

Core Competencies- Justice Involved Specialization for Certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists

Introduction

Peer Support is a proven tool for enhancing the recoveries of people with mental illness and/or substance use challenges. Senate Bill 803 (SB 803) recognizes the benefit that peer support provides to individuals and families with mental health and substance use difficulties and the increased diversity and effectiveness peers bring to the mental health workforce. In alignment with SB 803, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) established statewide requirements for the development of a program to certify Peer Support Specialists, creating a new Medi-Cal provider type and service categories that will be reimbursable through Medi-Cal. The California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) is implementing a Peer Support Specialist Certification program on behalf of interested county mental health and behavioral health plans. Specifically, this report focuses on additional training and skills for certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists who provide peer support to individuals with criminal justice involvement.

As part of this implementation plan, CalMHSA has undergone a thorough landscape analysis of existing Peer Certification programs across the United States to compare core curriculums, training standards, required skills, and best practices. This landscape analysis will focus on the core skills and practices of peer support for persons with criminal justice involvement, a priority specialization area which was identified by community members and stakeholders in California. Employment of Peer Support Specialists who work with individuals involved in the justice system is a growing practice. Acceptance of employing peers with lived experience to help others successfully navigate the criminal justice system has increased in recent years because it is effective in reducing recidivism and improving lives of service recipients. As the specialization of peer support services for persons with criminal justice involvement has gained wider acceptance, so has the need for developing standards of practice. Those evolving standards will be explored in this report.

Peer support is a person-centered, strengths-based support system offered to individuals who are involved in the criminal justice system who have mental health and/or substance use disorders. Peer support for persons with criminal justice involvement often starts from initial contact with law enforcement and supports continue through re-entry and reintegration into the community after release from incarceration. Peer Support Specialists are invaluable in helping identify resources within the community, including employment and housing opportunities, which may pose barriers for individuals with criminal justice involvement. Peer support can lead to successful reintegration into the community and a reduction of individuals with mental illness in the criminal justice system.

Peer support for persons with criminal justice involvement is based on principles of self-determination and an awareness that involvement in the criminal justice system is inherently traumatic. Using a trauma informed approach, peers with lived experience of criminal justice involvement act as credible role models, support pro-social behaviors, encourage compliance with probation/parole requirements, and provide the hope that there is a better life possible for individuals leaving the criminal justice system.

Background

Mental Health Services: Peer Support Specialist Certification Program Act of 2020

Senate Bill 803 (SB 803), authored by California State Senator Jim Beall is the “Mental Health Services: Peer Support Specialist Certification Program Act of 2020.” It sets a standard of seventeen Core Competencies that every Peer Support Specialist is required to know to be certified as a practitioner. In California, this creates a new provider and service type eligible for Medi-Cal reimbursement through the county mental health and behavioral health plans. The Department of Health Care Services will create guidance of reimbursement requirements.

To be a certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist an individual must meet the following qualifications:

- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Possess a high school diploma or equivalent degree.
- Be self-identified as having experience with 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.
- Be willing to share their experience.
- Have a strong dedication to recovery.
- Agree, in writing, to adhere to a code of ethics.

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- Successfully complete the curriculum and training requirements for a peer support specialist.
 - Pass a certification examination approved by DHCS for a peer support specialist.

Core Competencies for Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists

The training curriculum for Peer Support specialists must incorporate the following core competencies: 1) The concepts of hope, recovery, and wellness; 2) The role of advocacy; 3) The role of consumers and family members; 4) Psychiatric rehabilitation skills and service delivery, and addiction recovery principles, including defined practices; 5) Cultural and structural competence trainings; 6) Trauma-informed care; 7) Group facilitation skills; 8) Self-awareness and self-care; 9) Co-occurring disorders of mental health and substance use; 10) Conflict resolution; 11) Professional boundaries and ethics; 12) Preparation for employment opportunities, including study and test-taking skills, application and résumé preparation, interviewing, and other potential requirements for employment; 13) Safety and crisis planning; 14) Navigation of, and referral to, other services; 15) Documentation skills and standards; 16) Confidentiality; 17) Digital literacy

In California, a single certification exists for the Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists who meet the certification requirements noted above. Additionally, a certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist may elect to receive training in any of the 4 areas of specialization: 1) Parent, Caregiver, Family Member Peer; 2) Working with persons who are in crisis; 3) Working with persons who are involved in the criminal justice system; and 4) Working with persons who are unhoused. The areas of specialization offer a certificate of completion and no state certification exists for the areas of specialization. For this report, we will provide a high-level overview of the essential components to each core competency for certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists who plan to work with persons who are involved in the criminal justice system. Specifically, we will review the core training curriculum for the certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists and identify any additional training areas of focus for this area of specialization.

Conclusion

Based on our review of available information, when surveyed, criminal justice involved individuals identified and ranked six peer characteristics they found most important.

1. A history of incarceration and successful reentry.¹
2. A history of overcoming trauma.
3. A history of addiction and recovery.
4. The age of the mentor.
5. The race of the mentor.
6. The gender of the mentor.

A history of incarceration and the impact of trauma were the most important characteristics for an individual offering peer support to an individual with criminal justice involvement. Support by a peer with personal lived experience with aspects of criminal justice involvement and successful community reentry was considered central to the peer relationship.

Core Competencies Identified

The following table contains a summary of Core Competencies and related skills for peer support for persons with criminal justice involvement. The data was collected from a range of sources including: “Forensic Peer Specialists: An Emerging Workforce” from the Center for Behavioral Health Services and Criminal Justice Research (June 2011); “Substance Use Disorder Forensic Peer Best Practices Curriculum” by Michael Razavi, MPH, PRC, CADC I, CPS & Joan Ayala, MSW, CADC III, CRM (May 2017); “THE SEQUENTIAL INTERCEPT MODEL: Advancing Community-Based Solutions for Justice-Involved People with Mental and Substance Use Disorders” by PRA (Policy Research Associates); “Forensic Peer Support: The role of the forensic peer within the Sequential Intercept Model” by Christopher Gonzalez, MAEd & Brett W Matossian, BHT (2017); “Peer Support within Criminal Justice Settings: The Role of Forensic Peer Specialists” by Larry Davidson, Ph.D., and Michael Rowe, Ph.D. (May 2008); and “Peer Support Roles in Criminal Justice Settings” by SAMHSA, (Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration) (August 2017).

This summary is not meant to be exhaustive but to provide an overview of necessary skills and offer sample field practices that may be used to support individuals with criminal justice involvement and mental health and/or substance use disorders recover and create lives of freedom for themselves.

¹ Razavi, Michael, Ayala, Joan (2017). Substance Use Disorder Forensic Peer Best Practices Curriculum

Comparison between Core Competencies for Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists and Area of Specialization

Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies	Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved
<p><u>1. The concepts of hope, recovery, and wellness.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ability to promote hope, the potential for change, and personal empowerment. ▪ The ability to create healing relationships based on respect, compassion, open and honest communication, active listening, and cultural humility. ▪ How to foster individual choice and self-determination. ▪ How to establish and maintain relationships based on mutuality, respect, acceptance, and compassion. ▪ Understand the peer experience. ▪ Demonstrate consistent support to individuals during times of wellness as well as during challenging times. ▪ Demonstrate non-judgmental behavior. ▪ Apply principles of empowerment. ▪ Define the concept of a wellness-focused approach to recovery. ▪ Address internal and external stigma. ▪ Know the basic five stages in the recovery process and what is helpful and not helpful at each stage. ▪ Know the role of peer support services at each stage of the recovery process. ▪ Know the basic definition and dynamics of recovery. 	<p><u>1. Application of Lived Experience</u> (awareness of self and societal, self-disclosure; embody peer recovery values; role model recovery)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have lived experience in all or most of the continuum of the criminal justice systems, including arrests, detention, arraignment, court proceedings, sentencing, diversion, incarceration, probation, and/or parole. ▪ Build rapport and trust through sharing lived experience. ▪ Share personal lived experiences in ways that demonstrate how to advance in recovery and reentry. ▪ Act as credible role models to individuals transitioning from criminal activity to pro-social behaviors, perspective, and expression. ▪ Understand and apply mental health and substance use recovery concepts from a reentry perspective. ▪ Support people to restructure attitudes, beliefs, and maladaptive behaviors learned as survival mechanisms, including those learned in criminal justice settings.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify beliefs and values individuals hold that work against recovery. ▪ Be Strengths-Based. ▪ Know the difference between treatment goals and recovery goals. ▪ Know the difference between focusing on the symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges and focusing on their impact on individuals and families. ▪ Understand the role of culture in recovery. ▪ Be trauma informed. ▪ Promote a wellness-focused approach to recovery. ▪ Be able to identify the beliefs and values an individual holds that support and enrich their recovery. ▪ Be able to identify the beliefs and values an individual holds that works against their recovery. ▪ Know the five stages in the recovery process, what is helpful and not helpful at each stage and the role of peer support services at each stage of the recovery process. ▪ Know the ten guiding principles of recovery as defined by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be able to communicate own lived experience in a way that is non-judgmental. ▪ Have the ability to promote hope, the potential for change, and personal empowerment. ▪ Understand and apply recovery concepts from a reentry perspective. ▪ Share personal lived experiences following reentry and model the ways to advance recovery through coaching. ▪ Embody the potential for recovery for people who confront the dual stigmas associated with serious mental illnesses and criminal justice system involvement. ▪ Maintain freedom and model hope for a future free of incarceration. ▪ Help individuals evaluate their choices more effectively and provide guidance about appropriate interpersonal skills and ways of coping, ultimately increasing self-efficacy. ▪ Inspire hope and the possibility of positive change through appropriate self-disclosure of their own histories, by consistently modeling recovery behaviors, and being a continual role model in recovery from addiction and crime. ▪ Be able to identify and address barriers to success that prevent rehabilitation.

Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies	Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved
<p><u>2. The Role of Advocacy.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a working knowledge of the terms “peer support”, “peer”, and “recovery” as established by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the International Association of Peer Supporters (NAPS). ▪ Develop a working knowledge of the SAMHSA and NAPS guiding principles, practice guidelines, and core values of peer support. ▪ Understand the basic structure of the state Mental Health System (MHS) and how it works. ▪ Know the civil and human rights foundations from which the peer support movement arose, including issues related to prejudice, discrimination, and stigma associated with behavioral health. ▪ Understand how peer support is shifting care from an illness model to a recovery model. ▪ Know strategies to address internal and external stigma. ▪ Use knowledge of legal resources and advocacy organizations to help an individual build an advocacy plan. ▪ Help Peers develop self-advocacy skills. ▪ Advocate for multiple pathways to recovery/wellness. ▪ Know how to teach advocacy strategies that promote Self-Determination. ▪ Model how to self-advocate. 	<p><u>2. Role of Advocacy</u> (peer-to-peer relationship, trauma informed, person centered, strengths based, skill building, future planning)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicate to individuals their rights and responsibilities. ▪ Act as advocates for individuals at the individual and systems levels. ▪ Model appropriate advocacy within the varying service delivery systems. ▪ Promote recovery principles including self-advocacy and empowerment strategies. ▪ Improve civic engagement to support self-advocacy. ▪ Assist individuals in advocating for the correction of inaccurate entries in their criminal records. ▪ Work with individuals to explain misleading charges or convictions to potential landlords or employers. ▪ Knowledge of linkage to legal aid resources. ▪ Knowledge of resources to employment opportunities for individuals re-entering the community. ▪ Advocate for recipients of behavioral healthcare when they are unable to advocate for themselves. ▪ Knowledge of diversion programs, including advocacy and access to services. ▪ Educate stakeholders in the criminal justice system about mental health and substance use recovery.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have a basic knowledge of empowerment and the goals and objectives of the consumer movement. ▪ Understand relevant rights and laws (ADA, HIPAA, Olmstead, etc.) to ensure that peers’ rights are respected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Model disclosure of justice involvement to reduce internal and social stigma. ▪ Help navigate child welfare issues and/or support meeting mandate requirements. ▪ Support with navigation and resources of other human services systems (housing, social security, employment, etc.). ▪ Knowledge of resources to address co-occurring issues/conditions, including mental health, substance use disorder treatment, and physical health care.

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<p><u>3. The role of consumers and family members.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The role of consumer peer support specialists is to support other consumers through shared lived experience. ▪ The role of family peer support specialists is to support other family members through shared lived experience. 	<p><u>3. The role of consumers and family members.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use strengths-based approaches when interacting with individuals, setting goals, and engaging with communities. ▪ Support individuals in strengthening or acquiring life skills. ▪ Help individuals learn emotional regulation skills (i.e., mindfulness,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The role of peers or family members is to use their experience to role model resiliency and recovery to their peers. ▪ The role of consumers or family members is to give permission to recognize when self-care is needed and to practice it. ▪ Use personal stories of lived experience to support and empower the person receiving services. ▪ To build community and a sense of meaning and fulfillment. ▪ Advocates for the needs and desires of individuals in treatment team meetings, community services, living situations, and with family. ▪ Connect people to independent social support networks particularly self-help support groups. ▪ Recovery involves individual, family, and community strengths and responsibility. ▪ Individuals, families, and communities have strengths and resources that serve as a foundation for recovery. In addition, individuals have a personal responsibility for their own self-care and journeys of recovery. Individuals should be supported in speaking for themselves. ▪ Relate to the individual as an advocate. ▪ Advocate within systems to promote person-centered recovery/wellness support services. ▪ Describe the individual's rights and responsibilities. ▪ Explain importance of self-advocacy as a component of recovery/wellness. ▪ Differentiate between the levels of advocacy. ▪ Demonstrate a working knowledge of relevant rights and laws to ensure that the individual's rights are maintained. ▪ Uses knowledge of relevant rights and laws (ADA, HIPAA, Olmstead, etc.) to 	<p>attention shifting, forward looking, and reframing).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use trauma-informed approaches to understand the impact on social isolation from community and family or natural support systems previously in place. ▪ Motivate individuals to meet required justice involved obligations, including initial detention/diversion, pre-sentencing, and/or post-release. ▪ Role model appropriate advocacy throughout the justice involved continuum. ▪ Create healing relationships based on respect, compassion, open and honest communication, active listening, and cultural humility. ▪ Foster individual choice and self-determination. ▪ Use active listening and empathic skills. ▪ Communicate genuine emotion and support individuals in identifying and expressing emotions. ▪ Recognize and use person-centered language. ▪ Utilize a wellness-focused approach to recovery. ▪ Support in setting personal goals and assist individuals in making steps towards reaching them. ▪ Understand the Stages of Change, Recovery Capital, and Recovery Action Planning. ▪ Offer empathy and validation in addition to offering suggestions and strategies for overcoming challenges.
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<p>ensure that individuals rights are respected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Uses knowledge of legal resources and advocacy organization to build an advocacy plan.▪ Describe the civil and human rights foundations from which the peer support movement arose, including issues related to prejudice, discrimination, and stigma associated with behavioral health."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Apply and promote self-empowerment and recovery principles including self-advocacy.▪ Help individuals identify beliefs and values they hold that work against their recoveries.▪ Support Peers in identifying core values and beliefs that will support them in their recoveries.▪ Demonstrate consistent support to individuals during times of wellness as well as during challenging times.▪ Demonstrate non-judgmental behavior and listening.▪ Use open-ended questions that connect a person to his/her/their inner wisdom and move through their fears.▪ Communicate from a place of compassion.▪ Use trauma-informed principles and approach to support helping individuals find meaning and purpose in their lives, fulfill valued roles, and engage with their community in a meaningful way.▪ Address internal and external stigma surrounding incarceration, mental health and/or substance abuse.▪ Emphasize strengths and connect to resources.▪ Take into account the person's life stage when providing support.
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<p align="center">Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies</p>	<p align="center">Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved</p>
<p><u>4. Psychiatric rehabilitation skills and service delivery, and addiction recovery principles, including defined practices.</u></p> <p>Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Person-Centered - Peer recovery support services are always directed by the person participating in services. Peer recovery support is personalized to align with the specific hopes, goals, and preferences of the individual served and to respond to specific needs the individual has identified to the peer support specialist. ▪ Self-Determination - The primary responsibility of Certified Peer Specialists is to help individuals achieve their own needs, wants, and goals. Certified Peer Specialists will be guided by the principle of self-determination for all. ▪ Voluntary - Peer support specialists are partners or consultants to those they serve. They do not dictate the types of services provided or the elements of recovery plans that will guide their work with peers. Participation in peer recovery support services is always contingent on peer choice. ▪ Psychiatric Rehabilitation Skills and Service Delivery utilizes a strengths-based approach. <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize the stages of change, recovery, and wellness. ▪ Recognize signs of distress. 	<p><u>4. Engagement Skills and Interventions</u> (knowledge and application of Motivational Interviewing techniques; Seeking Safety; role model, de-escalation intervention; resources)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remain genuine and non-judgmental. ▪ Practice unconditional positive regard. ▪ Know and utilize techniques that support engagement such as Motivational Interviewing (MI) and Seeking Safety. ▪ Help individuals identify beliefs and values they hold that work against their recovery in order to support their recovery. ▪ Use questions to help individuals get in touch with the life they want. ▪ Understand the Cycle of Escalation and De-escalation. ▪ Use positive behavior supports and contingency management. ▪ Teach emotion regulation skills ▪ Model and teach self-control strategies ▪ Understand skill building techniques ▪ Use techniques to increase skills that promote self-efficacy. ▪ Partner with other service providers to support recovery. ▪ Encourage justice involved individuals to disclose information pertaining to arrest, charges, probation/parole conditions when it supports their success plan. ▪ Support justice involved individuals with abiding by their mandate

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the basic philosophy and principles of psychosocial rehabilitation and substance use recovery strategies. ▪ Be able to use dissatisfaction as an avenue for change. ▪ Be able to help a Peer articulate, set and accomplish his/her goals, including whole health and wellness goals. ▪ Understand the role of healthcare professionals that may be members of an individual's care team, including psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists, primary-care doctors/nurses, specialty-care doctors/nurses, community health workers, case managers, and other professionals. ▪ Support individuals in defining spirituality on their own terms. ▪ Certified Peers Specialists will keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to recovery, and openly share this knowledge with their colleagues. ▪ Know how to assist other healthcare team members to learn about the process of recovery, the concept of resiliency, and the relationship between person-centered, self-directed care and achievement of whole health goals. ▪ Social Development ▪ Recovery Management skills. ▪ Knowledge of Addiction and the Stages of Recovery. ▪ Knowledge of Addiction and Brain Chemistry / Pharmacology. ▪ Recovery Management skills. ▪ Understanding of Co-occurring Disorders. ▪ Understand the Harm Reduction model. 	<p>conditions with special attention to challenges impacting special populations, such as "290 status" registrant, batterer's intervention program and requirements for registering as violent offender, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage justice involved individuals to get involved with supportive networks that can address their criminogenic needs (i.e., AA/NA, Anger management groups, parenting groups, etc.) ▪ Embrace true collaboration as an ongoing process and invest in its development to ensure a sustained culture of collaboration. ▪ Contribute to the achievement of common goals by giving power and respect to each person's voice, integrating individual differences, resolving competing interests, and safeguarding the essential contribution each makes in order to achieve optimal outcomes. ▪ Act with a high level of personal integrity and hold others accountable for doing the same. ▪ Demonstrate competence appropriate to his/her/their role and responsibilities.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lapse/Relapse Prevention tools. ▪ Motivational Enhancement tools. ▪ Identifying one’s own strengths and help individuals identify theirs. ▪ Distinguishing between sympathy and empathy. ▪ Understand learned helplessness; what it is, how it is taught and how to assist others in overcoming its effects ▪ Understand the benefits of addressing mental health symptoms and addiction at the same time. ▪ Know how to facilitate groups. ▪ Recognize that there are multiple pathways to recovery/wellness. ▪ Be able to help individuals combat negative self-talk, overcome fears, and solve problems. ▪ Be able to help individuals create a Person-Centered Plan. 	

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<p><u>5. Cultural and structural competence trainings.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural humility. 	<p><u>5. Cultural Responsiveness</u> (cultural humility and awareness; historical racism and biases; subcultures; conflict resolution)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency includes:</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize and understand your own personal values, culture, and spiritual beliefs; how they may contribute to your own judgments, biases, and beliefs about others; and how to respond if they inhibit your ability to effectively serve another individual. ▪ Knowledge of cultural sensitivity and practice. ▪ Define culture, elements of culture, and its impact. ▪ Ability to communicate utilizing person first and person-centered language. ▪ Recognize different types of cultures. ▪ Explain key recovery language and culture concepts. ▪ Knowledge of the influence of cultural heritage on individuals and groups. ▪ Knowledge of and sensitivity to how cultural identity can influence the dynamics in communication. ▪ Knowledge of and sensitivity to how cultural identity shapes the helping process. ▪ Appreciate, recognize, and respect the personal values, cultural, spiritual beliefs, and practices of peers and their families and how these play a role in achieving their whole health goals. ▪ Recognize the importance of a holistic (e.g., mind, body, spirit, environment) approach to recovery/wellness. ▪ Be able to describe successful multicultural interactions and explain why the topic is important to peer services. ▪ Understand the concept of ‘seeking out common ground’. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awareness of your own personal values, culture, and spiritual beliefs; how they may contribute to your own judgments, biases, and beliefs about others; and how to respond if they interfere with your ability to effectively serve another individual (implicit and explicit biases). ▪ Knowledge of stigma and biases surrounding persons with justice involvement. ▪ Have knowledge of the influence of culture (including the subculture that surrounds jails/prisons, gang culture, drug use, etc.) on individuals and groups. ▪ Have knowledge of and sensitivity to how cultural identity can influence the dynamics in communication to support individuals in their recovery. ▪ Appreciate, recognize, and respect the personal values, cultural, spiritual beliefs, and practices of peers and their families. ▪ Understand the concept of “seeking out common ground” to support individuals in their recovery. ▪ Have an understanding of the impact of current and historical structural racism and how it creates disparities, including disparities in wealth, employment, education, housing discrimination, government surveillance, incarceration, drug arrests, and immigration matters.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An understanding of structural racism and how it creates disparities in Wealth, Employment, Education, Housing Discrimination, Government Surveillance, Incarceration, Drug Arrests, Immigration Arrests, and Infant Mortality. ▪ An understanding of how structural racism impacts health and recovery outcomes for people of color. ▪ Recognize the Connections between Behavioral Health Conditions and Trauma, Health Disparities, and Social Inequity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have an understanding of how current and historical structural racism impacts overall health and recovery outcomes for people of color. ▪ Recognize the connections between behavioral health conditions, trauma, health disparities, and social inequity to support individuals in their recovery. ▪ Support an individual with their recovery by interacting with purpose and with a cultural lens, including the use person-centered language. ▪ Advocate for multiple pathways to recovery/wellness. ▪ Use dignity and respect with all people, no matter ethnicity, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, mental or physical disability, or any other preference or personal characteristic, condition or state. ▪ Know strategies for working with adults and youth with justice involvement to support individuals in their recovery. ▪ Know strategies and be able to work with various subpopulations such as: youth, older adults, persons experiencing homelessness, LGBTQIA+ individuals, persons with chronic or persistent health conditions, and physical and developmental challenges.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Know and be able to link individuals to resources and services specific to their intersectional identities.

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<p><u>6. Trauma-informed care.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the core principles of trauma-informed care. ▪ Understand the prevalence of trauma and its impact on physical, behavioral, and emotional wellness. ▪ Be familiar with the ACE (Adverse Childhood Events) model. ▪ Understand cultural considerations and the effect of trauma on how we view our cultural experiences and the lens in which we view the world. ▪ Recognize signs of distress. ▪ Assist the individual in identifying basic needs. ▪ Recognize risk indicators that may affect the individual's welfare and safety. Respond to personal risk indicators to assure welfare and safety. ▪ Identify examples of traumatic events and individual responses. 	<p><u>6. Trauma Informed Support</u> (historical and contemporary trauma and stigma; building trust in relationships; signs and symptoms of distress; adaptive coping skills)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have awareness of trauma arising from individuals' criminal justice experiences, including but not limited to: police induced trauma, disparate sentencing, incarceration, threats, intimidation, and stigmatizing labels within incarceration and criminal justice. ▪ Understand the impact of environmental trauma and conditioning. ▪ Understand the historical and contemporary trauma, marginalization, and oppression

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	<p>populations, including cultural and ethnic minorities, and LGBTQ individuals experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the prevalence of trauma and its impact on physical, behavioral, and emotional wellness to offer trauma-informed peer services. ▪ Be familiar with the ACE (Adverse Childhood Events) model to offer appropriate trauma-informed Peer services. ▪ Recognize signs of distress and risk indicators that may affect the individual's welfare and safety and respond appropriately. ▪ Support the development of healthy behavior that is based on choice. ▪ Teach coping skills of emotional regulation, mindfulness, stress reduction, anxiety management, distress tolerance, and relaxation techniques. ▪ Be non-judgmental.

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<p><u>7. Group facilitation skills.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p>	<p>No additional information is identified in this section.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the difference between treatment goals and recovery goals and be able to create and facilitate a variety of group activities that support and strengthen recovery. ▪ Describe, select, and appropriately use strategies from accepted and culturally appropriate models for group counseling. ▪ Understand how to facilitate peer support/self-help groups. ▪ Know how to facilitate a Recovery Dialogue. 	

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<p><u>8. Self-Awareness and Self-Care.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize the importance of self-care. ▪ Develop self-care skills and coping practices for helping professionals. ▪ Know the importance of ongoing supports for overcoming stress in the workplace. ▪ Know resources to promote personal resilience. ▪ Understand burnout and using self-awareness to prevent compassion 	<p><u>7. Self-Awareness and Self-Care</u> (compassion fatigue and burnout; hobbies; personal therapy; community care)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognize the importance of self-care and activate self-care skills and coping practices for helping professionals. ▪ Know the importance of ongoing support for overcoming stress in the workplace.

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<p>fatigue, vicarious trauma and secondary traumatic stress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthen social skills and healthy social networks including peer and natural support systems. ▪ Be able to discuss their own tools for taking care of themselves. ▪ Learn to respond appropriately to personal stressors, triggers and indicators. ▪ Understand the concept of dual/complex relationships. ▪ Understand the dynamics of power, conflict and integrity in the workplace. ▪ Anticipate and avert or safely manage any re-experience of symptoms of their own challenge(s) to ensure continued wellness. ▪ Develop a working knowledge of the concepts of “activation” and “self-management” of whole health goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Know resources to promote personal resilience and incorporate these into daily life. ▪ Understand burnout and use self-awareness to manage compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma and secondary traumatic stress. ▪ Strengthen social skills and healthy social networks including peer and natural support systems. ▪ Be able to discuss their own tools for taking care of themselves to support others in their recoveries. ▪ Learn to respond appropriately to personal stressors, triggers and indicators. ▪ Use tools & techniques for entering “triggering” environments and create plans for potentially triggering situations prior to them occurring. ▪ Understand the dynamics of power, conflict and integrity in the workplace to maintain wellness. ▪ Anticipate and avert or safely manage any re-experience of symptoms of their own challenge(s) to ensure continued wellness. ▪ Develop a working knowledge of the concepts of “activation” and “self-management” to maintain wellness. ▪ Respond to any setbacks on their recovery journey as an opportunity for learning additional techniques or strategies to achieve and maintain their whole health goals. ▪ Conduct themselves in a manner that fosters their own recovery.

<p align="center">Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies</p>	<p align="center">Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved</p>
<p><u>9. Co-occurring disorders of mental health and substance use</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ability to promote hope, the potential for change, and personal empowerment. ▪ The ability to create healing relationships based on respect, compassion, open and honest communication, active listening, and cultural humility. ▪ How to foster individual choice and self-determination. ▪ Use active listening skills. ▪ Use empathic listening skills. ▪ Communicate genuine emotion. ▪ Recognize and use person-centered language. ▪ Define the concept of a wellness-focused approach to recovery. ▪ Have a basic knowledge of treatment approaches such as Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) and Medication Assisted Recovery (MAR). ▪ Understand the prevalence of trauma in the lived experience of people with co-occurring disorders. ▪ Meet people where they are. ▪ Understand Harm Reduction. ▪ Be able to communicate their lived experience in a way that is supportive. ▪ Peers support Peers in whatever their goal is. 	<p><u>8. Co-occurring disorders of mental health and substance use</u> (co-occurring disorders; drug use and treatment; recovery principles and harm reduction models; recovery capital principles; community resources; care coordination)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the vulnerability of individuals with a history of mental illness or substance use who've been recently released from corrections. ▪ Understand the Stages of Change to support with identifying and obtaining goals. ▪ Knowledge of available substance use disorder services, including Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services (i.e., counseling and medications for treatment of alcohol, opioid, and opioid overdose). ▪ Foster individual choice and self-determination. ▪ Have a basic understanding of the Disease Model of Addiction and the difference between prevention, treatment, and recovery. ▪ Understand harm reduction models and recovery action planning to support recovery. ▪ Understand recovery capital" principles (internal and external resources).

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the Stages of Change. ▪ Understand Recovery Capital ▪ Understand Recovery Action Planning. ▪ Have a basic understanding of the Disease Model of Addiction and the difference between prevention, treatment, and recovery. ▪ Understand Recovery Management Planning to support individuals with life domains. ▪ Know the science of addiction and the history of addiction. ▪ Embrace all pathways to recovery. ▪ Be active in your own recovery. ▪ Identify your own triggers and actively manage your recovery. ▪ Develop and maintain your own support system. ▪ Conduct yourself in a manner that fosters your own recovery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide peer support services even if individuals are not actively engaged in treatment. ▪ Demonstrate consistent support to individuals during times of wellness as well as during challenging times. ▪ Support peers to be part of recovery groups and communities to stay active and around others in recovery. ▪ Use questions to help individuals get in touch with the life they want and help identify steps to creating them. ▪ Assist individuals in recognizing the effect of substance abuse on life challenges and consequences of continued use. ▪ Provide education regarding warning signs, symptoms, and progression of substance use disorders. ▪ Be familiar with relapse prevention strategies to support the prevention of recidivism. ▪ Provide education on how substance use challenges affect self, family, and community. ▪ Be able to help individuals navigate treatment services and recovery supports. ▪ Recognize the importance of a holistic (e.g., mind, body, spirit, environment) approach to recovery/wellness to support individuals in their recovery. ▪ Partner with other service providers.

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<p><u>10. Conflict resolution.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop effective communication skills. ▪ Develop conflict resolution skills. ▪ Develop problem-solving skills. ▪ Understand the dynamics of power, conflict, and integrity in the workplace, ▪ Understand the concept of 'seeking out common ground'. 	<p>No additional information is identified in this section.</p>

<p align="center">Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies</p>	<p align="center">Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved</p>
<p><u>11. Professional boundaries and ethics.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The role of consumer peer support specialists is to support other consumers through shared lived experience. ▪ The role of family peer support specialists is to support other family members through shared lived experience. ▪ The role of peers or family members is to use their experience to role model resiliency and recovery to their peers. ▪ Understand how to establish, negotiate, and maintain appropriate interpersonal limits and boundaries that are necessary to promote effective peer support services. ▪ Understand the Peer Support Specialists' scope of service (i.e., know what you can and cannot do as a credentialed Peer Support Specialist). ▪ Conduct self-evaluations of professional performance applying ethical, legal, and professional standards to enhance self-awareness and performance. ▪ Recognize situations outside the competencies of a Peer Support Specialist. 	<p><u>9. Professional Boundaries and Ethics</u> (code of ethics for peer specialists; laws governing confidentiality; mandate reporting and legal requirements; conflict resolution)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adhere to Code of Ethics for certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists. ▪ Perform all job duties in accordance with federal and state rules and regulations and published code of ethics and professional conduct for credentialed Peer Support Specialists. ▪ Understand legal requirements as a Mandate Reported of abuse and neglect. ▪ Adhere to professional obligations/responsibilities and limits of the certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist role. ▪ Recognize situations outside the competencies of a certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist. ▪ Use supervision to assure individual is appropriately served (i.e., advocacy, education, confidentiality, skills development, boundary setting, etc.). ▪ Recognize and maintain professional and personal boundaries. ▪ Establish and maintain a peer relationship rather than a hierarchical relationship.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate respect and non-judgmental attitudes toward individuals in all contacts with community professionals and agencies. ▪ Maintain confidentiality of individual information in written and oral communications in accordance with confidentiality laws, including Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and 42 C.F.R. Part 2. ▪ Understand how to establish, negotiate, and maintain appropriate interpersonal limits and boundaries that are necessary to promote effective peer support services. ▪ Maintain boundaries and resist the temptation to partner with individuals “against the system”, especially in the face of perceived or actual injustice. Similarly, Peer Support Specialists do not partner with the “system” against the individual, or act as an agent of the system. ▪ Conduct self-evaluations of professional performance applying ethical, legal, and professional standards to enhance self-awareness and performance. ▪ Never intimidate, threaten, harass, use undue influence, physical force or verbal abuse, or make unwarranted promises of benefits to the individuals they serve.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicate personal issues or concerns, as appropriate, with supervisors that negatively impact the peer worker’s ability to perform job duties. ▪ Appropriately utilize supervision and consultation regarding issues that arise and that may interfere with the ability to effectively perform job duties. ▪ Use organizational/departmental chain of command to address or resolve issues. ▪ Recognize and address personal and institutional biases and behaviors. ▪ Maintain current, accurate knowledge of trends and issues related to wellness and recovery. ▪ Maintain high standards of personal conduct that fosters recovery. ▪ Do not enter into dual relationships or commitments that conflict with the interests of those served. ▪ Do not use unprescribed or illegal substances under any circumstance. ▪ Do not accept gifts of significant value from those served. ▪

Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies	Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved
<p><u>12. Preparation for employment opportunities, including study and test-taking skills, application and résumé preparation, interviewing, and other potential requirements for employment.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Know community resources for employment skills development. ▪ Be familiar with how to transition from Social Security and other disability benefits. ▪ Peers assist, guide, and support in developing education and employment skills as a Peer. ▪ How to use shared experience to leverage social capital and networking. ▪ Preparation for employment opportunities, including study and test-taking skills, application and résumé preparation, interviewing, and other potential requirements for employment. 	<p>No additional information is identified in this section.</p>

Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies	Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved
<p><u>13. Safety and crisis planning.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p>	<p>10. <u>Safety and Crisis Planning</u> (crisis evaluation and planning; risk assessment; protective factors; emotion regulation; power dynamics)</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand basic de-escalation techniques. ▪ Recognize various crisis and emergency situations. ▪ Recognize and respond to risk indicators to assure welfare and safety. ▪ Recognize signs of distress and threats to safety among peers and in their environments. ▪ Understand basic suicide prevention concepts and techniques. 	<p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice non-judgmental behavior. ▪ Use effective communication, conflict resolution, and problem-solving skills. ▪ Recognize and respond to various risks, crisis, and emergency situations. ▪ Understand and utilize de-escalation techniques and provide reassurance to peers in distress. ▪ Identify indicators that the individual may be re-experiencing symptoms of his or her condition(s) and provide early intervention strategies to avert crisis and/or the need for intensive services (escalation cycle). ▪ Recognize risk indicators that may affect the individual's welfare and safety. ▪ Respond to personal risk indicators to assure welfare and safety. ▪ Understand and utilize the concept of 'seeking out common ground'. ▪ Be able to personally deal with conflict and difficult interpersonal relations. ▪ Demonstrate consistency by supporting individuals during ordinary and extraordinary times. ▪ Recognize signs of distress and threats to safety among individuals and in their environments. ▪ Understand and practice risk assessment, suicide prevention, and safety planning.

Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies	Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take action to address distress and/or crisis using knowledge of local resources, treatment, and resources to support a person’s recovery. ▪ Assist individuals to develop and activate self-management plans, advanced directives, relapse prevention strategies, and crisis prevention strategies. ▪ Report any suspicions of neglect or abuse.

Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies	Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved
<p><u>14. Navigation of, and referral to, other services.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and maintain up-to-date information about community resources and services. ▪ Have a basic understanding of mental health and substance use challenges and the behavioral health system. ▪ Develop a working knowledge of available healthcare resources to help individuals navigate and choose between options. 	<p>11. <u>Community Reintegration Support</u> (Sequential Intercept Model; criminal justice system continuum; behavioral health delivery systems; client rights and other legal protections; employment and vocational support; goal setting)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have a basic understanding of mental health and substance use challenges and the behavioral health system. ▪ Provide care coordination services within the behavioral health delivery systems and across other service

Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies	Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have the ability to assist in establishing support systems and interfacing with agencies, organizations, and groups. ▪ Collaborate with individual to identify, link, and coordinate choices with resources. ▪ Develop tools for effective outreach and continued support. 	<p>delivery sectors (i.e., physical health, child welfare, courts, probation/parole, community resources, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support maintaining sobriety and access to recovery-focused resources. ▪ Have knowledge of criminal justice systems and provide support throughout the process, including arrests, detention, arraignment, court proceedings, sentencing, diversion, incarceration, probation, and/or parole. ▪ Have basic understanding of service delivery systems and assist individuals to link to and navigate housing, employment, community sobriety services and supports, relapse prevention, mental health services and supports, education, transportation, healthcare, and free or low-cost legal resources. ▪ Have awareness challenges faced by individuals with justice involvement, including navigation of referrals, accessing referral source, and barriers to follow up on referrals. ▪ Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions at various intercept points along the continuum of justice involvement. ▪ Identify positive supports and pro-social associates, thus targeting a peer-centered reduction of criminogenic factors. ▪ Have strong knowledge of client rights for diverse service sectors to support advocacy and coach self-advocacy.

Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Core Competencies	Core Competencies for Specialization - Working with Persons - Justice Involved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gather information and offer support through advocacy, skills development, and referral and do not offer advice or opinions on legal matters. ▪ Help individuals learn positive pro-social behavior and get them engaged in meaningful activities in the community. ▪ Improve civic engagement to support self-advocacy. ▪ Help individuals learn about changes in technology and trends that have occurred while incarcerated. ▪ Help individuals assess their own needs and provide them with referrals to appropriate community resources. ▪ Assist individuals in identifying support systems consistent with individual needs. ▪ Research and maintain up-to-date information about community resources and services, including available resources geared towards specific populations such as services for youth, veterans, and LGBTQ+. ▪ Model effective coping strategies and interpersonal skills such as: communication skills, emotional regulation, conflict resolution, etc. ▪ Encourage individuals to function as an active member of their treatment/recovery support team. ▪ Provide warm hand-offs to referred agencies and explain the necessity for the referrals so individuals understand and follow through.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate outcomes of services received from referrals to determine need for change of referral services. ▪ Accompany individuals to community activities and appointments when requested. ▪ Consider multiple barriers and challenges when helping an individual prepare for employment and education, including job search, navigating application process, interviewing, and attire. ▪ Support and coach individuals with finding and maintaining employment. ▪ Assist Individuals in discovery of healthy lifestyle choices, help them to engage in meaningful activities in the community, and encourage positive pro-social behaviors. ▪ Help individuals identify barriers to completing probation requirements and supporting them in overcoming those barriers. ▪ Remain an advocate when interacting with other service providers and educate service providers on engaging consumers with criminal justice history. ▪ Consider multiple issues when assisting individuals with housing options, including disqualifying criteria, cultural considerations, safety, relapse environment, type of offense, level of risk, stage of change, and history of recidivism. ▪ Understand the potential legal and community limitations of charges for

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	<p>some, such as "290" and arson registrations.</p>

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<p><u>15. Documentation skills and standards.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand current documentation requirements for submitting bills to Medi-Cal. ▪ Understand the concept of accountability. ▪ Understand and follow Mandatory Reporting requirements. ▪ Demonstrate a basic knowledge of medical language and chart/record documentation standards to communicate effectively with members of the care team and help the individual understand clinical situations and/or terminology. 	<p>No additional information is identified in this section.</p>

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<p><u>16. Confidentiality.</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) ▪ Understand Substance Abuse Confidentiality rules (42 CFR Part 2). ▪ Understand basic federal, state, employer regulations regarding confidentiality. 	<p>No additional information is identified in this section.</p>

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<p><u>17. Digital literacy</u></p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand digital platforms that can be used for service delivery, benefits acquisition, and resource connections. ▪ Understand digital privacy protections. 	<p>No additional information is identified in this section.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None 	<p><u>12. Recidivism Risk Factors</u> (criminogenic needs; Sequential Intercept Model; impact of trauma; resources; navigation barriers to integration)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand criminogenic needs as they relate to recidivism. The eight most significant criminogenic needs are: antisocial behavior; antisocial personality; criminal thinking; criminal associates; dysfunctional family; employment and education; leisure and recreation; and substance abuse. ▪ Understand how trauma can correlate with substance use (including self-medication) and criminal behavior. ▪ Understand how environmental factors such as their community may influence relapse or criminal behavior. ▪ Understand how mental illnesses associated with mania, extreme paranoia or hallucination may increase chances of law enforcement contact and incarceration. ▪ Discuss risks and protective factors that influence a person’s behavior. ▪ Teach skills that impact criminogenic needs. ▪ Share and role model own changes in own criminogenic thinking and behaviors.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None 	<p><u>13. Community Reintegration Support</u> (Sequential Intercept Model; criminal justice system continuum; behavioral health delivery systems; client rights and other legal protections; employment and vocational support; goal setting)</p> <p>Skills that can be assigned to this core competency include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a safe, non-judgmental space to persons in the early stages of re-entry. ▪ Support individuals to have accountability. ▪ Assist individuals with understanding and navigating the criminal justice system. ▪ Be able to constructively partner with support team. ▪ Provide aid, support, and motivation for meeting required mandates attached to any processes in the entire continuum of criminal justice involvement. ▪ Peer Support Specialists are not agents of the criminal justice system, and do not act as against the individual served ▪ Understand the Sequential Intercept Model and principles. ▪ Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions at various points of contact. ▪ Help reduce the time individuals stay in jail/prison through support, advocacy, and care coordination.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help people to negotiate and minimize continuing criminal sanctions through coaching, skills development, and role modeling as they make progress in recovery and meet criminal justice obligations. ▪ Provide information on the rights and responsibilities of discharged offenders and on satisfying criminal justice system requirements and conditions (probation, parole, etc.). ▪ Provide practical support by accompanying the person to initial probation meetings or treatment appointments. ▪ Know succinct clearances and restrictions on contact with peers on parole or previously incarcerated.

**Summary of Comparative Analysis of Core Competencies
for Working with Persons who are Justice Involved**

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