

# RECOVERY ROAD BLOCKS



**Where a person lives influences a lot in their life. This includes access to substances and outpatient recovery services. So if you need treatment, what can this mean for you?**

You face environmental risk factors for addiction every day. Your neighborhood, social group and even the state you live in affects you. And when you need help with addiction and recovery, your environment matters. Recovery is possible no matter your surroundings. First, we'll review how a person's environment affects addiction and recovery. Then we'll look at how outpatient treatment can help.

## **How a person's environment influences addiction and recovery**

People often learn about acceptable behavior from the people they spend time with. Also, a person's physical location can either support or limit their choices. Here are some ways a person's environment can affect addiction and recovery.

### **Social environment**

A person's social environment can trigger a person to crave or seek substances. It can impact your risk of developing addiction and your recovery journey. In treatment, a person learns to look closely at their social groups. They learn to stay connected to people with a positive influence.

### **Family relationships**

The family environment has a powerful impact as well. Siblings and spouses had a strong influence in one Swedish study. Also, growing up in a home with addiction can create painful family dynamics and sometimes lead to substance misuse.

### **The state a person lives in**

A person's access to treatment can vary depending on the state they live in. The largest number of rehab centers are concentrated in a handful of states. California, New York, Illinois and Florida have had the most facilities over the last ten years.

Urban treatment centers also may have more supportive services than rural clinics. In states with less population, long travel times and fewer options can make treatment more challenging.

## Local region

Customs and traditions vary in every region of the country. They can affect what a person believes about themselves and the world. Recovery can be stressful, even with good support. It can be more difficult in an area where it's common to socialize with alcohol.

## Safe neighborhood

A study of mothers in recovery showed the impact a safe neighborhood had on recovery. Mothers rated how safe they thought their community was. The safer they felt, the better chance they had of long-term recovery.

## How environments cause positive or negative impacts on recovery

Everyone has a unique way of reacting to their surroundings. Some may be more resilient, bouncing back from negativity and find a positive path. Others may face the same stressors, but they don't have the skills or support to cope as well.



One study showed other impacts from a person's environment. People who lived on their own were more likely to complete treatment. Having more education and a full-time job had a similar effect.

Two people may come from the same neighborhood and social circle. But both may react differently to the same environment. The person with more independence may rise above negative influences more easily.

## How outpatient treatment supports recovery despite a person's environment

Sometimes a person's environment isn't ideal. Outpatient rehab can help fill some of the gaps that make recovery harder.

Recovery can be difficult at times. When stressors come up, a person needs more support and structure. That's where outpatient treatment becomes a safety net. Positive people in their life can provide support and guidance.

Also, outpatient programs include structure. When a person struggles, they have a path to follow and people to connect with.