



PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST

DEFINITION: Current position is housed in our Behavioral Health Division with our Wellness Center Programs. A Peer Support Specialist provides peer-to-peer support services to help consumers access and navigate behavioral health services. Services are recovery-oriented, resiliency-focused, culturally appropriate and promote engagement, socialization, self-sufficiency, self-advocacy, and help to develop natural supports, as well as being trauma informed. Peer Support Specialist Services may include but are not limited to, promoting recovery, resiliency, and wellness; supporting identification of strengths; planning; finding and accessing community resources and services; and coaching, mentoring, facilitation, and/or education. Services may be provided individually or in a group.

ESSENTIAL JOB DUTIES:

Under direct supervision, the Peer Support Specialist may:

- Interpret and explain regulations and policies to clients;
- Assist with a limited caseload;
- Create a high level of trust with behavioral health clients;
- Assist individuals and families in accessing and utilizing formal and informal community support;
- Actively participate in the engagement process, providing reassurance that the circumstances and challenges that brought the individual and/or family into services will be handled confidentially
- Listen non-judgmentally to discover needs, strengths, and to identify people important to the client.
- Identify barriers that exist and help to remove them;
- Assist in addressing client needs through empathetic and supportive communication ;
- Provide assistance to clinicians, social workers, specialists and/or other professional staff with transportation of clients, collecting client documentation and coordinating communication with clients;
- Provide clerical support.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Education/Experience:

Must be at least 18 years of age and possess a high school diploma, equivalent degree, or higher. Must self-identify as a peer - an individual with lived experience accessing behavioral health services- and be willing to share their history as a person with lived experience.

Knowledge of:

- The concepts of hope, recovery, and wellness
- The role of advocacy.
- The role of consumers and family members.

- Psychiatric rehabilitation skills and service delivery, and addiction recovery principles, including defined practices.
- Cultural and structural competence trainings.
- Trauma-informed care.
- Group facilitation skills.
- Self-awareness and self-care.
- Co-occurring disorders of mental health and substance use.
- Conflict resolution
- Professional boundaries and ethics.
- Preparation for employment opportunities, including study and test-taking skills, application and résumé preparation, interviewing, and other potential requirements for employment.
- Safety and crisis planning.
- Navigation of, and referral to, other services.
- Documentation skills and standards
- Confidentiality
- Digital literacy

Ability to:

- Complete the 80-hour online training to meet certification requirements and receive certification, prior to providing services as a certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist
- Complete application for renewal of certification every 2 years
- Complete 20 hours of continuing education requirements annually
- Uphold the Inyo County Code of Conduct
- Promote the family members' voices and the articulation of their values in planning and evaluating behavioral health related challenges or concerns
- Support other family members as peers with a common background and history
- Disclose personal lived experiences of building resiliency in a way that focuses on and is beneficial to the individual, child, youth, family member, parent, or caregiver engaging in services
- Practice healthy disclosure about their own experience focused on providing hope and direction toward recovery and/or resiliency
- Practice honest and direct communication in a culturally relevant manner
- Demonstrate accountability in fulfilling commitments.
- Understand, encourage, and empower self-advocacy.
- Recognize the importance of supportive relationships and community in wellness, recovery and resiliency and encourage persons to identify and develop natural supports.

Typical Physical Requirements: While performing the essential functions of this job class, the employee is regularly required to: use hands and fingers to operate a vehicle and a variety of office equipment; possess flexibility and endurance to sit, stand, walk, bend, squat, climb, kneel, twist, and reach; talk and hear clearly and concisely to communicate with general public, clients, supervisors, and fellow employees on a continuous basis; regularly lift and/or carry and/or move objects weighing up to 10 pounds, and is occasionally lift and/or carry and/or move objects up to 50 lbs.

Typical Working Conditions:

Assigned work is performed in an office and occasionally in the outdoor environment. Incumbent will have continuous contact with clients, County staff, management, general public and outside organizations/agencies.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Must demonstrate completion of an 80-hour CalMHSA-approved training program for Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists and must successfully pass the state-approved Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification exam within 180 days of beginning employment and prior to providing services as a certified MediCal Peer Support Specialist.

Must have a strong dedication to recovery. Must agree, in writing, to adhere to the California Department of Health Care Services Code of Ethics for Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists in California.

Must be able to travel, either alone or with clients, within Inyo County routinely in the course of work, and occasionally travel outside Inyo County in the course of work; may be required to work flexible hours including evenings and weekends on some occasions; must possess a valid California driver's license; must successfully complete pre-employment background investigation and physical examination. Consistent attendance is an essential function of the position.

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