



# **2025-2026 MARION COUNTY OPIOID ABATEMENT PLAN**

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## Overview

In Marion County, Florida, we stand at a critical juncture in our ongoing battle against the opioid crisis - a challenge that has deeply affected our communities, families, and individuals across various walks of life. Recognizing the complexity and the devastating impact of Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), our Opioid Abatement Plan is a comprehensive, strategic response designed to address this epidemic holistically. This plan, tailored to the unique needs and circumstances of Marion County, aims to implement a multifaceted approach, focusing on treatment, prevention, and continuous research and education.

Our commitment is to provide effective, evidence-based strategies that encompass a broad spectrum of interventions. We understand that the path toward healing and recovery is not uniform; hence, our plan is inclusive, considering the diverse needs of our population.

This plan is not just a document; it's a pledge to our community. It's a pledge to employ every resource at our disposal, to collaborate across sectors, and to innovate continuously to ensure that we are doing the utmost to combat this crisis. We are dedicated to creating a future for Marion County where the shadow of opioid addiction is replaced with hope, health, and a renewed sense of community resilience.

## Funding Allocation

### **Schedule A: Core Strategies**

The following areas will be funded in alignment with Schedule A:

#### **1. Prevention Programs**

(see letter G of Schedule A: Core Strategies)

- **Amount Encumbered:** \$513,028
- **Description:** Funding has been encumbered for a future initiative aimed at enhancing the capacity of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and law enforcement personnel to respond effectively to individuals impacted by opioid use and co-occurring behavioral health conditions. While a specific project has not yet been selected, the initiative aligns with the approved uses under the Florida Opioid Settlement Agreement to hire or train behavioral health workers in support of first responder-led interventions. The project is expected to support training and coordination efforts for first responders involved in pre-arrest diversion programs, post-overdose response teams, or similar strategies. The overarching goal is to reduce recidivism, connect individuals to treatment and recovery services, and improve outcomes for those at risk of opioid-related harm through early and compassionate intervention.
- **Service Provider/ Vendor:** TBD
- **Hiring:** TBD
- **Capital Outlay:** N/A
- **Vehicle Purchases:** TBD

### **Schedule B: Approved Uses**

The following areas will be funded in alignment with Schedule B:

#### **2. Support People in Treatment & Recovery**

(see letter B of Schedule B: Approved Uses)

- **Amount Encumbered:** \$200,000

- **Description:** Funding has been encumbered for a future initiative aimed at providing behavioral health support to Marion County employees and their families experiencing co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, including opioid use disorder (OUD). While a provider has not yet been selected, the proposed project aligns with approved uses under the Florida Opioid Settlement Agreement, specifically focusing on hiring or training behavioral health professionals to expand evidence-based support services.

This project will enhance access to confidential counseling, peer-support, recovery case management, and other wrap-around services tailored to the unique needs of public employees coping with the effects of opioid and substance misuse. The goal is to foster a healthier, more resilient workforce by addressing behavioral health challenges with a compassionate, comprehensive care approach.

- **Service Provider/ Vendor:** TBD
- **Hiring:** One Mental Health Provider
- **Capital Outlay:** N/A
- **Vehicle Purchases:** TBD

### **Total Funding & Distribution**

Funding amounts outlined in the core strategies and approved uses above may be reallocated to one of the other specified core strategies/approved uses based on need.

- **Total Settlement Funds:** \$1,301,056
- **Schedule A Allocation:** \$513,028
- **Schedule B Allocation:** \$200,000
- **Funds Available (for priorities outlined in plan):** \$522,976
- **Administrative Funds:** \$65,052

### **Implementation Timeline (July 2025 – June 2026)**

As of now, funds have been formally encumbered for both initiatives outlined above but no specific providers have been selected. The implementation phase is anticipated to begin in FY25-26, with a strong focus on identifying and engaging service providers that demonstrate the capacity to meet the priorities outlined in the Florida Opioid Settlement Agreement. Additionally, in FY25-26 Marion County will also work to determine how best to prioritize the remaining “funds available”.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Once the opioid settlement funds are awarded, our county plans to put in place a monitoring process to help ensure the funds are used appropriately. This may include regular reports, financial reviews, and checks to track progress toward the goals of the settlement plan.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, Marion County's Opioid Abatement Plan represents a committed, strategic effort to address the opioid crisis with thoughtful, evidence-based initiatives tailored to our community's unique needs. As we move forward with awarding funds and implementing key programs, we remain dedicated to transparency, accountability, and collaboration to maximize the impact of these resources.