

New York State Peer Worker Certification Program in HIV, HCV or Harm Reduction Code of Ethics

Certified HIV, HCV or Harm Reduction Peer Workers are professionals who use their lived experience of HIV or HCV or accessing Harm Reduction services to assist others. Peer workers assist others with the goal of maximizing the health of people living with HIV, HCV, substance users and/or preventing new HIV/STD/Viral Hepatitis infections.

The principles that follow will guide Certified Peer Workers in their roles, relationships, and scope of responsibility.

1. Certified Peer Workers view themselves as professionals, demonstrate respect for the important work they do and maintain a commitment to continued learning and professional development.
2. Certified Peer Workers learn about the roles of other members of the care team and colleagues as appropriate. They work to maintain positive relationships with team members and colleagues and treat them with professional courtesy and respect.
3. Certified Peer Workers have a commitment to their own HIV, HCV or behavioral health care and are actively engaged in maintaining their physical, mental and emotional well-being.
4. Certified Peer Workers respect the rights and dignity of the people they serve. They never engage in any form of physical or psychological abuse or exploitation.
5. Certified Peer Workers abide by Mandatory Reporting standards established by regulatory and/or agency policy.
6. Certified Peer Workers respect the right of the people they serve to make their own decisions and refrain from passing judgement on behaviors or decisions that are different from their own. Certified Peer Workers respect the autonomy of the people they serve and demonstrate respect regardless of the decisions the people they serve make.
7. Certified Peer Workers appreciate and respect the cultural and spiritual beliefs and practices of the people they serve. Certified Peer Workers do not practice, condone, facilitate or collaborate in any form of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, disability, other preference or personal characteristic, condition or state.
8. Certified Peer Workers utilize supervision and abide by the standards for supervision established by the NYS DOH AIDS Institute, regulatory body, and/or their employer.
9. Certified Peer Workers never engage in romantic, sexual or intimate activities with the clients in their caseload and follow all relevant agency policies. Peer workers do not enter into business or any other inappropriate relationship with a client in their caseload. Certified Peer Workers will report any incidents that may be considered unprofessional to appropriate supervision.
10. Certified Peer Workers do not accept gifts of money or items of significant value, as defined by the employer or agency, from the people they serve. Certified Peer Workers

do not personally loan, give money or give items of significant value, as defined by the employer or agency, to the people they serve.

11. Certified Peer Workers only provide services and support within the hours, days and locations that are authorized by their employer/agency.
12. Certified Peer Workers will follow hiring agency policies on workplace conduct, including use of substances.
13. Certified Peer Workers do not offer services outside the boundaries of the Certified Peer Worker Competencies unless explicitly included in their job description and are otherwise trained, licensed or certified to do so.
14. Certified Peer Workers are not licensed practitioners of the healing arts. They do not offer advice to the people they serve to change prescribed medications or therapies in any way. Certified Peer Workers actively encourage and assist the people they serve to direct concerns about their prescribed medications or therapies to the prescribing provider or other healthcare professional.
15. Certified Peer Workers should refrain from communicating to the people they serve any personal opinions or assessments of the quality of services offered at their facility or any other facility. If someone they serve expresses concern regarding another staff member or service provider, the Certified Peer Worker: a) shares strategies for improving the relationship, b) encourages the individual to discuss the concern with the provider, and c) if needed, informs the individual that he or she may bring the concern to the appropriate staff member or appropriate regulatory body.
16. Certified Peer Workers are knowledgeable about their legal requirements for maintaining confidentiality of protected health information and other records. At all times and in all settings, Certified Peer Workers protect the confidentiality of persons served by the agency where they are employed, both during and after their period of employment.
17. Certified Peer Workers have a duty to inform the people they serve that information they share with the peer worker may become part of their record and may be shared with other members of the individual's care team or others as required by law, safety or agency policy.
18. Certified Peer Workers accurately document the services they provide in accordance with agency policy.
19. Certified Peer Workers follow the standard requirements for continuing education training as established by the certification body and/or their employer.
20. Certified peer workers are continually aware of the profession's mission, values and ethical principles and consistently act in a manner that is honest and responsible.

I attest that I will follow this Code of Ethics at all times. I understand that if complaints about my ethical behavior are filed, they will be fully investigated by the certifying body and if found valid, disciplinary action may occur up to and including loss of designation as a Certified Peer Worker.

Signature

Date