



Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist – FAQ for Scholarships

1. Who is making scholarships available?

- The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has made limited funding available in the form of scholarships for Peers seeking Certification for Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists in California. *The scholarships and funding are time limited.*

2. What does the scholarship cover?

- For individuals seeking initial certification, the scholarship covers costs for application, training, and exam.
- For individuals seeking certification through the grandparenting process, the scholarship covers costs for application and examination.

3. When will scholarships become available?

Scholarship applications are open as follows:

- May 2, 2022 – ~~September 30, 2022~~ November 30, 2022
For applicants seeking certification under the grandparenting process, applicants must be employed as a Peer as of January 1, 2022, and shall meet the work experience, training requirements, and all other requirements under the grandparenting process.
- July 1, 2022 – ~~September 30, 2022~~ November 30, 2022
For applicants seeking initial certification, not under the grandparenting process, applicants shall meet training and all other requirements.

Scholarship applications are open as noted above or until scholarships have been depleted, whichever comes first. A total of 5,000 scholarships will be distributed: 2,500 for peers under the grandparenting process and 2,500 for “initial” peers, not under the grandparenting process.

4. How long will scholarships be valid for?

- Scholarships will expire on ~~November 30, 2022~~ December 31, 2022. Awardee must be registered for the examination prior to ~~November 30, 2022~~ December 31, 2022. All forfeited or expired scholarships will be returned to a “general pool inventory” and awarded to applicants on the waitlist.
- No extensions will be granted for expired scholarships.



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5. Who may apply for a scholarship?

- Peers interested in providing peer support services in a Medi-Cal program. Peer refers to a person having experience with the process of recovery from mental illness or substance abuse disorder, either as a consumer of these services or as the parent, caregiver, or family member of a consumer.

6. How do I apply for a scholarship?

- Participating counties will disseminate information on how to apply.
- Participating counties will identify individuals for scholarships within their respected county who are currently employed or volunteering within their Mental Health or Behavioral Health plans, including their contract provider network.

7. How are you addressing equity in the application process?

- With equity in mind, DHCS assigned a set number of scholarships for each of the participating counties. The number of persons eligible for Medi-Cal in each county was the basis for identifying the number of scholarships assigned.
- Priority criteria for applicants on the waitlist have been established for the distribution of scholarships. Applicants from underrepresented people from racial, ethnic, cultural, and other diverse backgrounds will be taken into consideration in the scholarship selection process.

8. Will all counties receive an allotment of scholarships?

- No. The scholarships are available only to counties who have elected to implement the peer support benefit.



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9. Where can I find information on participating counties?

- The following counties are being represented by CaIMHSA for the administration of their certification program. The following counties will be allotted scholarships.

1	Alameda	27	Placer
2	Amador	28	Plumas
3	Butte	29	Riverside
4	Calaveras	30	Sacramento
5	Colusa	31	San Bernardino
6	Contra Costa	32	San Diego
7	Del Norte	33	San Francisco
8	El Dorado	34	San Joaquin
9	Fresno	35	San Luis Obispo
10	Glenn	36	San Mateo
11	Humboldt	37	Santa Barbara
12	Inyo	38	Santa Clara
13	Kerns	39	Santa Cruz
14	Kings	40	Shasta
15	Lake	41	Sierra
16	Lassen	42	Siskiyou
16	Los Angeles	43	Solano
18	Madera	44	Sonoma
19	Marin	45	Stanislaus
20	Mendocino	46	Sutter-Yuba
21	Merced	47	Tehama
22	Modoc	48	Trinity
23	Mono	49	Tulare
24	Monterey	50	Tuolumne
25	Nevada	51	Ventura
26	Orange	52	Yolo

10. How will CaIMHSA distribute scholarships?

- Certifying entity will review all applications.
- Only completed applications will be reviewed.
- Scholarship will be awarded directly to the applicant.
- Information will be provided through email.

11. When will I hear back about my scholarship application?

- Applicants shall receive notification by the certifying entity within 30 days from date of application.



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12. If I am not chosen for a scholarship, will I be put on a waitlist?

- Yes, your name will be added to a waitlist. Scholarships will be awarded to those on the waitlist in order of application. You will be notified by email if you are chosen for a waitlisted scholarship.

13. Will Peers get to choose which training programs they attend?

- Yes. Scholarships will be awarded directly to the peer. Peers will choose where they will receive training from a list of “approved training programs” located on the CaIMHSA Certification website.

14. How many times can I take the exam using the scholarship?

- The scholarship covers one-time cost for the exam.

15. Will there be a waitlist for scholarships if my county of employment runs out?

- When scholarships are no longer available for a given county, the peer will be placed on a waitlist. Unused or expired scholarships will be returned to a general inventory pool (not county specific) and will be distributed to peers on waitlist.

16. How will persons on the waitlist be prioritized?

- Order in which applicant was waitlisted.
- Response to narrative question on the scholarship application.
- Applicants who are from underrepresented racial, ethnic, cultural, and other diverse backgrounds.

17. What is a “Certificant Registry”

- The Certificant Registry is an online database administered and maintained by the certifying entity. The database is searchable and includes the full legal name of all Certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists (“Certificant”) and the status of their certification.

18. Will I get a job after I get certified?

- The certification confirms that the individual has met the minimum requirements to be certified as a peer support specialist. The certification does not guarantee employment.

19. May a person interested in out-of-state reciprocity participate in the scholarship process.

- No. Individuals seeking certification under the out-of-state reciprocity process are not eligible for participation in the scholarship program.



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20. What are the steps to apply for a scholarship?

- a) Applicants are required to register through the CaIMHSA Certification website following the recommendation by the county they are working or volunteering in for a scholarship.
- b) Applicant is required to watch the “Orientation and Self-Assessment for Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists in California” video.
- c) Applicant shall complete the scholarship application. The scholarship application consists of 1 question requiring a brief narrative response.
- d) Awardee shall select where to receive training from a list of approved training entities and shall follow registration information as required by the approved training entity. The list of approved training entities is available on the CaIMHSA Certification website.
- e) Awardee shall present the scholarship code to the approved training entity during registration.
- f) Awardee shall register to take the exam prior to ~~November 30, 2022~~ December 31, 2022, or scholarship shall be forfeited and invalid. Unused or expired scholarships will be returned to a “general inventory pool” (not county specific) and will be distributed to peers on waitlist.
- g) Awardee shall successfully pass the state-approved exam to receive certification for Peer Support Specialist.

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