

Peer Specialist Supervision Core Competencies

Category I: Recovery-Oriented Support

1. Understands the Peer Role - Supervisor fully comprehends the peer specialist role and duties through peer specific supervision training and their lived/professional experience.

2. Advocates for Peer Delivered Services - Supervisor advocates for and promotes peer recovery services within the organization and in the greater healthcare system. Supervisor serves as a CHAMPION for Peer Support Services and ensures that the impact of peer support is reflected in any data interpretation.

3. Promotes Recovery Orientation - Supervisor understands and supports the philosophy of recovery management and recovery-oriented systems of care (ROSC), including, but not limited to: hope, self-disclosure, mutuality, person-first language, self-determination, empowerment, many pathways and styles of recovery, fostering independence, utilizes strength-based approach, addressing stigma & oppression, client choice, and advocacy.

4. Models Principles of Recovery - Supervisor models recovery philosophy and incorporates those tenets in all peer occupational roles and duties, supervisory experience, and the orientation of the greater organization.

5. Supports Meaningful Roles - Supervisor supports meaningful peer roles, including outreach and engagement, empathetic support, instilling hope, client advocacy, and system navigation. Supervisor advocates to maintain those meaningful roles and discourages the use of peers in other roles that diminish the value of their work or create ambiguity in their occupational roles, or are beyond the boundaries of one's education, training, and experience. Supervisor embraces the value of lived-experience and appropriately utilizes peers based on their lived- experience (e.g., addiction peers, forensic peers, mental health peers, and family peers). Supervisor avoids role ambiguity by avoiding the administrative convenience of viewing all peers as "generalists." Supervisor supports peer specialization based on lived-experience (addiction peers, forensic peers, mental health peers, or family peers.)

6. Recognizes the importance of addressing Trauma, Social Inequity, & Health Care Disparity - Supervisor understands Trauma-Informed Care, social and health care equity, and incorporates that understanding into their supervision practices, peer

programming, and organization in which they work. Supervisor acknowledges trauma experienced by historically oppressed and/or underserved populations (ethnic & cultural minorities, those with mental health challenges, those with addiction, sexual minorities, those in poverty, those experiencing homelessness, those with disabilities, including veterans).

Category II: Education & Training

7. Supports Ongoing Training - Supervisor acknowledges that requisite entry-level education is modest and that their role includes ongoing training & education, including coaching/mentoring peers regarding competencies, skills development, documentation, data collection systems, ethical standards, professional boundaries, community resources, applicable laws, and client rights.

8. Assists with Professional System Navigation - Supervisor assists peer staff in understanding the greater behavioral health system and its relationship to health care, allied providers, courts, child welfare, and social service programs. Supervisor assists peer staff in understanding the etiquette, procedures, and legal obligations of working with community partners (Courts, Child Welfare, TANF, WIC, SNAP, Probation/Parole, Addiction Treatment, and Psychiatric Institutions.)

9. Guides Adherence to Applicable Laws & Regulations - Supervisor is aware of all relevant laws and can advise peers regarding the application of those laws in their peer work (CFR 42 p.II, HIPAA, Mandatory Reporting, ADA, Civil Rights, Fair Housing, Medicaid Fraud).

10. Facilitates Access to Community Resources - Supervisor facilitates finding and sharing community resource information and their guidelines through organizational directories, websites, and other research methods.

11. Provides Role Clarity and Fidelity - Supervisor provides role clarity for peers through accurate job descriptions based on peer scope of practice and the written articulation of duties, utilizing supervision time to identify, discuss, and process situations where there is role ambiguity or role confusion.

12. Practices Strength-Based, Person-Centered Supervision - Supervisor exercises strength-based person-centered approach to supervision. Supervisor has the capacity to give and receive feedback, engendering mutuality and trust. Supervisor creates a safe atmosphere for all staff to give and receive feedback, facilitate self-reflection, and the experience of professional growth. Supervisor utilizes a strength-based approach

and can consistently give recognition and praise for competency development and successful outputs/outcomes with clients.

13. Cultivates Peer Competencies - Supervisor can identify peer specialist competencies such as active listening, supporting self-efficacy, and other skills. Supervisor monitors the fidelity of those competencies and can give feedback to individual peers regarding their efficacy, and creating work plans as indicated.

14. Facilitates Occupational Self-Care/Confidentiality - Supervisor maintains appropriate confidentiality of supervision relationship and recognizes their obligations to support peer staff in occupational self-care while maintaining professional boundaries and avoiding acting as therapist, diagnostician, or sponsor.

15. Guides Navigation of Ethics & Boundaries - Supervisor is aware of ethical standards for peers and boundary issues common with peer specific roles. Supervisor understands the peer code of ethics and supports peer specialists in navigating complex relationships and ethical dilemmas that can arise.

16. Provides Comprehensive Supervision - Supervisor maintains the integrity of peer specialist supervision and balances administrative/clerical supervision versus quality peer services supervision, resisting “administrative compliance” being the primary function of peer-delivered services supervision.

17. Provides Adequate Accessibility - Supervisor is accessible, maintaining regular supervision appointments and providing consistent availability for consultation. Supervisor practices good time management and demonstrates respect for the importance of supervision by keeping supervision appointments and being present and accessible to peer workers.

Category III: Performing Administrative Duties

18. Promotes Occupational Equity & Staff Development - Supervisor affords opportunities for participation and training to all staff with equity, including peer staff. Supervisor promotes professional development and advancement through a career ladder. Supervisor develops written professional development plans with peer staff.

19. Facilitates Occupational Safety - Supervisor knows the places people provide services and equips them and supports them in navigating those settings safely. Supervisor elicits input from peers regarding occupational safety in communities where clients reside. Supervisor and peers jointly define safety risk and recognize stigma and

misconceptions regarding safety as it applies to race, ethnicity, infectious disease, and mental health challenges. Supervisors will educate peers on typical high-risk situations and how to address those situations

20. Employs Equitable Employment Practices - As the Peer and recovery champion, the Peer Supervisor influences hiring practices and facilitates the hiring process and includes existing peer staff in the hiring process for all direct care positions. Supervisor has awareness of the ADA, and in providing reasonable accommodations to peer staff. Supervisor is aware of generally accepted HR practices and applicable laws regarding applicant questioning and interviewing, compensation and benefits, grievances, employee rights, whistleblower policies, and mandatory trainings, such as Medicaid, Fraud Waste Abuse, Civil Rights, Safety Regulations, and others.

These core competencies for peer specialist supervisors were developed for the training and direction of peer support specialist supervisors in Texas. The competencies were derived from *Substance Use Disorder Peer Supervision Competencies* (Martin, et al., 2017) and adapted for peer specialists in diverse disciplines.

A workgroup of subject matter experts (SME) was convened by the Health and Human Services Commission of Texas comprised of individuals with extensive occupational experience in the supervision of peer specialists. These SMEs came from a variety of disciplines in the field to ensure broad applicability of principles.

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Reference

Martin, Jordan, Razavi, Burnham, Linfoot, Knudson, DeVet, Hudson, & Dumas (2017). *Substance Use Disorder Peer Supervision Competencies*, The Regional Facilitation Center, Portland, Oregon.