Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resources Overview

SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery) providers engage with a variety of people from various backgrounds, cultures, and beliefs that may be different than their own. SOAR applicants may be people of color who are experiencing homelessness and may be contending with many other factors, including substance use, poor health, limited education, past incarcerations and hospitalizations, low-level job skills, and limited work experience. Ensuring equity in SOAR program implementation requires providers to consider how implicit bias in any of these areas may contribute to disparities in how SOAR services are accessed by and delivered to diverse groups.

To facilitate equitable SOAR program implementation, the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center has created and revised resources to provide guidance and action steps that SOAR providers can implement in SOAR service delivery and resources that supervisors are encouraged to use to support them.
Check Out the SOAR DEI Resources Overview

As we all do our best to address the barriers associated with racism and inequity, we must accept the discomfort that comes with the effort to learn about ourselves, learn about each other, and grow to create an equitable environment for the people that we serve and to create a psychologically safe environment in which staff can work and thrive.

Remember, the way we show up to work is the way we do the work.

Reminder: Outcomes Reporting!

Demonstrate Your SOAR Impact!

REPORT YOUR

JULY 1, 2020 – JUNE 30, 2021

OUTCOMES!

Calling all SOAR providers! It’s almost time to report your 2021 SOAR outcomes. Get ahead of the game and log in to your SOAR Online Application Tracking (OAT) account today! We are counting SOAR-assisted Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) applications with decisions between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021.
Report your outcomes in the OAT system to demonstrate the power of the SOAR model. If you have questions, please reach out to your SOAR Liaison to help you through the process.

May Virtual SOAR Leadership Academy Recap

From May 11-13, 2021, the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center facilitated a Virtual SOAR Leadership Academy for SOAR Local Leads. There were 23 participants representing 14 states (Alabama, Arkansas, California, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Maryland, Maine, Nevada, New York, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin). Highlights of the meeting included enthusiastic participation, excitement for implementing or expanding SOAR in their state/community, and great discussion from attendees in a virtual setting. After reflecting on the 3 days of training, trainees shared the first steps they intend to take towards strengthening SOAR in their communities and the new partners with whom they will collaborate. We look forward to seeing our new Local Leads SOARing in their communities!

SOAR Jobs

Illinois

Legal Aid Chicago is seeking a full-time SOAR paralegal to assist individuals who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness in applying for disability benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA). Services will be targeted toward people currently and unnecessarily living in a nursing home, people living with HIV/AIDS, and Veterans.

Ohio

The Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) is seeking a full-time, self-motivated, experienced individual to provide coordination of training and technical assistance for SOAR Ohio program needs. This position will assist agencies and staff who are working with anyone experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, and/or preparing to exit institutions and living with mental illness and/or physical, developmental, and intellectual disabilities to successfully apply for SSI/SSDI using the SOAR model. The position is located in Columbus, Ohio, but COHHIO will be flexible about location for the first year.

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!
Sharing Our Successes

We love hearing from our committed SOAR Specialists, Local Leads, and State Leads about the difference that SOAR is making in the lives of applicants around the country. The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center is seeking SOAR success stories to feature in upcoming issues of our monthly SOAR e-newsletter. Do you have an applicant success story, a spotlight on collaboration, or a shoutout to a hardworking SOAR Specialist you’d like to share with us? Submit it to the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center, and your story could be featured in our next issue!

Submit Your SOAR Success

Events

SOARing Over Lunch Conference Calls

June 15, 2021, 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET

The next SOARing Over Lunch Conference Call will take place on June 15, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. ET! The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center hosts this series of informal monthly calls designed to help support SOAR efforts across the country. Participants can join to ask about any SOAR-related question they may have.

Add SOARing Over Lunch to Your Calendar

Get Social with the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center

Hear more about what SAMHSA SOAR is up to via @samhsagov on Twitter, @samhsa on Facebook, and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration on LinkedIn!
Federal Updates
SSA Issues an Emergency Message for Evaluating COVID
SSA is now evaluating the long-term effects of COVID-19 when determining disability. On April 16, 2021, SSA issued an Emergency Message (EM) with guidance to its employees for evaluating adult disability cases that include an allegation or diagnosis of COVID-19. Here are the key points of the EM as well as tips for SOAR practitioners to effectively represent SSI/SSDI applicants whose functioning is impacted by COVID-19. Read more of the EM here.