



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: Tuesday, April 7, 2026.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. Contact **Gage Harter** with any questions.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Powhatan County

Program Title: Mobile Outreach

Program Category: Health & Human Services

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Will Hagy

Title: County Administrator

Signature: 

Powhatan County Mobile Outreach Program

Executive Summary

The Powhatan County Mobile Outreach Program expands access to substance use and mental health resources through community-based engagement in a rural area with historically limited services. Designed to reduce barriers such as transportation, stigma, and fragmented systems of care, the program coordinates local systems to deliver outreach, education, harm reduction, and direct linkage to treatment and recovery supports.

Funded through a five-year Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) cooperative grant, the initiative began with a one-year planning phase to assess community needs and build a cross-sector steering committee. Full implementation was launched in FY25 with dedicated staff and ongoing collaboration across County departments and community partners. By aligning efforts across public safety, health, social services, and the legal system, the program maximizes every point of contact as an opportunity to connect individuals to care.

Early outcomes demonstrate expanded service reach, increased naloxone distribution and training, and the development of innovative partnerships that integrate recovery support into multiple community touchpoints. By leveraging grant funding, cross-sector partnerships, and community-driven strategies, the program shows how local governments can expand access to care, reduce stigma, and achieve meaningful, lasting improvements in outcomes for individuals and families affected by substance use and mental health challenges.

Need and Context

As a rural community, the County faces significant challenges in accessing substance use and mental health services, including limited providers, transportation barriers, and persistent stigma. Historically, the County has lacked coordinated response across systems, resulting in gaps in care and missed opportunities for early intervention.

The Mobile Outreach Program was developed to address these challenges by meeting individuals where they are - both geographically and emotionally, while fostering a more unified, community-wide approach to behavioral health and recovery support.

Program Implementation

The Mobile Outreach program was made possible through a five-year cooperative grant from the Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA), in partnership with neighboring jurisdictions. In FY24, the County utilized a separate one-year planning grant (through OAA) to cooperatively procure a consulting firm, Rulo Strategies, who facilitated a comprehensive needs assessment, conducted community surveys, and established a steering committee of key stakeholders, including County department leadership and community sector representatives. This contract ensured that other jurisdictions could acquire this service efficiently, bypassing a traditional procurement process.

In FY25, the County hired two dedicated Mobile Outreach staff members; an Outreach Coordinator and a Peer Recovery Specialist, to operationalize the program.

Which included:

- Community-based outreach, education, harm reduction initiatives
- Collaboration of key partners in the recovery space

- Quarterly Recovery Partners (Leadership) meetings
 - Formerly “Steering Committee” to guide strategy and assess ongoing system-level needs
- Monthly Recovery Partners (Frontline) meetings
 - To inform leadership efforts and strengthen coordination at the service delivery level

All program costs including staffing, technology, marketing, vehicle, training, wrap-around support, harm reduction supplies, and naloxone are currently covered through OAA funding, without utilizing any taxpayer dollars.

Results and Impact

The Mobile Outreach Program has delivered measurable results by expanding access to care, reducing overdose risk, and strengthening a coordinated, community-wide response to substance use. To date, 925 individuals have been served, and 466 received support accessing mental health, substance use, and recovery support; demonstrating effective engagement and linkage to care. Additionally, 500 individuals have been trained in evidence-based and evidence-informed practices, increasing the community’s ability to understand, recognize and respond to behavioral health needs and overdose crises.

Innovative harm reduction strategies have significantly improved access to life-saving resources. The program has distributed 1,606 doses of naloxone, 3,389 fentanyl and other drug test strips, and 2,657 additional harm reduction tools. Strategically placed community distribution boxes - located across all County-owned properties and select private

businesses provide consistent, low-barrier access, reaching individuals who may not engage in traditional systems of care.

Cross-sector collaboration through the following new programs has strengthened real-time intervention and system coordination.

- "Leave Behind Bags" in partnership with Fire & Rescue, delivers immediate recovery tools and resource information at critical moments during emergency response.
- "Safe Sharps Disposal" a collaboration with the Virginia Department of Health and Fire & Rescue, resulted in the County's first safe sharps disposal initiative, reducing public health risks and improving community safety.

Strategic partnerships are also proactively addressing root causes and expanding pathways to support through:

- "Compassion Cabinets," housed at the Community Services Board and Department of Social Services, increase access to essential items, support stability and reduce barriers to care.
- "First-Offender Program" was supported by the Community Services Board and Commonwealth's Attorney's Office. The program supports an initiative that diverts individuals toward treatment and recovery, reducing justice system involvement and promoting long-term outcomes.

Collectively, these efforts have increased community awareness, reduced stigma, and improved coordination among agencies, creating a more responsive and supportive system of care.

Why This Program Deserves an Award

The Mobile Outreach Program is a model of innovation in rural public health and community collaboration. It reflects a shared commitment across County departments to address substance use and mental health challenges through prevention, harm reduction, and recovery support.

What sets this program apart is its integrated, whole-system approach. By aligning efforts across public safety, health, social services, and the legal system, the program maximizes every point of contact as an opportunity to connect individuals to care. It not only addresses immediate needs but also builds long-term infrastructure for a more coordinated and compassionate response.

Through strategic use of grant funding, strong partnerships, and a focus on community-driven solutions, the program demonstrates how local governments can effectively expand access to care, reduce stigma, and improve outcomes for individuals and families impacted by substance use and mental health challenges.