



Powell Recovery Center, Inc.

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Baltimore City Council Public Health & Environment Committee

Hearing:	LO25-0024 - Oversight of Recovery Homes and Substance Abuse Clinics in Baltimore City
Date:	April 29, 2026
Submitted by:	Kim Wireman, LCSW-C, LCADC on behalf of Powell Recovery Center
Position:	Informational - Support for quality standards, accountability, and data-driven oversight

Chair Porter and Members of the Committee:

Powell Recovery Center appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony for the Committee's continued oversight of recovery homes and substance use disorder treatment programs in Baltimore City. Baltimore is right to ask hard questions about these services. The public needs to know which programs are licensed, which recovery homes are certified, and whether people entering care are safer, more stable, and better connected afterward.

PRC welcomes accountability. Good providers should want clear standards because clear standards help the City distinguish responsible, licensed treatment from unsafe or exploitative arrangements.

The draft COMAR revisions move in the right direction by strengthening expectations around clinical staffing, supervision, toxicology testing and documentation. Those are the kinds of standards that help separate quality providers from programs operating with little clinical depth or accountability. One area that also deserves attention is telehealth. Telehealth can be useful, but if a PHP or IOP program is operating entirely or almost entirely by telehealth, that should be clearly disclosed.



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The draft COMAR revisions also strengthen recovery residence oversight by making clear that recovery residences are housing and recovery support, not clinical treatment. They require certification, have staffing expectations, clear terms of occupancy and financial obligations, individualized recovery planning, and notice that residents have the freedom to receive treatment from the provider and location of the client's choice. Housing should support recovery, but it should not be used to steer or require clients into a particular Medicaid-billed treatment program.

Quality should also be measured. Baltimore should ask:

- Are clients able to access medications for opioid use disorder when clinically appropriate?
- Are programs admitting people to the right level of care?
- Are clients staying beyond the first few days?
- Are complaints and client feedback reviewed?
- Are emergency department visits, overdoses and deaths handled appropriately following COMAR regulations for critical incidents?
- Are outcomes being tracked?

Baltimore needs smart oversight paired with investment in outreach, high-quality providers, real-time data exchange and robust outcome tracking.

Powell Recovery Center would welcome the opportunity to work with the Committee, the Baltimore City Health Department, Behavioral Health System Baltimore, the Maryland Behavioral Health Administration, and community partners on practical standards for quality, transparency, and life-saving intervention.