



WVARR New Residence Provisional Certification Policy

2/1/2025

WVARR is committed to a process that ensures all individuals in or seeking recovery housing will have access to residences in compliance with our national best practice standards. Because WVARR's review process is inherently designed to assess existing recovery residence operations, WVARR previously required any new or newly developing recovery residence to be operating at 60% capacity for 60 days in order to be eligible for certification.

New state legislation requires all West Virginia recovery residences to be WVARR-certified in order to access state funding, including new or newly developing residences. Because the literal interpretation of this statute has the potential to inhibit much needed capacity expansion in the state, WVARR has decided to waive the operational requirement of 60% capacity for 60 days for new and newly developing recovery residences. WVARR will allow qualifying developing residences to acquire a New Residence Provisional Certification, which shall be considered equal by any relevant referring or funding entities as it pertains to requirements set forth in West Virginia state code.

A "new residence" includes any recovery residence that has not yet opened or begun operating, or has not yet reached the requirement of operating at 60% capacity for 60 days, at the time of application. New residences may be eligible to receive provisional certification for a period **no longer than one year** to allow them adequate time to establish their plan of begin operating and secure any relevant funding or referrals needed to support the initial development of the residence.

In order to qualify for a New Residence Provisional Certification, the residence or organization must complete all other requirements outlined by the National Alliance of Recovery Residences, the West Virginia Alliance of Recovery Residences, and the State of West Virginia relevant to certification. WVARR may waive certain requirements that the residence cannot complete in its current phase of development without access to additional funding or resident referrals, including capacity requirements. ***Under no circumstances will any waivers be issued that would jeopardize resident health or safety.***

If the residence is granted a New Residence Provisional Certification, the residence will require a follow-up inspection within 60 days of opening so that the remaining requirements can be assessed, to include resident interviews.

In order to be granted a New Residence Provisional Certification, the operator must submit a formal waiver request to the WVARR director by email, providing all information listed below. Each waiver application will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and approved or denied by the WVARR director.

Criteria for Issuing Waivers:

Waivers are issued at WVARR's discretion after taking into consideration all relevant factors, including that the applicant residence meets all standards other than those for which a waiver is requested. WVARR will adhere to the following guidelines in evaluating and acting on requests:

1. Applicant must be able to demonstrate and verify it meets the criteria for a "new residence."
2. Waivers may only be granted to new recovery residences. All operators in the state should be notified that waivers will not be granted for any residences opened prior to the date of application.
3. No waiver may be granted for conditions that jeopardize the health and safety of residents.
4. The applicant must certify that they are fully in compliance with any applicable fire, health, or safety codes.
5. With a very few exceptions, no waiver may be granted for elements of the standard other than those pertaining to physical environment or resident interviews without prior consultation with NARR.
6. If certain requirements pertaining to the physical environment are waived by WVARR for the purposes of allowing the residence access to start-up and other funding and referrals, the residence must submit to a physical inspection by WVARR prior to admitting any residents.
7. The applicant must propose a remediation plan that will address any and all deficiencies and a future date by which they expect to come into full compliance.

Waiver process:

Applicants must make a formal written request for a waiver, which will include:

1. Reason for the request
2. NARR/WVARR standard(s) or requirement(s) for which a waiver is requested
3. Exact nature of the waiver (e.g. acquire startup funding to purchase or renovate a building)
4. Remediation plan and period of time during which the waiver will be in effect

WVARR will maintain the application and records related to the waiver assessment process in the applicant's file. The assessment process may include interviews with individuals familiar with the applicant's business history.

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