

# *Oxford House*<sup>TM</sup>

## *World Council Manual*<sup>©</sup>

*"Working Together to Foster Recovery Without Relapse by  
Keeping Oxford House True to Its Purpose and Mission"*



*Commemorative Edition*

*21st Annual Oxford House Convention*

**Oxford House: Self-Reliance • Self-Respect**

Marriott Renaissance Downtown  
Washington, DC

August 29 – September 1, 2019

Oxford Houses are a network of self-run, self-supported recovery houses for recovering alcoholics and drug addicts. Each Oxford House is autonomous and holds a weekly democratic house meeting to assure the smooth operation and financial viability of the house. Local Oxford House join together in mutually-supportive chapters and annually elect members of a World Council to assure the continuity of purpose and mission of Oxford House as a whole.

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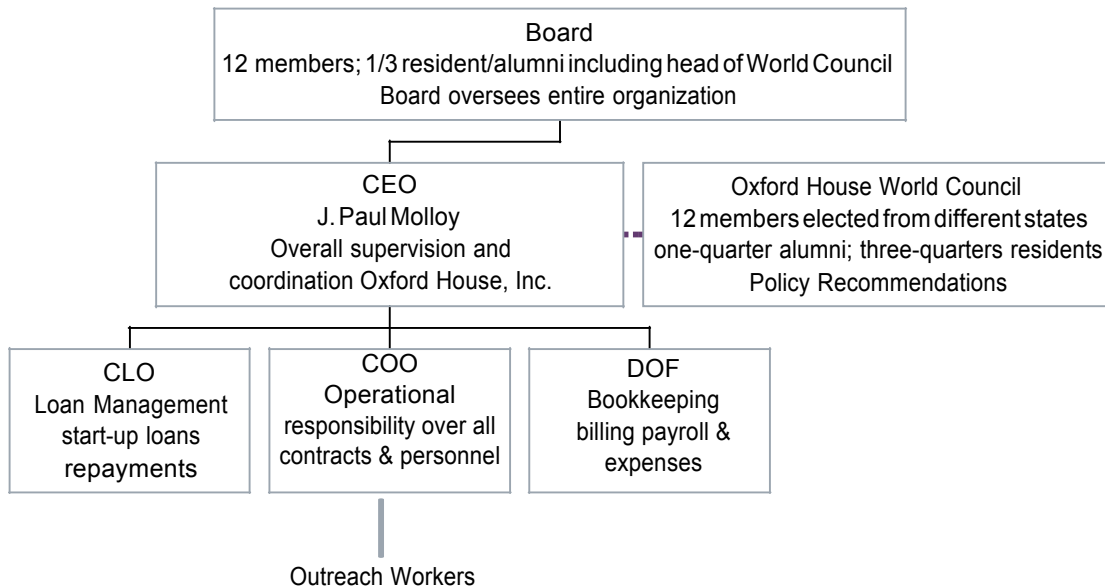
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Oxford House World Council reviews the policies, procedures, and text of the Oxford House procedures on an on-going basis. If you find any errors or have suggestions of ways and means to improve the Oxford House organizations, its manuals, or the forms, let the World Council know. The toll-free telephone number to get in touch with the World Service Council is 1-800-689-6411. The facsimile number is 1-301-589-0302.

# Oxford House World Council

The primary purpose of the Oxford House World Council is to assure that all Oxford Houses™ and Oxford House as a whole, operate in a way that is consistent with the Oxford House traditions and system of operations as described in the Oxford House Manual©. To achieve that purpose the World Council utilizes all levels of Oxford House organization – houses, chapters, state associations and the Oxford House World Services office. It identifies problems, develops solutions and makes suggestions to all levels of the organization. The World Council Chairperson is also an ex officio member of the Board of Oxford House, Inc. – the umbrella 501(c)(3) organization for all of Oxford House.

## Oxford House, Inc Basic Organization



The World Council, started in 1997, meets regularly to assure that the self-help legacy of Oxford House™ is forever secure by keeping the concept, traditions and system of operations up-to-date and under the control of residents and Oxford House alumni. This manual describes how the Oxford House World Council is elected and how it is operated and organized.

# *Principles*

Six principles underlie the role of the Oxford House World Council

- ◆ Oxford Houses must be self-run and self supported.
- ◆ Peer coordination and direction of Oxford House at all levels is best assured with oversight by an elected, geographically balanced World Council.
- ◆ Residents and alumni sharing experiences can provide the best policy and practices to preserve the integrity and foster the expansion of the network of individual Oxford Houses.
- ◆ The legal rights of individual houses should be protected at all times.
- ◆ Practices and procedures to guaranteeing vigilance to assure adherence to Oxford House Traditions must be available at all levels of the organization.
- ◆ Financial support to expand the network of Oxford Houses must be directed to expansion without compromising the Oxford House concept and the disciplined, democratic, and self-support foundation of Oxford House.



# The Role of World Council

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The unique character of Oxford House is two fold: [1] all homes are rented – not owned – single-family houses, and [2] the discipline, time-tested democratically run and financially self-supported system of operation. Both of these unique characteristics require vigilant review and affirmative action to avoid corruption of the concept or system of operation.

The World Council is made up of both alumni and residents of Oxford Houses who are elected by their peers. Electing members to staggered three-year terms of office assures continuity of the 12-member World Council. In theory at least two-thirds of the Council has experience and experience has validated the theory.<sup>1</sup> Requiring that all Resident Members and Resident Alternates be from different states and similarly, requiring all Alumni Members and Alternates to be from different states assures that the Council is representative of the entire Oxford House organization and discourages domination by single-state or local interests.

While Oxford House World Services – the operating arm of Oxford House, Inc.– has the sole authority to grant Oxford House charters, the World Council monitors that process to assure that Oxford House is composed of good houses in good neighborhoods. This activity runs the gambit from guidelines to select good houses to rent to procedures that assure expansion and correct application of the procedures of the Oxford House Manual<sup>®</sup> and Oxford House Chapter Manual<sup>®</sup>.

The World Council meets regularly and organizes itself into a number of committees to focus on all the different subjects that enable Oxford House to expand without diminishing quality operations at all levels of the organization. Each committee reaches out to other Oxford House residents and alumni knowing that good ideas, skills and hard workers are available throughout the growing network of Oxford Houses.

The primary principle driving the mission of World Council is preserving the character of Oxford House that is the hallmark of its success in helping recovering alcoholics and drug addicts help each other to become comfortable enough in sobriety to avoid relapse.

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*Oxford House has unique characteristics worth preserving.*

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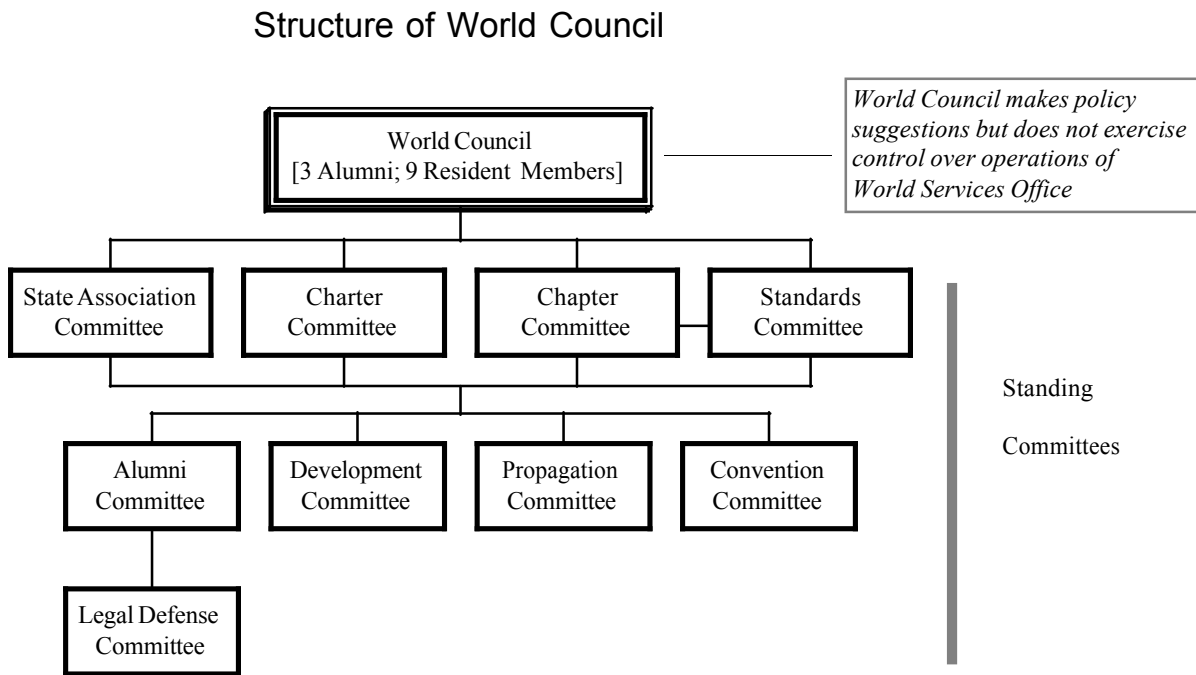


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<sup>1</sup> Since membership on the World Council is conditioned upon maintenance of absolute sobriety, it is possible that members will sometimes be asked to resign. Moreover, sometimes an elected member may resign because of other circumstances in his or her life. Each year the Convention elects alternate members who fill such vacancies if they occur.

## Structure of World Council

Democracy underlies Oxford House from the bottom to the top. The World Council is elected at the annual Oxford House Convention of residents and alumni. Its membership is by rule divided between residents [9] and alumni [3] and has no more than one representative from a state or foreign country. Four members are elected each year for staggered three-year terms to assure continuity on the Council. The Oxford House World Council is the nerve system for keeping the entire Oxford House Network of Houses on track and expanding as quickly as possible. Its members reach out to identify problems or opportunities and to recommend policies and procedures to solve problems or to take advantage of opportunities. The following diagram shows the World Council's structure.



The Oxford House World Council is made up of two types of members: residents and alumni. Resident members and alumni members are elected at the Annual Oxford House World Convention. In addition, the Council has two Emeritus members: Myrna Brown and James McClain – members of the original World Council in 1997.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> There are only two Emeritus members of the World Council because the primary driver in Oxford House is democratic election of residents or alumni to provide effective representation of all Oxford Houses, residents and alumni. The unique position of Myrna Brown and James McClain as original World Council members is intended to provide leadership and training to subsequent Council members. It is not anticipated that other Emeritus members will be elected.

## **Officers and Meetings**

The Oxford House World Council meets in person twice a year – once at the Annual World Convention and one additional time during the year. Every two months the Council members have a meeting via telephone conference call. Each member of the Council has one vote and they use parliamentary procedures similar to the procedures used in house or chapter meetings.

Officers elected from among the members of the World Council include: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Charter Chairperson, Chapter Chairperson, State Association Chairperson, Propagation Chairperson, Alumni Chairperson, Development Chairperson, Convention Chairperson and Legal Defense Chairperson. This usually means that each elected member of the council is also an officer or Committee Chairperson. The officers focus on keeping the workload of the Council on track and the Committee Chairpersons try to involve others in the Oxford House family in the committee work. Democratic and parliamentary procedures are followed in each meeting of the World Council and in its standing and special committees.

The **Chairperson** leads each of the scheduled meetings and such other meetings as the Council may have during the year. He or she may be an ex-officio member of all the Committees authorized by the Council and have an equal vote on both the Council and Committees. Whenever the Chairperson is not available for a meeting, the **Vice Chairperson** takes over.

The **Secretary** is responsible for taking minutes during each meeting of the Council, transcribing the minutes and distributing them to all Council members and the Oxford House World Services Office within one week of any meeting. Council members should be notified of any meeting at least two days in advance of the meeting except when members are present at the same location when a shorter notice may be given.

The **Treasurer** establishes a checking account for the World Council. He or she and the Chairperson should be co-signers on the World Council checking account. In advance of each Council meeting, the Treasurer should e-mail a financial report to all members reflecting the balance in the checking account and list of unpaid bills as accounts payable for the Council. The Treasurer's report should be part of every Council meeting. Funding of the World Council should be sufficient to publish and distribute periodic newsletters and to fund the semi-annual face-to-face meeting of Council members.

## Standing Committees

At the first regular meeting of the Council following the Annual Oxford House World Convention, Chairpersons should be elected for each of the following standing committees:

- ◆ The **Charter Committee** works with Oxford House World Services to get all Oxford Houses Chartered and is a part of any investigation in the event of revocation. The Committee will monitor the timely transition of houses from conditional charters to permanent charter status. In addition, the Committee works to help chapters monitor adherence to charter conditions by individuals houses. Whenever, problems are detected the Committee should analyze the problem[s] and recommend policy improvements to solve the problem[s].

The Chairperson of the Council and the Committee Chairperson should recruit not less than six residents and/or alumni to serve on the Charter Committee taking geography into account to assure a membership representative of the national network of Oxford Houses.

- ◆ The **Chapter Committee** is responsible for updating the Chapter manual to assure that all Oxford Houses have an opportunity to be a member of a Chapter. At least twice a year the Committee should distribute the Chapter newsletter – *The Common Good* – to each chapter. Specific aspects of chapter performance that the Council Chapter Committee should review include but are not limited to the following questions:
  - Does the Chapter meet every month and has it registered for chapter recognition with Oxford House World Services?
  - Does the Chapter encourage contributions to finance activities of the Oxford House World Services Office?
  - Does the Chapter elect officers once a year?
  - Does the Chapter hold semi-annual workshops to help house officers understand the duties and responsibilities of each office?



- What things can a Chapter do to encourage local houses to enjoy the sobriety from bowling league participation to socials?
  - How and when should Chapters raise funds for local expansion?
  - How and when should Chapters organize presentations to expand the knowledge about Oxford House to treatment providers, the criminal justice system and the recovery community?
  
- ◆ **State Association Committee** is responsible for organizing state associations and developing constructive roles for them to play in organizing workshops and soliciting funds for expansion of state networks of individual Oxford Houses, creating a strong sense of community among the houses in the state and encouraging participation in the annual World Convention.
  
- ◆ The **Propagation Committee** is responsible for development of ways and means to spread knowledge about how Oxford Houses work and the benefits from having clusters of Oxford Houses to serve those in recovery. The scope of work of the Propagation Committee includes general publicity and outreach to organizations and programs dealing with addiction. In addition, the Propagation Committee compiles lists of landlords to serve as references to prospective landlords or groups wanting to purchase single-family houses suitable for use as Oxford Houses.
  
- ◆ The **Alumni Committee** has responsibility for developing ways and means to keep track of Oxford House alumni and to make contacts with alumni to sustain their interest in the Oxford House movement and to solicit their assistance in helping with the establishment and maintenance of Oxford Houses.
  
- ◆ The **Development Committee** has responsibility to examine ways and means for expanding the network of Oxford Houses including an operating budget for the World Council and the utilization of applied research and foundation funding to seed

new geographic areas with establishment of new houses. Specifically, the Development Committee should seek input from state associations, chapters and individual houses to find ways to improve expansion of Oxford Houses including identification of institutions such as drug courts, churches, treatment providers, employee assistance programs and the recovery community in general that might have an interest in the Oxford House movement as a cost-effective way to enable recovering individuals to become comfortable enough in sobriety to avoid relapse.

- ◆ The **Standards Committee** has jurisdiction to develop and promote best practice standards involving all aspects of the Oxford House Network of houses. Subject areas might include how to interview recovering individuals incarcerated but about to be re-entering society, how to deal with prescription medication, criteria for putting residents who are having trouble adjusting to the Oxford House system of operation on contract, how to deal with loans between houses or from chapters to houses, how to deal with residents who fall behind on payment of an equal share of household expenses and other issues that invite guidance from the Oxford House family as a whole. Developed standards are only *suggested* steps individual houses should consider. Tradition Five of Oxford House clearly provides each house with autonomy but many Houses could benefit from guidance based on the experience of other Oxford Houses and leaders.
  
- ◆ The **Convention Committee** focuses on helping to make the annual Oxford House World Convention a success. Its work includes active recruitment of local house delegates to the convention as part of the institution-building of a strong worldwide network of Oxford Houses. In particular, the Committee suggests the annual theme for the convention, nominates individuals for the Tom Fellows Award, the Founder's Award and the Reggie Midget Award, and screens resolutions to be considered by the convention.

- ◆ The **Legal Defense Committee** is necessary because Oxford House residents continue to be subjected to discrimination with respect to location of the housing, insurance rates charged landlord renting the houses, different treatment of Oxford House groups than ordinary family renters and local laws making it difficult for individual Oxford Houses to adhere to the conditions of their Oxford House charters. Its role is to identify legal barriers to the effective functioning of Oxford Houses and to develop a network of lawyers willing to assist in the defense of rights of recovering individuals living together in order to develop sobriety sufficiently strong enough to avoid relapse. A directory of civil rights lawyers and lawyers in recovery willing to help defend the rights of Oxford House residents should be developed and the committee should keep such lawyers informed about the resolution of the numerous legal barriers placed in the way of Oxford House and the opportunity for recovering individuals to gain long-term sobriety without relapse.

Membership on the standing committees of the World Council should be geographically diverse and should reach out to residents and alumni having expertise in the various subject areas examined by the various committees. Accomplishment in most human endeavors depends upon networking. This is true with respect to recovery. Involving as many individuals as possible expands the network of individuals who may be able to help expand or strengthen the Oxford House Movement. Every member of the World Council should make as many contacts with as many individuals as possible. Every contact represents a potential Oxford House good idea, strong supporter or problem solver.

The committee structure within the World Council helps to focus areas where Oxford House can always use help. It also provides the discipline to effectively solve problem areas or to take advantage of opportunities important to the existence and expansion of Oxford Houses. More importantly, the World Council Committee Structure strengthens the grassroots democratic self-help principle so important to making certain that Oxford House adapts to change without compromising the concept and system of operations that enable recovering individuals to gain the time, peer support and responsibility essential for long-term sobriety without relapse.

## **World Council Committee Leadership**

The Committees of the World Council are the primary link into the National and International Oxford House Network of individual houses, chapters and state or other jurisdictional associations. Because Council Committees are the primary link into all parts of the grassroots Oxford House organization, it is important the Chairpersons of each committee recruit committee members representative of all segments of the Oxford House network of houses.

Some chapters or state associations will always be better organized than others but both the well organized and the less well-organized groups should have representatives on the World Council Committees. How else can the less well organized be improved? Another difference between various geographic clusters of Oxford Houses is those areas served by trained outreach workers under the supervision of the Oxford House World Services Office and areas where houses have been established by local members of the recovery community or have existed without trained outreach workers for a number of years. These differences should be taken into account whether collecting information about problem areas or distributing suggested ways to avoid or correct operating problems whenever they occur. Each World Council Committee Chairperson needs to balance committee membership to reflect the different training and support system underlying Oxford Houses in particular areas. Likewise suggested solutions should be transmitted in a way that makes certain that all houses have the benefit of the information.

Each time a World Council Committee takes up a problem it needs to first analyze the nature of the problem and then develop options for solving the problem. The Committee then needs to decide which option or options can best solve the problem being addressed. Sometimes several options might be tried in order to determine which option can work best. The “trial and error” method for determining the best practice has been a hallmark of Oxford House success and should not be overlooked as a way to achieve a best practice.

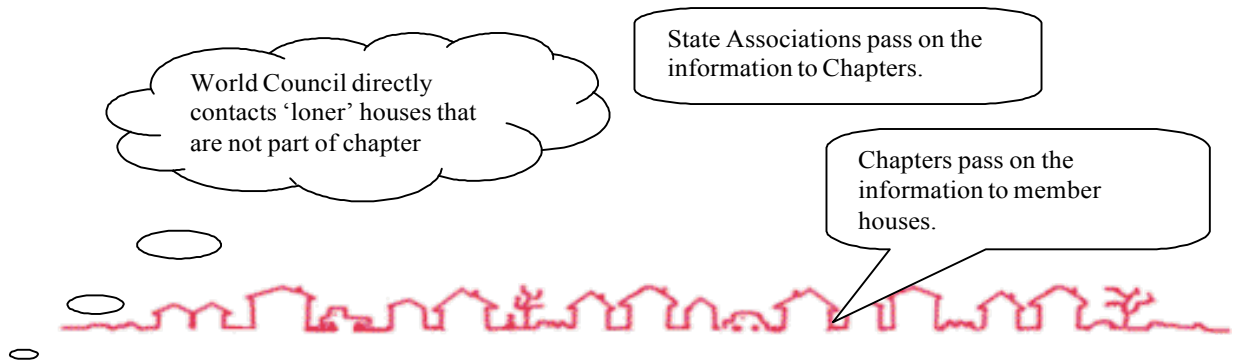
Whenever a World Council Committee suggests solutions to problems or new opportunities it should follow up to make certain that the suggestions are communicated to the entire Oxford House family so that improvements can be implemented. The first step of the two-step process is to bring the proposed solution or options to a meeting of the full World Council. At that stage the suggested solution or option can be approved, rejected or modified. If it is approved or modified, the second step should be to utilize all the assets of the World Council [the membership, all the Committee membership and World Services] to make certain that information transfer throughout the Oxford House family is effective.

There are certain skills that help make information transfer effective. The first is to clearly identify idea. That means the proposal should have a short title that describes its purpose or objective. For example, suppose that the issue involves interviewing of recovering individuals who are incarcerated but about to return to society and the suggestion involves how to adapt the usual application interview by all house members. Suppose that the Committee recommends that a group of two or three existing house residents might interview the incarcerated potential resident and report back to the full house and that the house might base its approval or rejection on the application and the report by the interview committee. The suggestion should be identified in a way that clearly states its purpose and recommendation. For example, it might state: Suggested Procedure for Interviewing and Accepting Recovering Incarcerated Individuals. This type of labeling clearly states the purpose of the suggestion and might include additional information about whether or not to make accommodation for the upfront money needed to move into a house.

*Passing On Good Ideas*

The goal of the World Council should be to distribute any agreed-upon proposals or suggestions to all Oxford Houses. Eventually all houses should have an e-mail address to simplify distribution – but other devices ranging from notification by posting on the website to articles in the Oxford Grape, Pathways or Common Good should also be used to make certain that everyone has the benefit of a Committee’s findings. Sometimes feedback from houses will uncover weaknesses in an idea and the appropriate committee should not hesitate to make modifications as needed.

Depending upon the nature of a suggested proposal or corrective action, the Council may chose to utilize chapters or state associations to distribute the information to all the individual houses within their bailiwick.



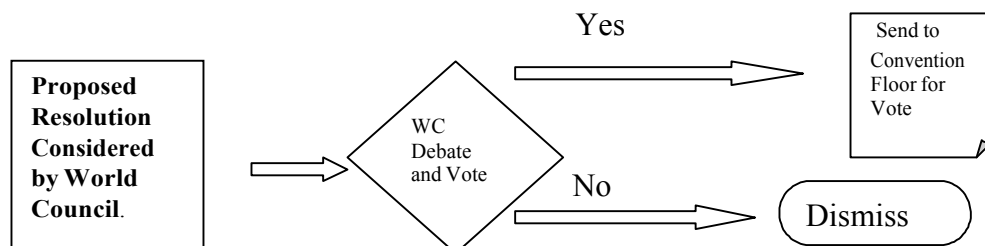
*Working Together to Foster Recovery Without Relapse by Keeping Oxford House True to Its Purpose and Mission*

*Promoting and Utilizing the Annual World Convention*

The annual Oxford House World Convention provides the forum that gives the World Council its membership and authority. Consequently, it is important that members of the World Council promote and utilize the annual convention. After all, it is the common ground for the entire Oxford House family and a hallmark of the self-run, self-supported autonomy of Oxford House. Since the first annual Oxford House World Convention in 1999, each convention has proven that “the inmates can run the asylum”. Hundreds of Oxford House residents and alumni gather to learn more about addiction and recovery without relapse, to share the Oxford House concept and system of operation with others interest in providing addicts the opportunity to escape from addiction, and to celebrate recovery, friends and Oxford House.

An important component of every Oxford House Convention is the election of members to the Oxford House World Council. Right at the Convention candidates representing current house residents and alumni are nominated for election and campaign to gain election by their peers. The nomination process creates excitement among convention attendees right from the opening session. Candidates get their petitions signed by representatives of five or more houses from around the country and give campaign speeches before the third general session of the convention. The first eight annual conventions have found a full house. Everyone attends the election speeches and evaluates which candidates will get their vote. Some state delegations aggressively campaign for their favorite son or daughter and American democracy is demonstrated in its best light. When the votes are counted one-third of the membership of the World Council has been elected and the new World Council conducts its first meeting before the convention draws to a close.

The World Council serving at the beginning of the convention performs an important role by screening resolutions to be voted on by the entire convention. Resolutions from the floor take a 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s vote to get it considered. Consequently, individuals or groups wanting a particular resolution considered always present it first to the World Council in order to get it polished and supported by a majority of the Council.



## *Resolutions*

Resolutions have been voted on at each of the Twelve Oxford House World Conventions. At the first Convention in 1999 held in Washington, DC at the Washington Court Hotel the residents and alumni voted on two resolutions.

- Be it Resolved: That next year's convention shall be held in the fall of 2000 in Kansas City, Missouri. [Vote 203 to 24] **#1**
- Be it Resolved: Each house should voluntarily send a \$50 a month contribution to Oxford House World Services to expand the network of houses. [Vote 168 to 43] **#2**

Both votes were taken after spirited debate and thus began a tradition of having representatives from the entire Oxford House family vote on important issues. The next year at the second annual convention in Kansas City, another group of resolutions were considered at the third General Session of the World Convention on Saturday afternoon. Three resolutions were voted on:

- Be it Resolved: That individuals taking methadone are not drug-free and cannot be admitted to an Oxford House. [Approved: Vote 326 to 3] **#3**
- Be it Resolved: The Convention thanks the State of Missouri for their hospitality and support of the Oxford House program. [Approved: Vote 343 to 0] **#4**
- Be it Resolved: Individual Oxford Houses must join a chapter. [Rejected: 274 to 43] **#5**

In 2001, the Oxford House World Convention returned to Washington, DC for its annual convention at the Washington Court Hotel on Capitol Hill – beginning the custom that the conventions would be held in Washington, DC every other year – and it approved the following resolutions.

- Be it Resolved: that each chapter should conduct financial audits in member houses whenever there is a need or not less than once a year. [Vote 384 to 12] **#6**
- Be it Resolved: that Houses should voluntarily contribute \$50 per month to Oxford World Services and any amount of these contributions in excess of \$200,000 during each fiscal year will be placed in a National Revolving Loan Fund to start new houses. Oxford House World Services should report its income and expenses to the houses every three months. [Vote 343 to 53] **#7**
- Be it Resolved: that The Oxford House family should work with local branches of the National Council on Alcoholism to combat addiction. [Vote 396 to 0] **#8**
- Be it Resolved: that the next World Convention will be held in Seattle, Washington in November of 2002. [Vote 323 to 74] **#9**
- Be it Resolved: that Oxford House Inc by-laws clearly indicate that only Oxford House Inc. can grant or revoke house charters. [Vote 372 to 13] **#10**
- Be it Resolved: that the federal government should update and reprint the publication, "Self-Run, Self-supported Housing for More Effective Recovery from Alcoholism and Drug Addiction." [Vote 381 to 0] **#11**

In 2002, the Convention was held in Seattle and the following resolutions were adopted:

- Be it Resolved: That Drug Czar John Walters be thanked for his support and endorsement of Oxford Houses. [Vote 401 to 0] **#12**
- Be it Resolved: That Ken Stark, Head of Washington State Department of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, be thanked for his commitment and leadership for expansion of Oxford Houses in Washington State. [Vote 403 to 0] **#13**
- Be it Resolved: That the Board of Directors be encouraged to set up a foundation separate from Oxford House Inc. [Vote 372 to 13] **#14**
- Be it Resolved: That all States which have more than three Oxford House Chapters be encouraged to set up a State Association. [Vote 342 to 56] **#15**
- Be it Resolved: That all houses be strongly encouraged to belong to a chapter. [Vote 355 to 72] **#16**
- Be it Resolved That Oxford House Inc. devise a letter to local organizations to educate local law enforcement officials about Oxford Houses as solicit their cooperation in matters regarding the houses. [Vote 392 to 8] **#17**

In 2003, the Fifth Annual Oxford House World Convention returned to the Washington, DC area using the Omni Shoreham a larger hotel just off Connecticut Avenue, NW. Again the general session on Saturday afternoon took up resolutions and voted on the following.

- Be it Resolved: that it is the sense of the Convention that every effort should be made to provide financing for the World Council to meet in person between annual Oxford House World Conventions. [Vote 407 to 19] **#18**

- Be it Resolved: that each Oxford House having a permanent charter for at least six months shall replicate by having two or more of its residents begin a new Oxford House by renting another house and committing to live in the new house until it has fulfilled the conditions to get a permanent charter. [Vote 322 to 97] **#19**
- Be it Resolved: that Oxford House be encouraged to establish incarceration committees to work with programs for incarcerated alcoholics and drug addicts. [Vote 340 to 74] **#20**
- Be it Resolved: that the Women's Conference become a regular part of future conventions. [Vote 432 to 0] **#21**
- Be it Resolved: Oxford Houses be encouraged to charge new members a non-refundable move-in or acceptance fee in place of a security/sobriety deposit. [Vote 224 to 117] **#22**
- Be it Resolved: That the World Convention upholds the 1990 decision by Oxford House residents at that applicants who are using methadone are not acceptable in an Oxford House. [Vote 422 to 6] **#23**
- Be it Resolved: That the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention be held in San Antonio, TX. [Vote 377 to 53] **#24**

In 2004 the Sixth Annual Oxford House World Convention held in San Antonio and produced three new resolutions – two new resolutions covering new subjects and one [regarding the women's conference] similar to a resolution passed the previous year.

- Be it Resolved: That Chapters be encouraged to implement "Newcomer Orientations" for all house newcomers at Chapter meetings on a regular basis. [Vote 312 to 13] **#25**
- Be it Resolved: That Chapters and State Associations encourage houses to provide financial support to the World Services Office [Vote 331 to 4] **#26**
- Be it Resolved: That the pre-convention Women's Conference become a permanent part of World Conventions in the Future. [Vote 310 to 6] **#27**

In October 2005 the Seventh Annual Oxford House World Convention returned to the Washington, DC area at the Hilton Alexandria Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia and passed one resolution.

- Be it Resolved: That World Services provide at least 10 months of notice to houses as to where the next World Convention will be held and that cost should always be a consideration when considering convention sites. [Vote 432 to 23] **#28**

In 2006, more than 450 Oxford House residents and alumni at the Eighth Annual World Convention in Wichita, Kansas. The highly successful convention considered several resolutions and passed the following three:

- Be it Resolved: That Oxford Houses must reject acceptance of any resident using methadone. [Vote 368 to 5] **#29**
- Be it Resolved: That World Council *suggests* that house may want to avoid accepting individuals convicted of a sexual offence. *The resolution was amended to make certain it is only a suggestion because each House is autonomous.* [Vote 268 to 189] **#30**
- Be it Resolved: All domain names related to Oxford House should be owned by Oxford House, Inc. to assure preservation of the good name of Oxford House. [Vote 410 to 4] **#31**

In 2007 the Ninth Annual World Convention returned to Washington, D.C. Labor Day weekend where more than 550 residents and alumni gather at the Capital Hill Hyatt Regency. The highly successful convention considered several resolutions and passed the following three resolutions:

- Be it Resolved: That Oxford House will give consideration to a T.V. series on Oxford House, with Oxford House having control over the content. [Vote 502 to 12] **#32**
- Be it Resolved: That during September 2007, which is the month set aside for "Recovery Month" we encourage every Oxford House to host open houses for their neighborhood. [Vote 513 to 3] **#33**
- Be it Resolved: That Oxford Houses should be considered a "Best Practice" for the therapeutic community and politicians. [Vote 515 to 0] **#34**
- Be it Resolved: That Oxford House would encourage politicians in all states to re-instate the "Mandatory Revolving Loan Fund." [Vote 412 to 64] **#35**

In 2008, the Tenth Annual World Convention was held in New Orleans and more than 580 residents and alumni attended. The Convention members adopted four resolutions.

- Be it resolved, that every chapter should obtain a PO box and give the PO box number to Oxford House World Services. [Vote 520 to 7] **#36**
- Be it Resolved: That it is the duty of the secretary of each house to update vacancies on the website once a week for their house. [Vote 539 to 13] **#37**
- Be it Resolved: That it is the duty of the President to make sure the voice mail messages are retrieved and returned. [Vote 509 to 12] **#38**
- Be it Resolved: that each house shall obtain an email address for the house. [Vote 480 to 22] **#39**



In 2009, the Eleventh Annual World Convention was held in Washington, DC with 640 residents and alumni in attendance. The following resolution was adopted.

- Be it Resolved: That the use of electronic banking shall be limited exclusively to the repayment of revolving loans and/or the monthly donation to Oxford House World Services. [Vote 550 to 10] **#40**

In 2010, the Twelfth Annual World Convention in Chicago, Illinois with 680 residents and alumni in attendance passed the following resolution repealing three prior resolutions prohibiting admission of residents using methadone.

- Be it Resolved: That notwithstanding Resolutions #3, #23, #29 each Oxford House shall have sole authority over acceptance of residents. [Vote 343 to 187] **#41**
- Be it Resolved: That it is encouraged that at any single time no resident or alumni should be Treasurer of more than one Oxford House entity-House, Chapter or State Association. [Vote 315 to 23] **#42**

In 2011, the Thirteenth Annual World Convention in Washington, DC with 680 residents and alumni in attendance passed the following resolutions:

- Be it Resolved: That it is strongly suggest that each house elect an experienced resident as housing service representative. [Vote 322 -2] **#43**
- Be it Resolved: That the organization adopt a State Association Manual including forms for data collection, based upon final approval of the draft by the World Council. [Vote 364-3] **#44**

In 2012, the Fourteenth Annual World Convention in Oklahoma City with 645 residents and alumni in attendance passed the following resolutions.

- Be it Resolved: That during September, which is set aside as Recovery Month, we encourage every Oxford House to host open houses for their neighborhood. [Vote 453 – 3] **#45**
- Be it Resolved: That houses and chapters be encouraged to implement Newcomer Orientations for all house newcomers, within thirty days. [Vote 486 – 13] **#46**

In 2013, the Fifteenth Annual World Convention in Washington, DC with 723 residents and alumni in attendance passed the following resolutions.

- Be it Resolved: That each Chapter should verify the financial audits of the Chapter member's houses, at least once a month, and these audits are retained a maximum of three years for review. [Vote 600 – 13] **#47**
- Be it Resolved: That every State/Regional Associates and Chapters should obtain a PO Box and give the PO Box number to Oxford House World Services. [Vote 512 –23] **#48**
- Be it Resolved: That all house members are responsible for answering the phone and it's the duty of the President to retrieve and respond to voice messages daily and report at the weekly meeting. [Vote 483 -13] **#49**

In 2014, the Sixteenth Annual Convention in Portland, OR with 827 residents and alumni in attendance passed the following:

- Be it Resolved: That all houses should conduct interviews with applicants at any time by any means available. [Vote 767-19] **#50**
- Be it Resolved: That members of the house should vote on the issue of “vaping” in houses and each house should establish smoking areas at a minimum safe distance from structures on the property. [Vote 566-132] **#51**
- Be it Resolved: That each House should promptly respond to applicants. [Vote 688-9] **#52**

In 2015, the Seventeenth Annual Convention in Washington, D.C. with 832 residents and alumni in attendance passed the following:

- Be it Resolved: in accordance with Tradition 8, the use of social media should be to provide education and share the experience, strength, and hope of Oxford House while remembering principles should be expressed not personalities. [Vote 754-21] **#53**
- Be it Resolved: State-Regional Associations and Chapters are strongly encouraged to have all officer candidates quality themselves before a vote is held. [Vote 543-108] **#54**
- Be it Resolved: That, because we are a family and want to avoid isolation, dwelling locks on the outside of individual bedrooms are not to be used. [Vote 769-3] **#55**

In 2016, the Eighteenth Annual Convention in Dallas, TX, with 1,087 residents and alumni in attendance passed the following:

- Be it Resolved: That all residents moving out of Oxford House in good standing register as alumni on the national Oxford website at: [www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org) under “Contact Us.”[Vote 578-34] **#56**
- Be it Resolved: Each Oxford House should be encouraged to adopt the standardized Oxford House Forms, approved and located on the Oxford House national website for purposes of further unification across the Oxford House Network. [Vote 422-87] **#57**
- Be it Resolved: That in keeping with Oxford House traditions, houses are encouraged to rely on awareness of behaviors during consideration of possible expulsion. [Vote 322-65] **#58**

In 2017, the Nineteenth Annual Convention in Washington, DC with 1,247 residents and alumni in attendance passed the following:

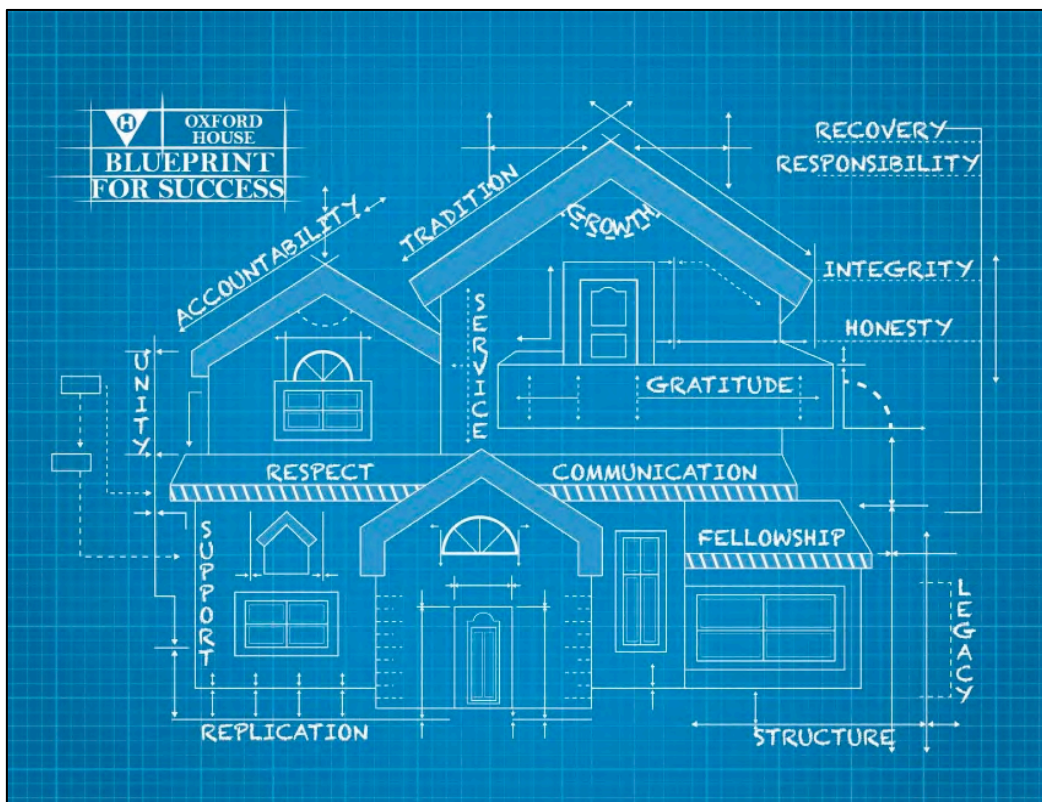
- Be it Resolved: That all Houses are encouraged to obtain Narcan opioid overdose reversal kits and train residents as to use of such kits. [Vote 534-88] **#59**
- Be it Resolved That Houses make sure the vacancy update contact person position be filled at all times.[Vote 612 to 18] **#60**

In 2018, the Twentieth Annual Convention in Kansas City, MO with 1,647 residents and alumni in attendance passed the following:

- Be it Resolved that: State and Regional Associations are encouraged to form Alumni Associations. [Vote 684 to 22] **#61**
- Be it Resolved: Chapters include a copy of FEIN in their Chapter Recognition application. [Vote 701 to 12] **#62**
- Be it Resolved: 2020 World Convention be held in Seattle WA and All future Conventions not held in DC area to be voted on a Minimum of 2 years in advance. [Vote 688 to 23] **#63**

Implementation of the resolutions adopted is carried out by the Council, which records the approved resolutions, catalogues and numbers them and reports progress to the next Annual Oxford House World Convention. The number of each resolution is printed following the text of the Resolution.

Note: “votes” are a show of hands and counting should be considered “best estimates.”



*Oxford House: Blueprint for Success*

# Oxford House World Council Bylaws

The Oxford House World Council is an elected membership subsidiary of Oxford House Inc. [a non-profit Delaware corporation and the 501(c)(3) umbrella organization of all Oxford Houses and Alumni Oxford Houses] whose principle place of business is 1010 Wayne Ave. Suite 300, Silver Spring, MD 20910. The following are bylaws for the Oxford House World Council.

## ARTICLE I

### Incorporation of Oxford House, Inc. Bylaws

The bylaws of Oxford House, Inc. are hereby incorporated by reference to Oxford House World Council.

## ARTICLE II

### Composition of Oxford House World Council

The Oxford House World Council shall be twelve (12) voting members with nine (9) resident members and three (3) alumni members. Each member shall serve for a term of three years except three of the initial members shall be elected for three years, three for two years and three for one year. In addition, there shall be three alternate council members [two resident and one alumni] each serving a one year term of office and determined by the candidate for election to the Council receiving the highest number of votes to the election candidates in the respective class.

## ARTICLE III

### Election Procedure

Election of council members and alternates shall be conducted annually at the Oxford House World Convention. Each house in attendance at the convention is entitled to one vote for three resident members and one alumni member. Alumni in attendance at the convention can vote for alumni members but not resident members. Broad geographic distribution shall be assured for the Council by requiring that all Resident Council Members and Resident Alternate Members be from different states. Similarly, all Alumni Council Members and the Alternate Alumni Member shall be from different states.

## ARTICLE IV

### Member Responsibility

Council membership is conditioned on maintenance of sobriety and participation in World Council meetings. Unexcused absences from more than two meetings shall result in termination of membership on the Council and substitution to the first alternate from the same class of membership as the person leaving the council. An alternate shall serve the remainder of the former member's term. A relapse [return to using alcohol and/or drugs] shall result in immediate disqualification from Council membership of a council member or alternate.

## ARTICLE V

### Council Offices and Standing Committees

The council at its first meeting following the election of new council members shall elect the following officers for a term to extend until the next annual Oxford House World Convention: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Chapter Chairperson, Charter Chairperson, Alumni Chairperson, Convention Chairperson, Propagation Chairperson and Fundraising Chairperson. Each committee chairperson may select up to ten committee members at least two of whom should be council members or alternate council members.

**Chapter Committee** – Maintain and update the Chapter manual and maintain the network of Oxford House Chapters.

**Charter Committee** – Work with Oxford House, Inc. on getting all Oxford Houses Chartered and participate in the investigation in the event of a Charter revocation.

**Alumni Committee** – Establish and maintain a list of all active alumni. Receive and account for dues from alumni. Maintain contact with alumni and promote more involvement from alumni.

**Convention Committee** – Work with Oxford House, Inc. on the coordination and function of the Annual World Convention.

**Standards Committee** – Develop best practice standards for any procedures or practices throughout the Oxford House network and make suggestions to affected entities to achieve best practices.

**Propagation Committee** – Establish and maintain avenues of promoting Oxford House as a whole taking into account the concept, traditions and system of operations of Oxford House.

**State Association Committee** – Assist states with three or more Oxford House Chapters to develop State Associations to help expand and maintain their networks of Oxford Houses.

**Development Committee** – Works to find ways and means to expand the number of Oxford Houses to provide more recovering alcoholics and drug addicts the opportunity to gain sobriety without relapse. In addition the Committee shall work with houses to raise funds to strengthen and expand Oxford House include fund raising.

**Legal Defense Committee** – Develop ways and means to assure that the civil rights of all Oxford Houses are protected and identify discrimination as soon as it occurs.

The Chairperson of the Council may establish such select committees as he or she may deem to be appropriate. The outgoing Chairperson shall remain on the World Council as a parliamentarian for one year after his or her term of office is complete.

#### ARTICLE VI

##### Coordination with the Oxford House, Inc. Board of Directors

The Chairperson of the World Council, during his or her term of office, shall also serve as a member of the Oxford House, Inc. Board of Directors. Twenty-five (25) percent of the Oxford House, Inc. Board of Directors shall be comprised of Oxford House resident or alumni members counting the two lifetime alumni members of the Oxford House, Inc. Board – Paul Molloy and James McClain. When necessary, because of the number of Oxford House, Inc. Directors, the World Council shall by majority vote elect from among its membership one or more representatives in addition to the Chairperson who shall serve during their term of office on the Council.

#### ARTICLE VII

##### Mission of Oxford House World Council

The primary mission of the Oxford House World Council is to facilitate adherence to Oxford House Traditions, concept and system of operation by providing effective means of communication and mission focus between the various organizational structures of Oxford House as a whole. In carrying out its mission the Council always keeps a focus on expansion of the network of individual Oxford Houses to provide all recovering alcoholics and drug addicts the opportunity to develop comfortable sobriety without relapse. The Oxford House World Council is the guardian of the manuals and traditions.

#### ARTICLE VIII

##### Resolutions Considered at Annual Oxford House World Convention

The annual Oxford House World Convention, consistent with the bylaws of Oxford House, Inc. and the Oxford House World Council, has the authority to enact resolutions affecting Oxford House policies and procedures. Such resolutions must be approved by a majority vote of the World Council and publicly posted at the Convention at least 24 hours before presented for vote at a General Session of the Annual World Convention. The World Council shall be guided by welfare of Oxford House as a whole taking into account the concept, traditions and system of operations of Oxford House.

#### ARTICLE IX

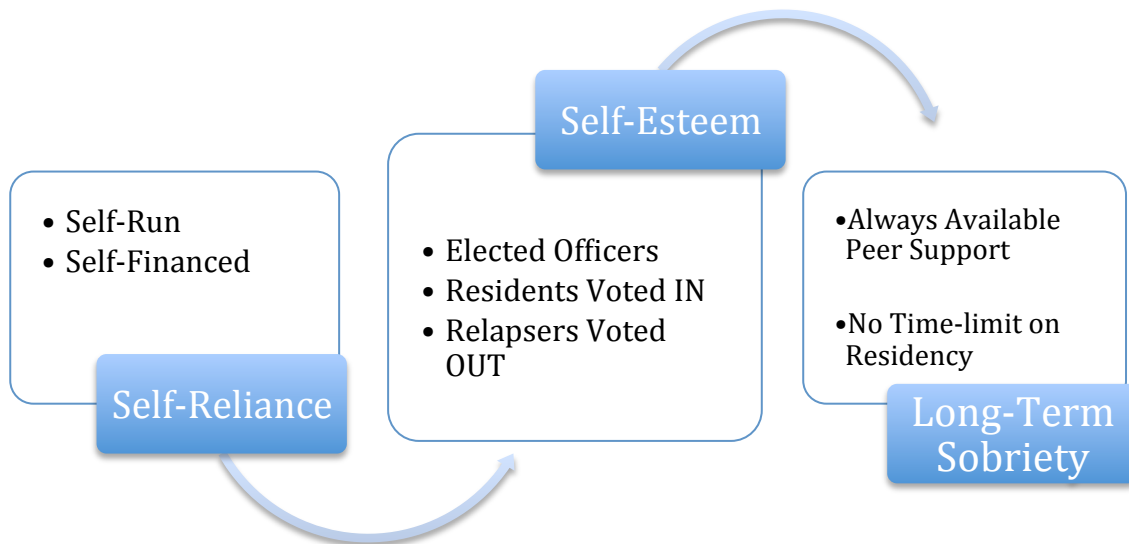
##### Amendment of Bylaws

The World Council may amend these bylaws by a two-thirds vote at any meeting of the council having a quorum. A quorum shall be at least nine members present at a meeting or attending the meeting via speaker telephone.

***APPROVED THIS SIXTH DAY OF DECEMBER IN THE YEAR 2000 AT A MEETING OF THE WORLD COUNCIL AT THE SECOND OXFORD HOUSE WORLD CONVENTION***

# Oxford House™

Unique • Evidenced-based • Time-tested



## FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ADDICTION

- About 17 million Americans are primarily active alcoholics with another 8 million addicted to illicit drugs. (SAMHSA)
- 20.3 million persons aged 18 or older needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol abuse problem in 2013 (8.5 percent of persons aged 18 or older). (SAMHSA)
- Of these, only 1.25 million – 6.2 percent of those who needed treatment – received it.
- Government reports show that alcohol and drug abuse is responsible for the admission of almost 1.5 million people to emergency rooms nationwide and drug addiction results in nearly half a trillion dollars’ economic loss annually or \$1,426 per American.
- For those receiving treatment, 60% had been in prior treatment an average of more than three times. [TEDS]

**Oxford Houses Provide a Low-Cost, Highly Effective Method of Reducing Recidivism**

## The Process of Recovery

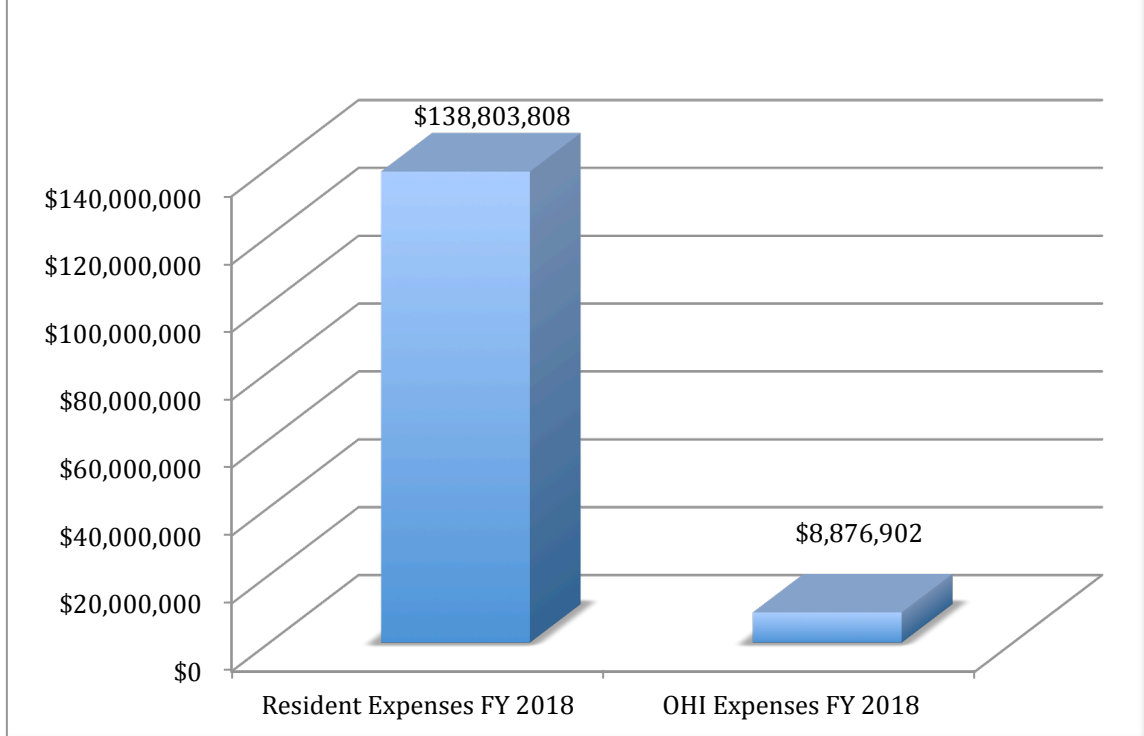
Not everyone who drinks alcohol becomes an alcoholic. Not everyone who uses mood-altering drugs becomes a drug addict. But some do. Society has struggled with effective ways to help those who become addicted to change behavior because their addiction can cause harm to them, their families and society at large. There is no magic wand but there is a process that works.

- Intervention
- Detoxification [*Ending physical dependence*]
- Treatment [*Motivation and education*]
- Long-term Behavior Change [*Supportive Living Environment*]

The weak link in the process is society’s failure to support living environments that foster long-term behavior change. Most individuals relapse after the first three steps of the process – intervention, detoxification and treatment.

Significant evidence suggests that Oxford Houses provide the time, peer support and structured democratic process to make recovery without relapse the norm – not the exception.

## Amount spent by Oxford House residents for household expenses versus the amount spent by OHI in FY 2018



During fiscal year 2018, for every dollar spent by Oxford House, Inc. to develop new houses and help keep existing houses on track, the residents expended \$15.63 themselves to pay for household expenses including rent to a landlord, utilities and other household expenses.

Oxford House, Inc.[OHI] – the national umbrella nonprofit organization – has the sole authority for granting groups charters to establish Oxford Houses. The charter has three specific conditions: (1) the group must be democratically self-run, (2) the group must be financially self-supported, and (3) the group must immediately expel any resident who returns to using drugs or drinking alcohol. It also trains and supervises outreach workers, maintains a number of State start-up revolving loan funds and services as the umbrella organization for all Oxford Houses.

The outreach worker is trained by Oxford House World Services for the following tasks:

- ◆ Finding a suitable house to rent
- ◆ Getting a charter from OHI
- ◆ Getting an FEIN number from IRS
- ◆ Recruiting initial residents
- ◆ Teaching residents the system of operations
- ◆ Building mutually supportive chapters
- ◆ Balancing supply of houses to demand
- ◆ Developing linkages to providers
- ◆ Developing employment linkages
- ◆ Documenting success/failure

OHI employs, trains and supervises outreach workers to help establish new Oxford Houses and organize chapters and state associations to provide mutual support and quality control. Each Oxford House is self-run and self-supported using the time-tested, disciplined, democratic system of operations used by Oxford Houses for more than 44 years.

In CY 2018 only 16.7% of the more than 35,000 residents in the national network of Oxford Houses were expelled because of relapse. Recovery without relapse is the norm – not the exception – for Oxford House residents. Today, there are Oxford Houses in 48 of the 50 states. There are also Oxford Houses in several foreign countries including Canada, Australia, Ghana and United Kingdom.

## **OXFORD HOUSE TRADITIONS**

1. Oxford House has as its primary goal the provision of housing for the alcoholic and drug addict who wants to stay clean and sober.
  2. All Oxford Houses are run on a democratic basis. Our officers serve continuous periods of no longer than six months.
  3. No Member of an Oxford House is ever asked to leave without cause -- drinking, drug use, or disruptive behavior.
  4. Oxford House members realize that active participation in AA and/or NA offers assurance of continued sobriety.
  5. Each Oxford House should be autonomous except in matters affecting other houses or Oxford House, Inc. as a whole.
  6. Each Oxford House should be financially self-supporting.
  7. Oxford House should remain forever non-professional.
  8. Propagation of the Oxford House, Inc. concept should always be conceived as public education.
  9. Members who leave an Oxford House in good standing should become associate members.
-

# Oxford House™

1975-2019

*44 Years of Organized Self-Help To Enable Alcoholics and  
Drug Addicts to Recover Without Relapse*

- Providing Sole Authority for Oxford House Charters
- Providing Technical Assistance to Establish New Oxford Houses
- Providing Technical Assistance to Keep Existing Oxford Houses on Track
- Providing Organization of Chapters to Help Oxford Houses to Help Themselves
- Providing the Time, Living Environment and Support to Enable Alcoholics and Drug Addicts to Achieve Recovery Without Relapse
- Providing the Legal, Philosophical, and Scientific Framework for a Cost-effective, Worldwide Network of Supportive Recovery Housing.

Write or Call

***Oxford House, Inc.***

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