Peer Specialist Certification Program



2024 DBH Peer Specialist Certification Training Program & Waiver Testing

District of Columbia Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) is accepting applications for the 2024 DBH Peer Specialist Certification Training Program and Waiver Testing.

There are three sessions scheduled for training classes and three for Waiver testing.

Application deadlines, training dates, waiver testing and general instruction regarding practicum assignments for all sessions are provided in the class schedule section (see below).

Peer Specialists are self-identified people who are successful in the recovery process and who help others living with mental and/or substance use disorders.

Through mutual respect and shared understanding based on similar experiences, Peer Specialists help people get into treatment and meet the challenges to sustain recovery.

The Peer Specialist Certification Training Program builds on the experience of people in recovery with training in foundational competencies required by anyone who provides peer support in behavioral health services.

The Peer Specialist Certification Training Program will reinforce your knowledge based on personal experience, bring a unique prospective to person-centered care, and enrich our recovery support services.

The Peer Specialist Certification Training Program helps prepare individuals to qualify for available Certified Peer Specialist jobs within the community behavioral health provider network.

Under general supervision, a Certified Peer Specialist performs a wide range of tasks to help individuals regain control over their lives and their own recovery process.

DBH encourages certified providers to include Certified Peer Specialists in their workforce.

A Certified Peer Specialist offers critical support in a variety of ways including:

* Acting as a mentor and being present for those engaged in the recovery process.
* Helping people advocate for and access resources they need to support their recovery.
* Participating in the treatment team under supervision of a trained Behavioral Health Specialist.
* Leading recovery groups.
* Conducting surveys to gauge satisfaction with services.
* Bringing their personal experiences to decisions about program and policy development.
* Participating in community engagement activities to promote treatment and support services.

After successful completion of classroom training, an 80-hour field practicum must be completed with a behavioral health provider certified by the Department of Behavioral Health.

Participants who successfully complete program requirements will receive a two-year Peer Specialist Certification.

**Who is eligible for the program?**

The Peer Specialist Certification Training Program is for self-identified current or former consumers of behavioral health services who can support other individuals diagnosed with a mental illness and/or substance use disorder.

To be eligible for consideration, applicant must be a District resident, at least 18 years of age with a high school diploma, GED, or higher, and in recovery from a mental illness and/or substance use disorder for two years or longer.

To be consider for a **waiver**, applicant must be at least 18 years of age with a high school diploma, GED, or higher, and in recovery from a mental illness and/or substance use disorder for two years or longer, currently or formerly employed (including volunteer experience) in a peer capacity within a DC behavioral health system or its contractors for a minimum of five (5) years, or have current certification from another state or jurisdiction (in good standing).

**How do I apply for the program?**

A completed application along with a resume, proof of residency, evidence of education, and two letters of reference (no older than one year) must be emailed to dbh.cfaa@dc.gov, mailed, or hand-delivered to the Department of Behavioral Health Consumer and Family Affairs, 64 New York Avenue, NE, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20002 (Attn: CFA or hand-delivered to a CFA staff member).

**Only complete applications will be considered.**

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|  2024 Peer Specialist Certification Training Program Schedule & Waiver Testing |
| **Location** | **Application Deadline** | **In person Classes** | **Interview Dates** | **Orientation** |
| 64 New York Ave NEWash, DC 20002 | February 9, 2024 at 12 pm  | February 20 – March 29, 2024Monday – Friday9:00 am – 12:30 pm | Scheduled upon selection | To be determined |
| 64 New York Ave NEWash, DC 20002 | April 12, 2024 at 12pm | May 13 – June 21, 2024Monday – Friday9:00 am – 12:30 pm | Scheduled upon selection | To be determined |
| 64 New York Ave NEWash, DC 20002 | June 21, 2024 at 12pm | July 1 – August 9, 2024Monday – Friday9:00 am – 12:30 pm | Scheduled upon selection | To be determined |
| **Location** | **Waiver Application Deadline** | **Waiver Interview Dates** | **Waiver Test Dates** |   |
| 64 New York Ave NEWash, DC 20002 | February 2, 2024at 12pm | To be determined | To be determined |   |
| 64 New York Ave NEWash, DC 20002 | April 12, 2024at 12pm | To be determined | To be determined |   |
| 64 New York Ave NEWash, DC 20002 | June 21, 2024at 12pm | To be determined | To be determined |   |
| Practicum Assignments |
| Practicum assignments are coordinated by CPS Program Coordinator. Schedules for practicums are customized by the trainee and host provider. Practicum dates generally do not exceed 4 weeks post class completion. The DBH Training Team provides support to the trainee throughout this process. |

**Service Details:**

[Consumers and Families](https://dbh.dc.gov/service/consumers-and-families)

**Attachment(s):**

 [Peer Specialist Waiver Application](https://dbh.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dmh/service_content/attachments/2024%20Waiver%20Application.pdf) - 210.6 KB (pdf)

 [2024 Peer Specialist Certification Training Program Application.pdf](https://dbh.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dmh/service_content/attachments/2024%20Peer%20Specialist%20Certification%20Training%20Program%20Application.pdf) - 142.5 KB (pdf)