

# 2023 SAMHSA SOAR MARCH E-NEWS

## 15,000 Successful Completions

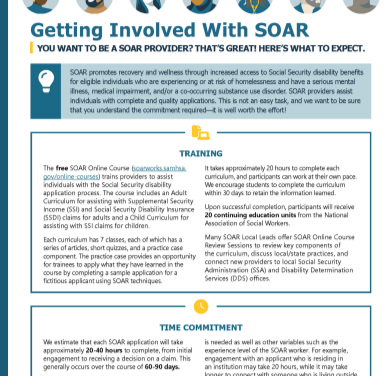
The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center is proud to share that 15,000 people have successfully completed the SOAR Online Course: Adult Curriculum! This number represents countless hours of hard work by caseworkers to complete the training and speaks to their amazing commitment to assist the most vulnerable in our communities.

The impact of this effort is partly measured in [SOAR outcomes](#), which are collected in the [Online Application Tracking \(OAT\) system](#). Entering outcomes in OAT shows the impact you are making in your community, state, and the nation. Strong outcomes can lead to additional funding for SOAR-dedicated staff and serve as an incentive for other agencies to become involved. We encourage everyone who has passed the SOAR Online Course to [register for OAT](#) and regularly track your outcomes!

## New SOAR Resource

Gaining buy-in for SOAR and understanding the expectations of becoming involved in the process is a key part of implementing and expanding the SOAR initiative.

The new [Getting Involved With SOAR infographic](#) provides a comprehensive overview of the time commitment and expectations associated with taking the SOAR Online Course, completing applications utilizing the SOAR Critical Components, and tracking outcomes in OAT. It also highlights how the SOAR process can benefit your community. We invite you to share this resource!



## March Spotlight

### March Is National Social Work Month!

# SOCIAL WORK BREAKS BARRIERS

March is Social Work Month, and this year's theme is "[Social Work Breaks Barriers](#)." This month and all year we celebrate social workers who break barriers by helping people (including themselves) thrive. We're hoping social workers will take this theme to heart as we bring awareness to the awesome, empowering, life-changing work that social workers in SOAR programs do each and every day.

According to the [National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\) Code of Ethics](#), "Social Workers should challenge social injustice, respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person, help people in need, recognize the importance of human relationships and promote diversity, equity and inclusion..."

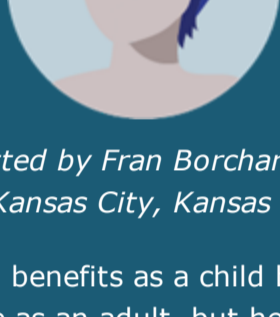
SOAR social workers are breaking down barriers by building up collaborations and walking alongside people experiencing or at risk of homelessness so they can see individuals and communities thrive. The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center is committed to creating [effective tools and resources](#) that empower SOAR providers to break barriers and navigate challenges experienced at both the direct practice and systems level.

We also recognize that breaking barriers requires managing your wellness. Self-care is not a trend, it's a lifestyle! Take a look at our [self-care webinar](#) for ideas on taking care of yourself so you can continue doing the hard work that you do.

"I participate in Permanent Supportive Housing and supporting those who experience chronic homelessness because at my core I believe in the capability and capacity for human growth and self-determination. I support those in our program and community who society as a whole has let down with every aspect of their lives; psychologically, socially, economically, and personally. I've witnessed individuals and families blossom, thrive, and achieve the knowledge and skillsets necessary to find the success, balance, and stability everyone deserves." -Anonymous

## See How SOAR Works

### Sharing Our Successes



The following SOAR success story was submitted by Fran Borchardt, LBSW, Certified SOAR Case Manager from Wyandot Behavioral Health Network in Kansas City, Kansas

Sean\* is a 25-year-old man who received SSI benefits as a child but lost them when he turned 18. His mother/legal guardian helped him apply twice as an adult, but he was denied both times. When I received his referral, I quickly realized why he had been denied. I had hardly any evidence to file a claim -- he only received case management services at our center, had never been hospitalized, and his medical records were more than two years old. When I asked if he had ever worked, Sean told me that he tried a total of 7 jobs in different fields, but he was unsuccessful at each job attempt. I gave some of our former-employer questionnaires to his guardian, and two weeks later, I received completed reports from one of our local grocery stores and one of our school districts where he had worked. Both employers made the same statement, "Sean cannot work full-time on an ongoing basis, and we would only take him back as a part-time worker if we can assure that someone is working with him 1:1 during the whole shift." These employers provided so much valuable information that I decided to file a claim based on these two documents. It worked! Sean was approved for SSI and SSDI benefits.

**Have a story of your own? [Submit your SOAR success!](#)**

\*Sharing Our Successes stories are edited for brevity and clarity. All beneficiary names have been changed to protect anonymity.

## SOAR Tip: Make Connections With SSA and DDS



Strong communication with our partners at the Social Security Administration (SSA) and Disability Determination Services (DDS) can make all the difference when it comes to decision times.

Don't be afraid to reach out to your SSA Homeless Coordinator or SSA SOAR Liaison to ask what they prefer when it comes to processing applications. (If you aren't sure who these SSA contacts are, your [SAMHSA SOAR TA Center Liaison](#) can help!) You can do the same with DDS! Find out if there are designated SOAR DDS Examiners in your state and reach out to them. Maintaining regular contact with DDS through phone calls and email will help ensure that your applications are being processed and DDS has the information needed to make a quick decision.

Check out our [resources](#) for collaborating with SSA and DDS!



## SOARING Over Lunch Conference Call

TODAY! March 14, 2023, 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET

The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center holds informal monthly calls designed to help support SOAR efforts across the country. [Read more about SOARING Over Lunch](#) and add it to your calendar.

## Federal Updates

### Social Security Administration Redesigns Website

On December 6, 2022, the Social Security Administration redesigned their website. The changes are intended to prioritize the customer experience by providing a clear user-friendly approach that helps users easily find what they need. Visitors can use interactive tools to:

- [Check eligibility for benefits](#)
- [Request a replacement Social Security Number \(SSN\) card](#)
- [Start an application for Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\)](#)
- [Apply for Social Security benefits and access many other online services](#)

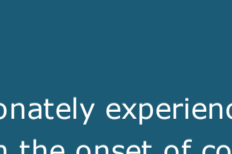
### Continuing Disability Review Report Now Available in my Social Security

Adult beneficiaries who do not have a representative payee can now complete the medical *Continuing Disability Review Report* (Form SSA-454) using their personal *my Social Security* account.

SSA periodically reviews the current medical condition of all people receiving disability benefits to determine if they continue to have a qualifying disability. Requests for updated disability reports are sent by mail. Eligible beneficiaries now have the option to either return the report by mail or complete the forms using their personal [my Social Security account](#). If eligible, the person can log in to their account and complete the *Continuing Disability Review Report* (Form SSA-454) and *Authorization to Disclose to Information to the Social Security Administration* (Form SSA-827). [Read more about the Continuing Disability Review process.](#)

## Partner Updates

### HHRC Webinar: Housing Supports for Older Adults Experiencing Homelessness



April 19, 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET

People experiencing homelessness disproportionately experience a high burden of chronic illness, substance use disorders, and mental illness, which hasten the onset of conditions associated with aging. This webinar will present an overview of factors impacting older adults experiencing homelessness and share strategies to support their housing needs. [Register for the HHRC Webinar!](#)

## SOAR Jobs



- **Maryland:** Health Care for the Homeless is seeking a Disability Assistance Outreach Specialist who will submit SSI/SSDI applications using the SOAR model for individuals with severe and chronic mental illness who are experiencing homelessness in Baltimore City.
- **Colorado:** Bayaud Enterprises is hiring a full-time Benefits Navigator to assist children and adults with disabilities in applying for and obtaining Social Security SSI/SSDI utilizing the SOAR model.
- **Virginia:** Northern Virginia Family Service is seeking a full-time Benefits Counselor II & SOAR Advocate to provide oversight of Public Entitlement Services and Benefits Counseling at NVFS, provide basic Public Benefits education to program staff, help eligible clients apply for SSI/SSDI using the SOAR model, and manage complex and/or difficult cases.

Learn more about these positions on the [SOARWorks website](#). Do you have a job posting you would like to share with the SOAR community? Please [submit it to the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center!](#)

## More From SOAR





[State Directory](#)

[Library & Tools](#)

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The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Technical Assistance (TA) Center is sponsored by SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

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