



Foundation for Wellness: Guiding Principles for Mental Health, Suicide Prevention, and Substance Use in the Connecticut Construction Industry

The construction industry is filled with talented, hardworking people who build America and have incredible pride in the craft. It also faces a crisis. An estimated 83% of people in construction, in both craft and management, experience some level of behavioral health issues, such as mental health and/or substance use disorders. Suicide claims the lives of over 6,000 construction workers annually, and it's estimated that there are 1.6 million suicide attempts each year. The likelihood of someone dying from an opioid-related overdose in construction is 6 times more than any other industry.

Our industry has come together time and again to shore each other up and bring out the best in one another. The purpose of this document is to create cohesiveness and provide direction for the people and organizations seeking to address the mental health and opioid crises in construction by supporting initiatives that improve culture and reduce stigma. These measures ensure that those who need help can access it—knowing they'll be able to return to work—while employers benefit from safer, healthier, and more productive workers and job sites.

By signing this MOU, your organization commits to:



Safe and Stigma-Free Workplaces

Provide a safe workplace where:

- Mental and physical wellness are prioritized.
- Resources for support are accessible without shame.
- Everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- Everyone can participate in identifying and resolving safety, health, and issues affecting wellbeing.
- Recovery is supported and a pathway to return to work is established.



Support Awareness Campaigns and Events

Support and actively participate in:

- Mental Health Awareness Month (May)
- Construction Safety Week (May)
- Construction Suicide Prevention Week (September)
- Toolbox talk series addressing lifestyle issues (Winter)



Raise Awareness and Implement Training

Conduct, recognize, or procure mental health, suicide, and substance use disorder awareness and prevention training, including:

- General awareness training for all workers through orientations, toolbox talks, and standdowns.
- Importance of maintaining confidentiality and privacy when supporting workers.
- Implement and promote a Naloxone at work program
- Procure and provide Naloxone for First Aid stations
- Promote www.ANSW.org for free Naloxone at work program materials and worker training.



Provide Resources

Provide access to mental health, suicide, and substance use prevention resources, including:

- 988 hotline materials
- NHBT Member Assistance Programs (MAP)
RIBCTC "We've Got Your Back" program
(example to be used by NHBT)
- Employer Assistance Programs (EAP)
- Ensure that these resources are known to all management and peers and incorporate into all training.



Ensure Safe Practices

- Conduct regular project walkthroughs with senior executives and worker representatives to promote interaction with trades about safety and health on the jobsite.
- Create opportunities for workers to have a positive impact on identifying and resolving safety and health issues.
- Provide recognition for safe work practices.



Support Peer Programs

Recognize and support peer support networks through:

- Direct sponsorship and / or subcontractor procurement of training and support networks.
- The recognition of peers as important connectors and resources.
- The notification of building trade recovery program leaders of a substance use and or mental health workplace incident.



Continue Improving

- Annually review and renew this MOU for continuous improvement in safety and mental health, suicide, and substance use disorder awareness and prevention.
- Evaluate current standing using the attached Self-Evaluation Scorecard (see Appendix A) and implement a plan to achieve a higher score by the next self-evaluation. Aim to evaluate on a regular basis (i.e., every 6 months or once per year).

SIGNATORIES

The signatories to this MOU agree to work in partnership in pursuit of the above objectives.

It is not intended by the signatories that this MOU be a binding document, but rather a statement of the signatories' understanding and public commitment to achieving excellence in occupational safety and health performance within the construction industry.

BY AND BETWEEN

List Organizations and Principals:

[illegible]

All resources outlined within the above MOU.

Provider	Email, web address, or phone	Resource Description
988 Lifeline	988 Lifeline Home	Call, text, or chat during a crisis
Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	Printed Materials	Order stickers, magnets, posters, and more to promote 988
NHBT (CT BT)	Website for member assistance program information	The MAP contact information and recovery meeting information for all building trade unions. Hard hat decals / banners with QR code
Construction Safety Week	Construction Safety Week Home	Annual re-commitment to and celebration of sending all construction workers home safely. Held annually in May
Construction Suicide Prevention Week	Construction Suicide Prevention	Raise awareness about the unique challenges construction workers face. Held annually in September
Mental Health Awareness Month	Mental Health America	Promote mental wellness across the country. Held annually in May
The Alliance for Naloxone Safety in the Workplace (ANSW)	ANSW Home Page	Free promotional information, written Naloxone at work policy, Naloxone training, FAQs

Resources that were not outlined within the MOU but still serve important and unique purposes for mental health awareness and substance use disorder prevention within the construction industry.

Provider	Email, web address, or phone	Resource Description
BuildWell Health	Annalynn Barnett abarnett@buildwellhealth.com	Telehealth program combining expert coaching with an online platform for mental health and recovery first aid training
Wellness Workdays	Debra Wein (781) 741-5483	Wellness Workdays
The Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR)	Foundations for Safety Leadership	2-hour online leadership course
Forefront Suicide Prevention Center	Forefront Suicide Prevention Center Training	1-hour online course (free)
Associated General Contractors (AGC) of America	AGC Home	Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Course (free for AGC members)

Appendix A

Self-Evaluation Scorecard

Category	Commitment	Score (0–3)	Comments/Notes
 Safe & Stigma-Free Workplaces	Support wellness, dignity, and nonjudgmental access to help		
	Provide clear return-to-work protocols for those seeking support		
	Engage all workers in identifying safety and well-being issues		
 Support Awareness Campaigns and Events	Engage in industry events (Recovery Week, Mental Health Month, etc.)		
 Provide Resources	Provide 988 crisis hotline information, Narcan, and other site-level resources and ensure they are known to all management and peers		
 Raise Awareness and Implement Training	Deliver general awareness training and information on how to access and use Building Futures resources		
	Always maintain worker privacy and confidentiality when possible		
 Support Peer/Ally Programs	Recognize and support peer and ally programs as important connectors and resources		
	Institute a notification protocol to provide support for workers and facilitate care		
 Ensure Safe Practices	Conduct regular executive walkthroughs and worker safety talks		
	Create opportunities for workers to have a positive impact and provide recognition for safe practices		
 Continue Improving	Review and renew MOU and practices bi-annually or annually		
TOTAL SCORE	/39		

Individual Item Scoring Guide

- 0 – Not started
- 1 – In planning
- 2 – In progress
- 3 – Fully implemented

Total Score

- 0-10 points – Needs work
- 11-18 points – Improving
- 19-28 points – Good
- 29-36 points – Excellent