



## Promoting wellness and recovery

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### Recovery Housing Building Code: What you need to know

The Ohio Building Code (OBC) is updated periodically and care should be taken to review the most up-to-date version. However, in November 1, 2017, updates based upon the 2015 International Building Code (IBC) resulted in a focus on risk-based minimum code requirements. This document is intended to inform recovery housing operators and mental health and addiction boards who are navigating the codes.

The OhioMHAS requires a Certificate of Occupancy for housing operators to utilize its funding. Properties are subject to the code and requirements for obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy, and are required to have a current Certificate of Occupancy that matches the current use of the building. Changes to the Code also resulted in the removal of the references to numerous state agency licensing requirements, reclassification of care facilities and the creation of new housing category definitions. 'Recovery Housing' is not defined in the OBC, which leaves this responsibility to those individuals preparing and communicating building plans. Additional items to note are below:

#### 1. State vs. Local Codes

Enforcement of the Ohio Building Code is frequently performed by a local building code enforcement office, or by the Ohio Department of Commerce where no local jurisdiction is in place. Local jurisdictions may have some requirements that are more stringent than the Ohio Building Code, but they should not conflict with the Ohio Building Code.

#### 2. Ohio Building Codes (OBC) vs. Residential Code of Ohio (RCO)

Two building codes govern the design and construction requirements in the State of Ohio. Because the Department of Commerce does not enforce the RCO, residential buildings in areas without local enforcement are unregulated. Questions regarding these two codes should be referred to either your local building code enforcement office or the Ohio Department of Commerce.

#### 3. Plan Information and Helpful Definitions

The Board of Building Standards [Memo](#) issued in October 2017 provided basic guidance to those individuals preparing and communicating building plans to the department. Special attention should be given to the definitions included in Chapter 2 of the Ohio Building Code, the most applicable of which are located on page 6 of the Board of Building Standards [Care Facility Tools](#). Note that while the Code has included a definition of 'incapable of self-preservation', there is no definition of 'capable of self-preservation' provided. Also note that the 'Residential/Institutional Occupancy Questionnaire and Certification' document included in the Care Facility Tools packet is not mandated by the Board of Building Standards but can be a helpful tool to communicate to the department the intended use of the building.

If you have further questions regarding OhioMHAS housing requirements, please contact Maura Klein at 614-644-8424 or [maura.klein@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:maura.klein@mha.ohio.gov). If you have questions about the Ohio Building Code of Residential Code of Ohio, please contact your local building code enforcement or the Board of Building Standards at 614-644-2613 or [BBS@com.state.oh.us](mailto:BBS@com.state.oh.us).