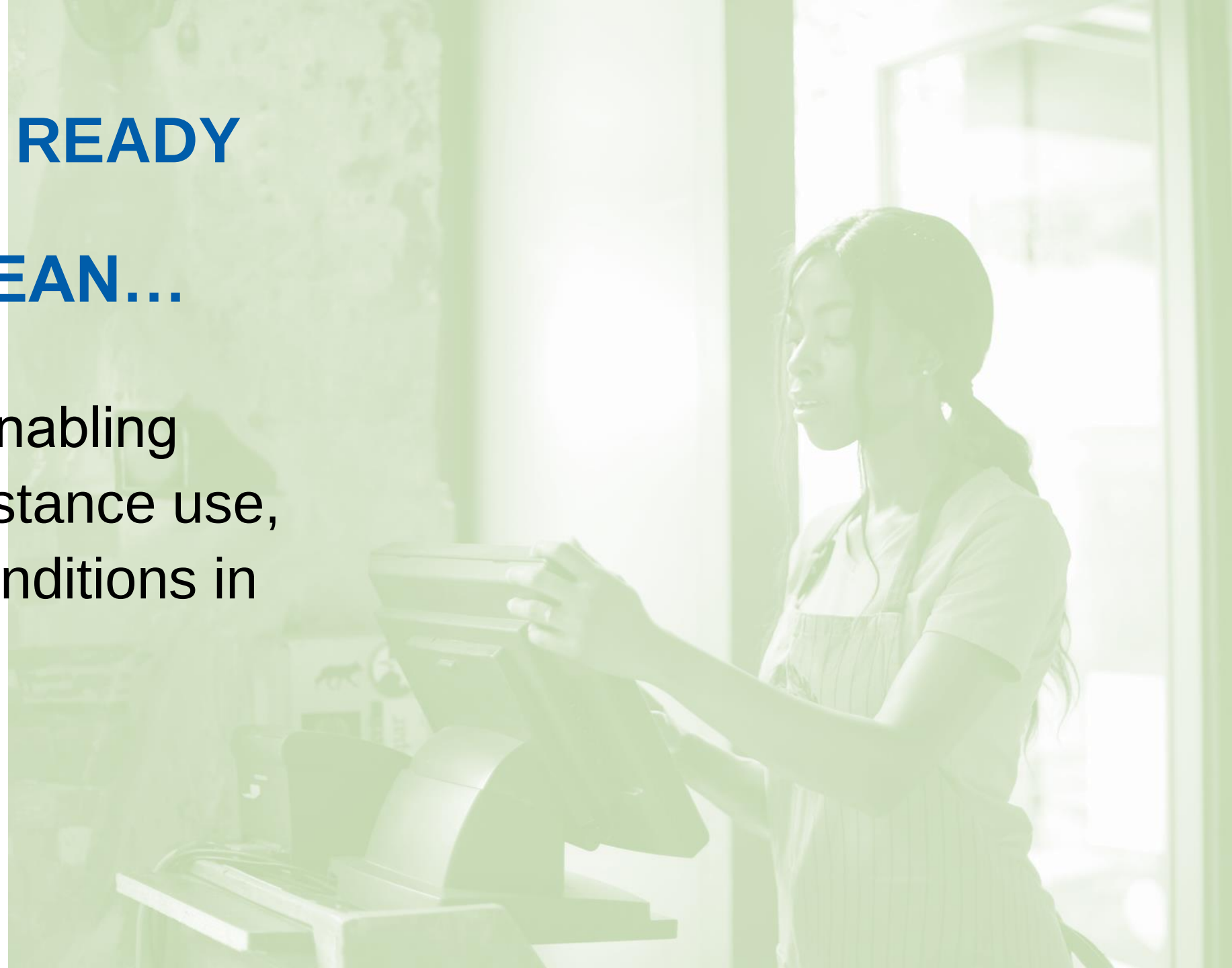
A RECOVERY READY WORKPLACE DOES *NOT* MEAN…

…accepting or enabling intoxication, substance use, or any unsafe conditions in the workplace.



WHAT IS A RECOVERY READY WORKPLACE?

A Recovery Ready Workplace

Acknowledges and openly addresses the topic of drug and alcohol misuse

- Communicate about the issue to reduce stigma
- Encourage employees to discuss substance use concerns and recovery successes

Educates employees and customers about the disease of addiction and treatment resources and options

- Train employees on SUDs and stigma in the workplace
- Prepare supervisors to respond to substance use concerns
- Provide resources and access to support services

Offers policies and practices to support employees who are in recovery from addiction

- Prioritize safety and wellbeing
- Offer supportive leave policies and accommodations
- Re-think hiring standards

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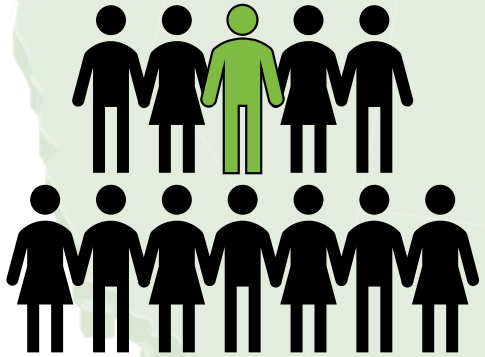
VALUE OF RRW FOR EMPLOYERS

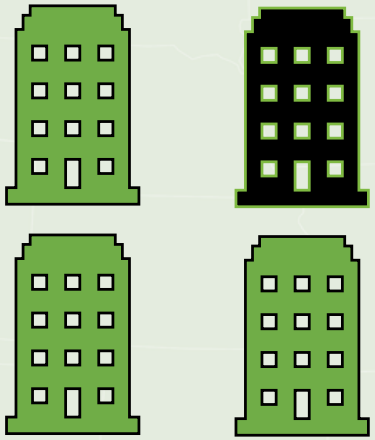
National Safety Council (2021). ncs.org

THE SCOPE OF ADDICTION



One in 12 U.S. workers has an untreated addiction.

Source: National Safety Council



Over 75% of employers have been affected by employee opioid use.

Source: National Safety Council

$696 billion

The opioid crisis alone cost the U.S. economy $696 billion in 2018.

Source: White House Council of Economic Advisers

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ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: KEY ELEMENTS

Policy & Practice	Communication	Education	Accountability
• Open Door Policies • Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) • Health insurance/health-related benefits • Leave of absence, part-time, or light duty policies • Return to Work policies • Stigma-free hiring standards • Substance-free employee activities	• Talk about impacts of addiction • Share nearby treatment and recovery support options • Offer Information on legal protection • Encourage discussion of recovery successes	• Addiction • Stigma • Safety Practices • Recovery-related policies	• Assess organizational culture • Establish measurable goals • Monitor performance

THANK YOU

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For more information about ATR, please visit our website

www.MA-ATR.org

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SAMHSA Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
(Federal Government Funder)

MA Department of Public Health BSAS Bureau of Substance Addiction Services
Prevent • Treat • Recover • For Life
(State Government Funder)

AHP Advocates for Human Potential, Inc.
(Manages the ATR Program)