

FAQs

CANADA



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FIRE FIGHTERS



ADVANCED RECOVERY
SYSTEMS
an advanced approach to patient care

IAFF Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery

What is the IAFF Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery?

The first of its kind for the fire service and the International Association of Fire Fighters – the IAFF Center of Excellence provides a highly specialized program exclusively for IAFF members and treats post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other behavioral health issues in a 64-bed, residential setting. With the help of Advanced Recovery Systems (ARS), a leader in behavioral healthcare management, the Center of Excellence (“Center”) is staffed by a highly experienced and specialized team to treat the complex needs of fire fighters seeking recovery from PTSD and co-occurring addictions. The Center is also used to train and educate peer support members and conduct additional research on PTSD.

Why did the IAFF create the Center of Excellence?

A staggering number of IAFF members deal with various mental health and stress-related conditions, while the services for peer counseling and comprehensive treatment are limited. Members are struggling with PTSD, depression, anxiety and substance abuse and want trusted treatment professionals who understand the culture and the unique pressures of the job. The Center of Excellence offers evidence-based treatment for successful recovery that will help members return to the job as quickly as possible. Equally important, the Center of Excellence is a safe haven for talking with other fire fighters who face or have overcome similar challenges. No existing treatment facility provides this and the IAFF has filled this critical void with a premier location that treats the special needs of members.

Does the IAFF own and run this center?

While the IAFF does not own or have any financial interest in the Center of Excellence, the IAFF provides guidance to ensure that the program, treatment and services are tailored to the unique needs of members. The IAFF General President has appointed an Advisory Committee, comprised of trusted members and behavioral health experts who have been instrumental in the overall design and development of the Center and provide recommendations to ARS to ensure members receive the highest quality of care.

Who is Advanced Recovery Systems?

Advanced Recovery Systems (ARS) is an integrated, behavioral healthcare management company dedicated to the treatment of mental health and substance abuse issues, with a network of treatment centers throughout the United States. ARS provides high-quality, client-centric treatment. The organization’s Chairman of the Board and CEO are actively involved in managing the Center as a partnership with the IAFF.

Where is the Center of Excellence located?

The Center is located outside of Washington, DC, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, USA. Given its proximity to airports in Baltimore and Washington, DC, members from across the U.S. and Canada can seek treatment.

Why should I go to the IAFF Center of Excellence?

The Center of Excellence is a one-of-a-kind treatment facility dedicated to fire fighters. Designed from the ground up, the Center offers comprehensive, best-practice treatment. Staff are experts on the types of trauma experienced by members, including post-traumatic stress, that are a result of a critical incident or the cumulative effect of trauma exposure. The serene, wooded campus provides an opportunity for members to focus on treatment and make recovery their number-one priority. ARS works to transition members to ongoing support once they return home, regardless of where they live.

What types of behavioral health problems does the Center address?

The Center offers intensive treatment for PTSD and other co-occurring clinical conditions, such as substance abuse, addiction, complicated grief, depression and anxiety.

What type of treatment is offered?

The Center offers multiple levels of treatment to meet members’ needs as they progress in their recovery, including:

- Detox
- Residential Inpatient
- Partial Hospitalization
- Intensive Outpatient
- Twelve-step meetings, available onsite

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What makes the Center of Excellence unique for fire fighters?

Treatment plans are developed to meet the needs of members seeking recovery from PTSD, substance abuse and co-occurring behavioral health issues and the Center is staffed by clinicians who understand the fire service culture. Because members feel most comfortable talking to other fire fighters, there is a commitment to include members of the IAFF peer support program in education and research at the Center. The facility sits on a 15-acre campus designed to support fire fighters as they seek treatment and recovery and includes a state-of-the-art gym and other features that encourage physical activity (including a pool, walking trails and a basketball court) for members to continue with their fitness regimen as a way to help with their recovery and prepare them to return to the job.

Are non-fire personnel also accepted as patients?

The IAFF Center of Excellence is solely for IAFF members.

How is post-traumatic stress be addressed?

The Center uses evidence-based approaches to address post-traumatic stress, including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Cognitive Process Therapy (CPT) and exposure therapy. The Center also offers other activities that can assist with recovery, including yoga, meditation and art therapies.

How long will I need to stay?

The length of stay is driven by the treatment plan. Typically, treatment lasts four to six weeks, but may be more or less depending on the individual member. Staff is committed to providing the highest level of care and design treatment plans that meet clinical needs of the patient. After-care services should continue following a stay at the Center and are coordinated by facility staff prior to discharge.

Will the WSIB permit treatment?

Yes, the the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board will permit appropriate clients to seek treatment at the Center of Excellence. In order to coordinate an admission, employees or retirees must work with their treating healthcare professional, employer and Center of Excellence intake staff to determine program suitability.

Before a client is approved, each municipality will individually contract with ARS Executive Vice President Jon Eisenberg on financing details. He can be reached at **954-235-3922** or **JEisenberg@AdvancedRecoverySystems.com**.

Will the WSIB's administration fee be applied?

The standard administration fee for WSIB claims (assessed as a percentage of the treatment costs) will NOT apply to the Center of Excellence, potentially yielding a lucrative cost savings for the municipality.

This does not apply to lost wage benefits, for which the WSIB's fees will be regularly assessed to the employer.

Will anyone else know about my treatment?

The Center of Excellence is committed to compliance with Canadian law regarding healthcare confidentiality. Per the Center's agreement with the WSIB, assessment findings and proposed treatment plans are to be sent to the WSIB and communicated to the employer as outlined under the WSIA. During treatment, as individuals progress through the program, the Center of Excellence will supply an updated treatment plan to the worker's community treating healthcare professional and the WSIB at each stage of progression. In preparation for discharge, the Center of Excellence will provide the WSIB with recommendations for outpatient services in Ontario and all relevant medical reports. These stipulations vary from our guidelines for clients from the United States, for whom Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) laws are applied.

To learn more or to coordinate an admission, call our 24/7 admissions center at 855-900-8437