

Behavioral Health Peer Specialist

Description:

Under direct supervision and in a learning capacity, the incumbent will be responsible for the development and on-going provision of peer support services within Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The Behavioral Health Peer Specialist encompasses the trainee level to the fully trained, competent Behavioral Health Peer Specialist in the flexible classification series. Incumbents in the Behavioral Health Peer Specialist Series are unique in that they have personal lived experience with behavioral health and/or recovery challenges themselves and/or they may be the caregivers/family members of individual(s) with behavioral health and recovery challenges. The Behavioral Health Peer Specialist is expected to possess the ability to work in a capacity performing necessary non-professional work under direct supervision.

Incumbents perform duties of increasing responsibility as expertise is gained. The Behavioral Health Peer Specialist is distinguished from the Senior Behavioral Health Peer Specialist classification by the limited degree of responsibility and decision-making afforded to incumbents. Promotion to Senior Behavioral Health Peer Specialist is considered on a merit basis upon completion of the minimum qualifications, and is subject to the recommendation of the Director of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

Essential Functions:

- Provides peer assistance and mentoring to promote consumer engagement in supportive networks, natural supports, and activities within and outside the behavioral health system.
- Serve as a mentor/role model demonstrating competency in recovery, effective coping skills and self-help strategies.
- Develops effective working relationships with agencies and organizations to advocate for client and family/caregiver empowerment.
- Outreaches to unengaged consumers, face-to-face or by phone
- Facilitates peer self-help/recovery groups (e.g. Wellness Recovery Action Plan) for consumers, family members, and caregivers.
- Attends and participates in special events, conferences, workshops and trainings with the behavioral health system and in the community
- Assists in organizing training activities and with providing educational materials on Behavioral Health Recovery for community groups, behavioral health consumers, family members, and staff.
- Transports clients to and from medical and social service appointments.
- Recommends and makes referrals to programs for instruction on life skills, livelihood skills and workplace readiness skills necessary for successful reintegration into family life, the work force and the community.
- Performs basic typing and computer tasks; accesses, utilizes, and maintains electronic records and files, including an electronic health record computer program.
- Performs other job-related duties as assigned.

Employment Standards:

Minimum Qualifications:

- High School Diploma or GED equivalent.
- Must be a current or past consumer of mental health or co-occurring behavioral health services or family member or caregiver of a current or former mental health or co-occurring behavioral health services consumer.
- Three (3) months of full time paid experience working in a social service or mental health setting in a capacity requiring interaction with the chronically mentally ill **OR** 320 hours of volunteer experience completed within a 6-month period if confirmed in writing from a recognized organization.
- A valid California Class "C" Driver's License is required at the time of appointment.

Additional Requirements:

Within 120 days of hire incumbents must obtain current certification in the Peer Employment Training (PET) and the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) training. Certification must be obtained within the time specified or employment will be terminated.

Dependent upon assignment, applicants may be required to pass an extensive background investigation and be fingerprinted. Disqualification for felony, misdemeanor, and traffic offenses will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Incumbents may be required to work flexible hours including evenings, weekends, and holidays.

Knowledge of: local community behavioral health services, community agencies and support groups; basic vehicle and field safety procedures; office functions and procedures including basic computer and record keeping; crisis intervention techniques; basic math; and public relations.

Ability to: publicly acknowledge and share personal recovery experiences and provide support to other person-in-recovery; interact and train mental health consumers and their families; read and comprehend medical information; obtain and complete routine forms; maintain records; operate a vehicle in a safe manner; writes clearly; understand and follow oral and written instructions; establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, other County departments, public and private agencies; utilize a computer and associated software; access, utilize and retrieve electronic records and files; represent and advocate for the consumer perspective within the community and behavioral health system; effectively communicate the workings of the behavioral health system to clients, families, and caregivers.

A background check may be conducted for this classification.

All Kern County employees are designated "Disaster Service Workers" through state and local laws (CA Government Code Sec. 3100-3109 and Ordinance Code Title 2-Administration, Ch. 2.66 Emergency Services). As Disaster Service Workers, all County employees are expected to remain at work, or to report for work as soon as practicable, following a significant emergency or disaster.