



## **Treatment Communities of America**

Treatment Communities of America (TCA) is a non-profit association comprised of community based substance abuse treatment providers throughout the United States. Incorporated in 1975, our mission is to ensure access to a full continuum of care for individuals and families affected by a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) through the following:

- Continuous improvement of the efficacy and efficiency of SUD treatment through research, partnership development, and resource acquisition.
- Education of the public about the need for and benefits of comprehensive SUD services.
- Advocacy to policymakers, public and private entities and other key stakeholders to ensure policies, regulations and legislation are in alignment with our mission.

### **Substance Use Disorder Services and Employment**

Over 30 years of research has demonstrated that individuals in recovery have a greater chance of maintaining their sobriety if they are employed in the workforce as productive members of society. Regardless of that finding, minimal efforts have been made by the federal entities responsible for SUD and Employment, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Department of Labor (DOL), to ensure that program design and funding are dedicated to addressing this issue. Although SAMHSA and DOL share many of the same consumers-with histories that include homelessness, criminal justice involvement, mental health issues, training and minimal employment skills – their approach to providing services has made partnership difficult. SAMHSA places the emphasis on treatment to address the SUD first and then employment; while DOL utilizes the strategy of employment as a means to address the issues impacting individuals served. In order for both systems to maximize funding, resources and outcomes for individuals affected by SUDs, TCA recommends the following:

- DOL and SAMHSA identify mechanisms to blend funding to ensure the provision of integrated employment and treatment services.
- DOL allows for program design and performance measures that recognize the need for treatment and support services for individuals with SUDs in any discretionary grant or Workforce Investment Act funding.
- DOL and SAMHSA recognize that employment related skills are necessary prior to employment, inclusive of high school education and vocational training, and provide the funding and resources to support.
- SAMSHA incorporates employment related services as a mandatory component of SUD treatment.

- DOL and SAMSHA mandate partnerships between local SUD and employment providers in any new RFAs for services.

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1875 I Street, NW, Room 574

Washington, DC 20006

(202) 296-3503 FAX (202) 518-5475

Email [tca.office@verizon.net](mailto:tca.office@verizon.net)

[www.treatmentcommunitiesofamerica.org](http://www.treatmentcommunitiesofamerica.org)