



Pennsylvania Peer Support Coalition

CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFIED PEER SPECIALISTS

Certified Peer Specialists must receive 18 hours of continuing education per year. Twelve of those 18 hours must be specifically focused on recovery or peer support. The other six hours can be on other mental-health related topics.

Continuing education trainings do not need to have CEU's (continuing education units) attached. The training presenters do not need to have any specific qualifications. Trainings may be in-person trainings or webinars. The training should have a presenter and learning objectives, and it should be relevant to mental health.

Visit the [Continuing Education Resources](#) page for more information about some good sources of continuing education for peer specialists.

DOCUMENTING / VERIFYING CONTINUING EDUCATION

To document that you have received your required training, you should keep any certificates of completion that you get from trainings you attend. The certificate does not need to say that it counts towards your Certified Peer Specialist continuing education requirements. Each employer has a unique procedure to keep training records. It's important to check with your supervisor about your organization's training and documentation requirements.

If you attend a training that does not offer a certificate of completion, you should keep any materials that you did get from the training (handouts, training overview, or the workshop description). Then get your supervisor's signature and date on those materials indicating that you attended. For example, if you attend a webinar, you would save the webinar announcement and any handouts. Then you would have your supervisor sign and date on the webinar announcement that you attended.

Currently, only Certified Peer Specialists working in Peer Support Services Medicaid-billable programs will have their continuing education hours verified. When the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) comes to a Peer Support Services program to review that program's performance, OMHSAS will check to ensure that all the Certified Peer Specialists working in that program have received continuing education.

Certified Peer Specialists who do not work in these Medicaid-billable programs are still strongly encouraged to get the 18 hours of continuing education. Keeping up-to-date with continuing education helps keep your skills sharp and helps keep you employable. Ask your supervisor what the organization's requirements are for training and keeping track of training.

Certified Peer Specialist

(general description of role)

A Certified peer Specialist (CPS) provides support services to individuals receiving mental health services. A CPS promotes growth, recovery and wellness. Some of the ways in which they can promote wellness are:

1. Share their personal experiences and how they manage mental health recovery
2. Advocate for individuals receiving mental health services
3. Provide support to individuals facing everyday challenges
4. Assist individuals in recovery with areas such as the identification of personal strengths, self-esteem enhancements, conflict resolution, assertiveness and other recovery skills
5. Advise individuals on community resources including housing, education, transportation, recreation, and health
6. Support spiritual wellness as the individual identifies
7. Attend treatment/recovery meetings to support the individual as permitted