



Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification-Grandparenting Process Guidelines

Recognizing the years of dedication and work in Peer Recovery, a “grandparenting” process for certification is available for individuals who meet the requirements. This “grandparenting” process is open to California residents who meet the requirements by December 31, 2022.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1) Register and submit an application for grandparenting on the CalMHSA Certification website by December 31, 2022
- 2) Complete certification, including passing the certification exam, 12 months after application has been approved by CalMHSA
- 3) Upload required documents to the CalMHSA Certification website for verification that requirements have been met (i.e., proof of age, education, work experience, peer training completed, continued education hours, etc).
- 4) All applicants are required to watch the Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Orientation and Self-Assessment video located on the CalMHSA Certification website. The video is approximately 30-minutes in length.
- 5) Successfully pass the state Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification exam.



B. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS and ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTATION

1) For individuals employed as a peer as of January 1, 2022, or before, who seek certification under these standards, known as grandparenting, the following requirements must be met:

Requirement	Acceptable Forms of Documentation
a) Submit application for grandparenting on the CalMHSA Certification website.	This will be done through the CalMHSA Certification website online application process.
b) Be employed in a peer worker role paid or unpaid as of January 1, 2022.	Submit letter from employer, on agency letterhead to the CalMHSA Certification website.
c) Must be at least 18 years of age or older.	Provide a government-issued identification with photograph, such as driver's license, identification card, passport to the CalMHSA Certification website.
d) Possess a high school diploma, general equivalency degree (GED) or college degree.	Submit educational transcripts; or Submit diploma or GED; or equivalent degree; or college education degree to the CalMHSA Certification website.
e) Self-identify as an individual with lived experience, Peer.	Self-attestation through the on-line application process.
f) Be willing to share your experience as a person with lived experience.	Self-attestation through the on-line application process.
g) Have a strong dedication to recovery.	Self-attestation through the on-line application process.
h) Agree, in writing, to adhere to the California Department of Health Care Services Medi-Cal Code of Ethics for Peer Support Specialists in California.	Sign an attestation. This will be done as part of the on-line application process.



2) Meet at least one of the following experience requirements below:

Requirement	Acceptable Forms of Documentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1: <p>One (1) year paid or unpaid work experience with a minimum accumulation of 1550 hours of experience in a peer role.</p>	<p>Forms of documentation to prove applicants have met this employment requirement can be any of these (listed in no particular order):</p>
<p>OR</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 2: 	
<p>Minimum of 1550 hours in 3-years with 500 hours completed within the last 12-months, working as a peer.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay stubs that list hourly wage and the year-to-date earnings for this year (2022) at the time of application, and the last two years (2021, 2022) if they are equal to or greater than 1,550 hours 2. A print-out from <u>Human Resources</u> which states either: the number of hours worked per year over the past three years, or states that the specific 1,550 hours requirement has been met in the past three years. 3. A letter from a current or past employer on company letterhead that attests to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Date of hire b. Whether work status was full-time or part-time c. How many hours worked per week, AND d. That the specific employment hours requirement has been met by listing which requirement was met. <p>Applicants who have worked for more than one agency during the past three years should submit documentation from each agency that proves the 1,550 hour requirement has been met in the past three years listed above.</p>



	Applicants should not apply if they have not met the employment hours requirement at the time of application.
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3) Complete 20 hours of continuing education (CEs), including 6 hours of law and ethics.

Requirement	Acceptable Forms of Documentation
<p>Complete 20 hours of continuing education (CEs), including 6 hours of law and ethics.</p> <p>CE course training shall have been taken in the last 2 years.</p> <p>CEs can be in relevant professional competencies obtained via relevant in-state, out of state or national educational forums. The 6 hours for law and ethics shall be considered part of the twenty (20) hour continued education requirement.</p>	<p>Any of the following or a combination of shall be submitted at time of application to the CaIMHSA Certification website:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Certificate(s) of completion of training(s); or 2) Letter demonstrating proof of attendance of training; or 3) Letter of accomplishment. <p>Letters must be on company letterhead and shall include date of training, title of training, and number of hours participated in training.</p>

Acceptable courses for continuing education (CEs) may include:

- a) Peer Certification trainings.
- b) Courses relevant to the practice of peer and recovery services.
- c) Trainings that focus on significant recent developments in the discipline of peer support and recovery.
- d) Trainings that concentrate on the areas of specializations; "Parent, Caregiver, and Family Member Peers," "Persons experiencing a Crisis," "Persons who are unhoused," and "Persons with justice system involvement."

- e) Direct care courses that cover peer, recovery, and specialty areas (e.g., theoretical frameworks of recovery; intervention techniques with individuals, families, and systems of care).
- f) Indirect care courses that cover pragmatic aspects of clinical practice (e.g., legal or ethical issues, consultation, recordkeeping, supervision training).
- g) Courses that meet the continuing education requirements for Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist (LMFT), Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Certified Alcohol & Drug Counselor (CADC), Licensed Alcohol & Drug Counselor (LADC), or Continuing Medical Education (CME); or
- h) An undergraduate or graduate course in a behavioral health related field that pertains to direct interaction with consumers (three (3) hours of course work is equal to twelve (12) hours of CEUs).

Below are examples of law and ethics course elements that would apply toward meeting this requirement:

- i) Legal and ethical issues when working with children
- j) Legal and ethical issues when working with disabled adults and older adults
- k) Legal responsibilities for mandate reporting
- l) Information on advanced mental healthcare directives
- m) Professional conduct and boundaries
- n) Ethics and counselling in addiction and recovery
- o) Legal and ethical responsibilities covering confidentiality



4) Complete a peer training. Training in this section may also be used to satisfy the continued education hours requirement noted above.

Requirement	Acceptable Forms of Documentation
<p>Completion of a Peer training.</p> <p>Peer training is defined as training focused on concepts of peer recovery and resiliency. Proof of completion is required.</p> <p>There is no minimum number of hours for the length of the peer training program.</p> <p>If peer training hours are used towards the CE hours requirement, documentation of attendance will be required.</p>	<p>Any of the following shall be submitted to the CalMHSA Certification website:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Certificate(s) of completion of training(s) with your name and date of training, and training hours; or 2) Letter or email demonstrating proof of attendance; or 3) Certificate of completion; or 4) E-Learning Transcript; or 5) Letter of accomplishment on agency letterhead and including your name, date of training, title of training, and number of training hours.

Acceptable training shall consist of any training consistent with aspects of the Peer Support Specialist discipline that are fundamental to the understanding or the practice of peer support and recovery including:

- a) Peer certification trainings.
- b) Courses relevant to the practice of peer recovery and resiliency.
- c) Trainings that focus on significant recent developments in the discipline of peer support and recovery.
- d) Trainings that concentrate on the areas of specializations; "Parent, Caregiver, and Family Member Peers," "Persons experiencing a Crisis," "Persons who are unhoused," and "Persons with justice system involvement.

- e) Direct care courses that cover peer, recovery, and specialty areas (e.g., theoretical frameworks of recovery; intervention techniques with individuals, families, and systems of care).

5) Submit three (3) letters of recommendation to the CalMHSA Certification website as follows:

<p>a) From a supervisor.</p>	<p>Letter must be on company letterhead and must include your name, recommendation, and name of supervisor making the recommendation.</p>
<p>b) From a colleague or professional.</p>	<p>Letter may be on agency letterhead and must include your name, recommendation, and their name and title.</p>
<p>c) Self-recommendation describing the applicant's current role and responsibilities as a peer.</p>	<p>Letter must include your name and description of your current role and responsibilities as a peer. Letter shall not exceed one page in length.</p>

6) Successfully pass the state-approved Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification exam.



Checklist

- Employed as a peer as of January 1, 2022, or before.
- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Have a high school diploma, general equivalency degree (GED), or equivalent degree, or college degree.
- Have met work experience.
- Completed Peer training.
- Completed 20 hours of continued education in the last 2 years
- Completed 6 hours of training in laws and ethics as part of the 20 continued education hours requirement above.
- Self-identify as an individual with lived experience of the process of recovery from mental illness or substance use disorder, either as a consumer of these services or as the parent, caregiver, or family member of a consumer.
- Provide three letters of recommendation.
- Be willing to share your story as a person with lived experience of recovery.
- Have a strong dedication to recovery.
- Will agree, in writing, to adhere to Medi-Cal Code of Ethics for Peer Support Specialists in California.
- Pass the state certification exam.



Sample Letter of Self-Recommendation

You may opt to use the templated letter. [Click here.](#)

1. Make sure to include:
 - a. Name of the workplace
 - b. What you did in your position
2. Suggested to include:
 - a. Number of hours worked per week
 - b. Date employment began
 - c. Your position title (title does not have to be "Peer Support Specialist")
3. Tips to gather information:
 - a. Refer to your list of duties on your job description to capture the full scope of your work duties and job title
 - b. Check pay stub for number of hours

Example letter:

My name is Elise Smith, and I am writing this letter as a letter of recommendation for myself to be grandparented as a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist through CalMHSA Medi-Cal Peer Support Certification Program. I have been working as a Peer Volunteer with the organization Community Wellness Drop In since April 18, 2018, including January 1st of 2022.

My job duties include:

- Facilitating a Hearing Voices group
- Facilitating a WRAP group
- Facilitating a Transition Age Youth Support group
- Offering one on one peer support to drop in participants
- Connecting peers with resources such as housing, job readiness, food resources, mental healthcare and more as needed

I've worked approximately 600 hours per year in this role with more than 550 within the past year. My job duties as listed above are in line with requirements for certification and I would like to be considered for grandparenting in as a result.

Thank you for your time,

Elise Smith