

County of Humboldt Job Specification
PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST I/II
Classification 0754A/B



DEFINITION

Under immediate (I level) and general (II level) supervision, provides peer-to-peer support services for clients and their family members and/or caregivers who receive behavioral health services; assists in developing and coordinating activities, programs and resources which directly support clients in achieving wellness and recovery oriented goals; conducts outreach to clients, family members, and/or caregivers and the community; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives immediate supervision (I level) and general supervision (II level) from assigned supervisory or management personnel. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Peer Support Specialist I: This is the entry-level classification in the Peer Support Specialist series. Initially under close supervision, incumbents learn and perform routine peer support tasks. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied, complex, and difficult; close supervision and frequent review of work lessen as an incumbent demonstrates skill to perform the work independently. Positions at this level usually perform most of the duties required of the positions at the Peer Support Specialist II level but are not expected to function at the same skill level and exercise less independent discretion and judgment in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is supervised while in progress and fits an established structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedures are explained in detail as they arise.

Peer Support Specialist II: This is the journey-level classification in the Peer Support Specialist series. Positions at this level are distinguished from the Peer Support Specialist I by the performance of the full range of duties as assigned, working independently, and exercising judgment and initiative. Positions at this level receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit.

This classification is distinguished from the Senior Peer Support Specialist in that the latter performs the most complex work assigned to the series, including providing technical and functional direction and training to lower-level staff.

Positions in the Peer Support Specialist class series are flexibly staffed. Positions at the II level are typically filled by advancement from the I level after gaining the knowledge, skill, certification, and experience which meet the qualifications for, and after demonstrating the ability to perform the work of, the higher-level classification.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignment of different positions.

Some duties, knowledge, skills, and abilities may be performed in a learning capacity for entry-level (I Level) positions.

- Provides peer-to-peer support services which include, but are not limited to, monitoring, informing, supporting, assisting and empowering clients who directly or indirectly receive behavioral health services, as well as their family members and/or caregivers.
- Provides outreach to peer clients to engage them in services and overcome barriers to participation in behavioral health services.
- Assists in the coordination and development of support services; provides information on community resources available for services provided by the County and the community.
- Assists peer clients and/or family members in tracking and implementing recovery and wellness goals; offers support, encouragement and hope; models effective coping and self-help strategies to targeted populations; advocates on behalf of peer and family members as necessary.
- Accompanies peer clients to meetings and appointments to support their self-advocacy and facilitate better communication with service providers.
- Serves as mentor to teach and show peer clients and family members how to function more independently and in finding community resources; assists with access/linkage to community resources such as housing, transportation, education and employment.
- Serves as a role model to build and sustain connections and relationships with peer clients and the community.
- Assists peer clients in a wide variety of daily living activities, such as completing applications and forms, providing transportation, and navigating support service systems.
- Participates in production and/or distribution of support and educational materials and in training activities; conducts orientation sessions for center or program events and services.
- Attends meetings and workshops to gain further knowledge and skills to better serve peer clients and the community; serves as a peer representative to program activities and meetings.
- Assists with administrative and clerical tasks as assigned; maintains files and records.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

QUALIFICATIONS

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge and ability required.

Knowledge of:

- Operations and services provided through a peer support program.
- Behavioral health issues within targeted population groups.
- Principles and practices of building and maintaining strong relationships and connections to peers.
- Program policies and procedures.

- Applicable state and federal laws governing assigned services, including those related to confidentiality.
- Community resources and service agencies, including both private and other public agencies.
- Basic needs and challenges for individuals and families accessing behavioral health services, including cultural barriers.
- Community socio-economic and cultural demographics.
- Methods and techniques of providing outreach services to the community.
- Methods and techniques of communicating program services to a diverse community.
- Principles and practices for providing effective public service and maintaining positive working relationships with employees, public officials, community partners, and members of the public.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.

Ability to:

- Provide peer and mentoring services to peer clients and their families/caregivers.
- Provide advocacy on behalf of the client, promote self-advocacy, resource navigation and referrals for services, and collaboration with others providing support to the client, family, and/or caregivers.
- Provide a safe and welcoming environment for peer clients and their families to learn coping mechanisms and problem-solving skills in order to help clients achieve desired outcomes.
- Through coaching and support, inspire hope and confidence in peer clients and encourage participation in behavioral health treatment.
- Provide structured, non-clinical therapeutic activities to promote recovery, wellness, self-advocacy, relationship enhancement, development of natural supports, self-awareness and values, and the maintenance of community living skills.
- Provide basic de-escalation and emotional regulation interventions and support to individuals in distress.
- Understand the socio-economic and cultural differences in a diverse community and how they impact peer client behavior.
- Work as a member of a team to deliver effective program services.
- Maintain confidentiality of information received when providing services.
- Demonstrate strong active listening skills.
- Maintain files and records.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Minimum Qualifications:

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

Equivalent to the completion of the twelfth (12th) grade.

and

Peer Support Specialist I: Eligibility to apply for certification as a Peer Support Specialist per California Welfare and Institutions Code section 14045.12. by self-identifying as having experience with the process of recovery from a mental illness or substance use disorder, either as a consumer of these services or as the parent, caregiver or family member of a consumer.

Peer Support Specialist II: In addition to the above, one (1) year of experience equivalent to the County's classification of Peer Support Specialist I.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Must possess a valid US driver's license upon date of application. Must obtain California driver's license following hire date per California DMV regulations.
- Must obtain and maintain certification as a Peer Support Specialist by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) prior to hire or advancement to the II level.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

- Mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; frequent standing in work areas and walking between work areas may be required; occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information; ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 25 pounds.
- Vision to read printed materials and a computer screen.
- Hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone.
- Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter keyboard, or calculator and to operate standard office equipment.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

- Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to potentially hazardous physical substances.
- Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Some departments may require pre-employment screening measures before an offer of employment can be made (i.e. background screening, physical examination, etc.).
- Must be willing to work evening, nights, and/or on-call shifts as needed.