



**MHEC**  
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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 27, 2019

**TO:** Segmental Advisory Council  
Faculty Advisory Council  
Student Advisory Council

**FROM:** Dr. James D. Fielder, Secretary 

**SUBJECT:** Opioid Awareness Events: Relax and Reality Check (R&R)

Please circulate this memorandum to appropriate campus leadership and personnel.

This memorandum is to solicit interest from any group or organization that is interested in hosting an opioid awareness event, called a "Relax and Reality Check" event, on their campus between August 26 and September 9, 2019. Last year 2,114 family members, classmates, and neighbors in Maryland died from an opioid overdose. More than 88% of those deaths were fentanyl related.

In response to this statewide opioid crisis, the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), will support R&R events on college campuses with funding from the Maryland Department of Health, Behavioral Health Administration. The event must provide information on the dangers of fentanyl and naloxone training. Posters and pamphlets will be furnished by MHEC. The event should feature an alternative relaxation presentation, such as yoga, guided imagery & meditation, art therapy (finger-painting), planting, making stress balls, making PB&J's for a vulnerable population near your campus, or other de-stress activities.

MHEC will provide informational materials and funding needed to host your event. Additionally, Mr. Jimmy Paylor, a former Towson University football player and a recovering alcoholic and addict, has agreed to participate as a guest speaker for these events (pending his availability).

If you are interested in hosting and organizing a Relax and Reality Check event on your campus, please submit a statement of interest to Rhonda Wardlaw, Director of Communications, ([rhonda.wardlaw@maryland.gov](mailto:rhonda.wardlaw@maryland.gov)) by August 5, 2019. Please include the following information in your statement of interest:

- Date and time of event
- Location of event
- A brief abstract of the event (100-500 words)
- An itemized budget
- Primary point of contact (including name and contact information)

- Brief advertising plan

MHEC will review all submissions and notify campuses of available funds by August 9, 2019. The primary point of contact will be responsible for providing MHEC with a detailed invoice, prior to the event for approval, outlining the cost. MHEC will provide reimbursement after the event has occurred.

MHEC understands the immense need to increase awareness of the opioid epidemic and related information to all students. Therefore we request that all events are open to colleges and universities nearby by providing explicit invitations (e.g., through social media and other digital platforms) to surrounding campuses to participate.

If you are unable to host during the allotted time frame, please let us know and we will work to provide additional opportunities during the 2019-2020 academic year.