

Who is a Peer Support Specialist?

A Peer Support Specialist is a person living in recovery with a substance use disorder and providing support to others seeking recovery from a substance use disorder.

A **Certified Recovery Support Specialist** is a person in recovery from substance use disorder, working within an agency or organization, who has been trained to use their personal recovery story to assist others in developing their personal plan for recovery. This person must meet the Alabama Department of Mental Health's requirements to provide peer supportive services.

What is Peer Support Services?

Peer Support Services is a range of non-clinical supportive services to facilitate the process of recovery and holistic wellness. These services may be provided prior to, during, and after treatment to an individual and/or family member of an individual with a substance use disorder; either in an individual or group setting.

These services are led by a Certified Recovery Support Specialist in the structure of an agency or peer run organization.

Peer Support Services promote:

- Many pathways to recovery
- Self-directed care
- Advocacy
- A strength-based approach
- Relationship enhancement
- Emphasis on peer support philosophy
- Recovery philosophy
- Holistic Approach
- Self-care



Peer Support Services Include:

- Facilitating recovery education groups
- Peer led support groups
- Peer mentoring
- Using life experience to assist consumers in understanding their diagnosis
- Crisis support
- Assistance in:
 - * Identifying barriers
 - * Connecting to community health, social services and self-help groups
 - * Identifying warning signs and barriers to recovery
 - * Relapse prevention planning
 - * Reconnecting to family and community
- Assistance in developing:
 - * Basic living skills
 - * Self-esteem and confidence
 - * Recreation and social opportunities
 - * Self-help and self-advocacy skills
 - * Crisis resolution, problem solving, and goal setting skills
- Screening/intake
- Assistance in acquiring resources:
 - * Housing
 - * Employment
 - * Job readiness training
 - * Education
 - * Physical and mental health
 - * Food
 - * Clothing
 - * Parenting
 - * Transportation
 - * Criminal justice requirements



Peer mentoring is a one-on-one relationship in which a peer support specialist with more lived recovery experience encourages, motivates, and supports the peer seeking to establish his or her own recovery.

Peer support is the act of people who have had similar experiences with substance use disorders giving each other encouragement, hope, assistance, guidance, and understanding that aids in recovery. It can be done anytime or anywhere when two or more peers are in a mutual, supportive relationship.



Peer support philosophy is utilizing a strength-based approach to provide needed services that nurture self-direction, empowerment, and choice. The primary goal is to build hope for recovery to individuals and/or family members of an individual with substance use disorder.

