# **Policy Title: Priorities and Committee Establishment**

# Section I. Background

States, cities, counties and tribes are receiving funds from opioid manufacturers, pharmaceutical distributors, and pharmacies as a result of litigation brought against these companies for their role in the opioid epidemic that has claimed more than half a million lives over the past two decades.[[1]](#footnote-2)

This (memo/ policy brief/document) outlines a proposal for the use of the opioid settlement monies received by the (SUBDIVISION NAME). Currently, [subdivision] has received $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from these settlements, part of the $238 million Maine will receive by 2038. Funding amounts will change annually, but [subdivision] is expected to receive an average of $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ per year.

This proposal includes the establishment of a committee and sets (SUBDIVISION’S) priorities for funding. Establishing this committee and setting the groundwork for funding priorities is the first step in allocating and spending the opioid settlement funds responsibly, using a collaborative process.

# Section II. Spending Priorities

A community-centered approach is crucial to ensure opioid settlement monies are used effectively and meaningfully. By involving individuals with lived experience in the decision-making process, the committee can leverage their unique insights and firsthand knowledge to make informed decisions that genuinely reflect the needs of the community. This inclusive strategy fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment among community members, which is critical for successful capacity and infrastructure building to address substance use disorders. (SUBDIVISION NAME) aims to prioritize opioid settlement fund spending under four pillars that offer a multifaceted approach: Prevention, Harm Reduction, Treatment, and Recovery. Each pillar targets a different aspect of the crisis, creating a comprehensive strategy that increases the likelihood of long-term success.

**Prevention** refers to activities and programs that work to educate and support communities and individuals to prevent the use and misuse of drugs and the development of substance use disorders.

**Harm Reduction** is an evidence-based approach that refers to policies, programs, and practices that aim to minimize the negative effects of drug use.

**Treatment** issafe withdrawal management from substances, and therapy to develop skills for staying safe and sober.

**Recovery** is a holistic journey where people improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive towards full potential.

This holistic approach ensures that opioid settlement monies are used to increase community capacity and build critical services across the full continuum of care and address the opioid crisis at all stages, from prevention through recovery. By prioritizing these speciﬁc areas, we can ensure that the settlement monies are directed towards targeted, impactful initiatives.

# Section III. Committee Composition

The committee will be made up of individuals that will represent the diverse needs, strengths, and experiences of the SUBDIVISION community related to substance use. This ensures that the allocation of funds is guided by firsthand knowledge and insights. If a grant application process is used, it is recommended that anyone serving on the committee be prohibited from submitting a grant application on behalf of any organization they work for or serve on the board of, to ensure there are no conflicts of interest.

The committee should include: (ADD/SUBTRACT MEMBERS; CUSTOMIZE AS NEEDED)

* A Member of the (ENTITY; i.e., city council, town council, steering committee, etc), who serves as the Chair of the Committee;
* A person who identities as someone with personal experience of opioid use disorder;
* A person who has lost a partner, spouse, or other close family member from opioid overdose death;
* A medical professional with experience working in substance use disorder treatment;
* A person who actively holds a role as a liaison (who is not a law enforcement officer) between local law enforcement and residents living in recovery or with active opioid use disorder;
* A person with expertise in recovery housing;
* A person with experience in the field of primary prevention and/or expertise in youth programming;
* A person working in the field of harm reduction;

* The (City Manager/Town Manager/County Official) or their designee (ex officio).

**Responsibilities:** The committee will be responsible for overseeing the use and spending of the opioid settlement dollars for (SUBVDIVISION NAME).

# Section IV. Action Requested

Approval of the proposal to allocate the opioid settlement monies according to the outlined pillars and priorities, and the establishment of a committee of individuals including those with lived experience to oversee the allocation and spending of these funds.

1. [https://www.maine.gov/ag/docs/Principles for the use of Funds from the Opioid Litigation.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/ag/docs/Principles%20for%20the%20use%20of%20Funds%20from%20the%20Opioid%20Litigation.pdf) accessed 10.31.2024 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)