

Peer Support Specialists: Preserving the Workforce



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Peer Support Specialists: Preserving the Workforce

Welcome and Overview



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- Welcome, Introductions
- House Bill 1486
- Preserving the Workforce Requirements
 - Peers
 - Peer Supervisors
 - Trainers
- Next Steps

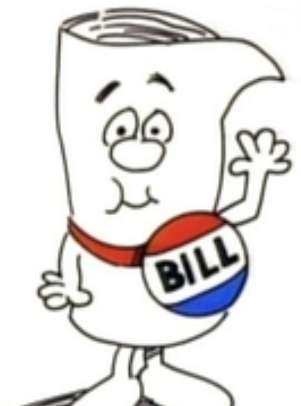
House Bill 1486



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Authored by Representative Four Price in the 85th Legislative Session, the bill requires HHSC to:

- Adopt rules related to peer specialists, providing services to persons with a mental health or substance use condition under Medicaid, including peer specialist certification.
- Establish a stakeholder workgroup to provide input on the rules, which meets at least monthly until the rules are adopted.



New Medicaid Benefit: “Peer Support”



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- HHSC created a stand-alone medical policy in conjunction with the Texas Administrative Code rules for Medicaid peer services, applicable to both mental health and substance use.
- These rules do **not** apply to non-Medicaid peer services nor Medicaid mental health rehabilitation, which is governed by other pre-existing rules.

Peer Support Stakeholder Work Group



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- 22 member workgroup
- Members applied and were appointed by the HHSC Executive Commissioner
- Representatives include:
 - Peer trainers
 - Training organizations
 - Peers and recovery coaches
 - Organizations that use peers



HHSC thanks the stakeholder workgroup for their wisdom, passion, and patience in working through many difficult decisions related to the draft rules.

Preserving the Current Workforce



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- The new rules include exceptions for those already performing a specific duty to continue performing that duty under the new rules without having to meet all of the requirements.
- Exceptions are included for:
 - Currently certified peer specialists (MH and SUD)
 - Peer specialists supervisors
 - Trainers and instructors

Peer Specialist Requirements



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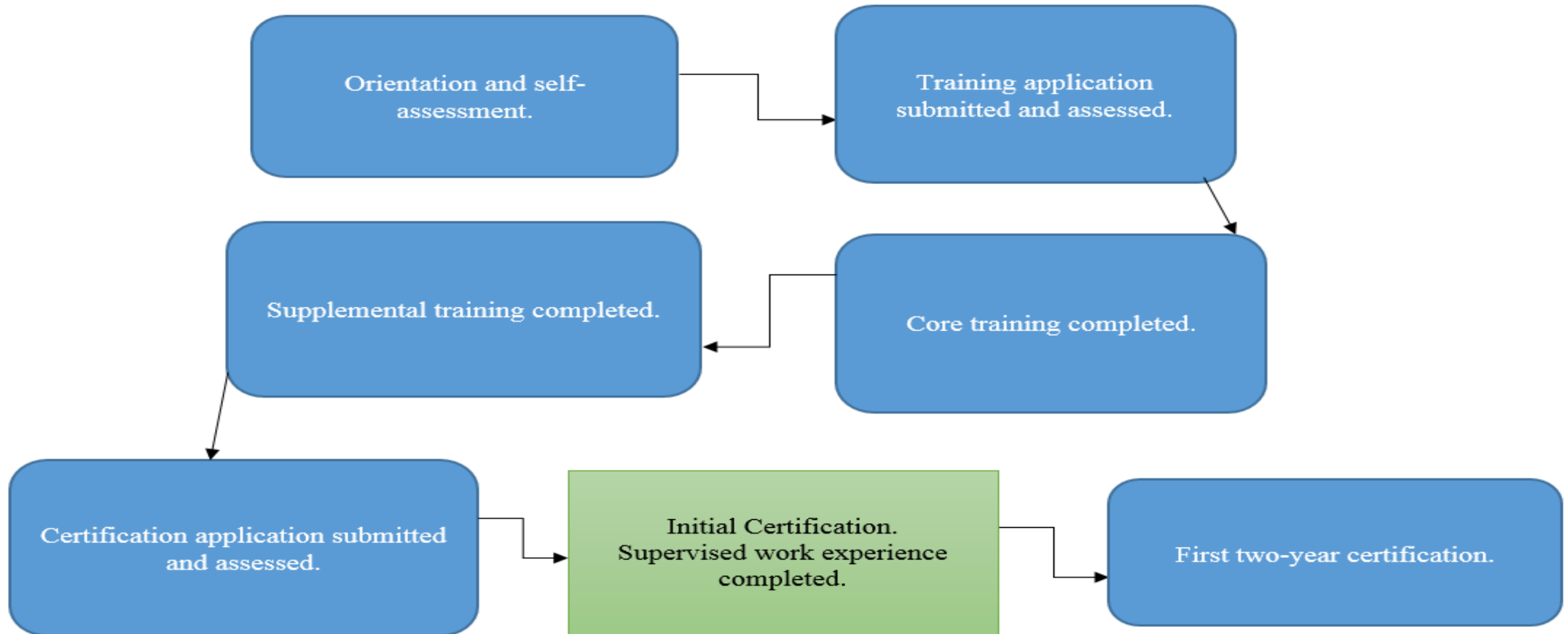
A peer specialist must:

- (1) be at least 18 years old;
- (2) have lived experience;
- (3) have a high school diploma or GED;
- (4) be willing to appropriately share own recovery story;
- (5) pass criminal history and registry checks ; and
- (6) attend core and specialty training, and pass the knowledge assessments for both.

Certification Process Flowchart



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Preserving the Current Workforce: SU Peers



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Current peer specialists for substance use:

- If you have at passed the IC&RC exam and have at least 250 hours of supervised work experience:
 - Apply at www.tcbap.org for the Recovery Support Peer Specialist Certification
 - Submit proof of background check through IdentoGO
- If you do not have the required 250 hours of supervised work experience **and** have not passed an exam, contact TCBAP about your current progress toward full certification and how to move forward with an application under Medicaid rules



Preserving the Current Workforce: MH Peers



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Current certified peer specialists:

- **Via Hope:** Certified Peer Specialists certified by Via Hope can be certified as a Mental Health Peer Specialist with application, background check, and documentation of 250 hours of supervised work experience
- May be certified through initial certification without 250 hours of documented supervised work experience



Preserving the Current Workforce: MH Peers



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Via Hope will not be involved in the Medicaid certification process. However, TCBAP will have access to Via Hope's database to confirm your certification status.



Preserving the Current Workforce: MH Peers



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Peers currently certified by Via Hope:

- Apply at www.tcbap.org for the Mental Health Peer Specialist Certification
- Download a supervised work experience (SWE) form from the web site
- Submit SWE form signed by the person who supervised those hours (or has access to the documentation verifying those hours)
- Submit proof of background check through IdentoGO

Those who cannot verify the 250 hours of SWE but hold the certification from VIA Hope can receive an initial certification good for six (6) months. They must complete the required 250 hours and submit the SWEI form within the six (6) months, or the certification will expire.

Preserving the Current Workforce: Peer Supervisors



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New type of supervisor designation: Qualified Peer Supervisor (QPS).

A QPS must:

- (A) be a certified peer specialist under this subchapter; and
- (B) have one of the following combinations:

(i) a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) and at least four years of work experience as a peer specialist, up to two years of which may be substituted by work experience supervising others; or

(ii) an associate's degree or higher from an accredited college or university and at least two years of work experience as a peer specialist.



Preserving the Current Workforce: Peer Supervisors



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Peer specialist supervisor requirements:

- At least two years of experience supervising peer specialists within the last five years
- Successful completion of the required supervisor training knowledge assessment required by these rules.
- If a person is unable to successfully complete the knowledge assessment, the certification entity may:
 - Deny the request; or
 - Accept the request for an initial one-year period during which time the person must successfully complete specific training and pass the knowledge assessment

Preserving the Current Workforce: Peer Supervisors



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- Apply at www.tcbap.org for the Peer Supervisor Certification
- Submit proof of background check through IdentoGO
- Pass knowledge assessment (details to be finalized)

Preserving the Current Workforce: Training Entities



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A training entity under the Medicaid rules may be an organization or an individual.

A training entity, whether it is an organization or an individual trainer, must meet the requirements of §354.3151. This rule lists policies and processes that must be in place, as well as documentation and other requirements which must be met.



Preserving the Current Workforce: Instructors



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Instructor who is also a stand-alone training entity:

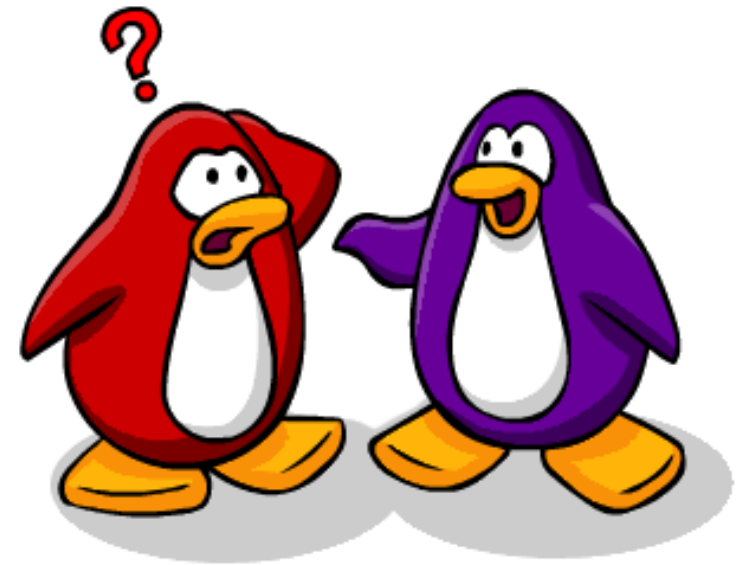
1. Apply as a training entity
2. Apply for exception as a pre-existing instructor

Instructor who is part of an organization:

1. Organization must apply as a training entity
2. Apply for exception as a pre-existing instructor

Training organization:

1. Apply as a training entity
2. Have each of your instructors who meets exception criteria apply as a pre-existing instructor



Preserving the Current Workforce: Instructors



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Instructor requirements:

- Consistently providing peer specialist training in the last two years
- Restricted to providing only supplemental training in the area of specialty for which they have historically provided training
- Existing trainers will not be required to be a certified peer specialist as new trainers will be required under these rules

Preserving the Current Workforce: Instructors



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Each instructor:

- Apply at www.tcbap.org
- Submit proof of background check through IdentoGO

Organizations are not subject to the exception process, and must submit an application, with all required policies and procedures, to TCBAP in order to become certified.



Implementation



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- HHSC will provide a sustained technical assistance effort to facilitate provider readiness to fully integrate peer support into their service arrays.
- HHSC staff will continue visiting many areas of the state to generate interest and provide a forum for organizations to explore the benefits and challenges of implementing peer support.

Resources



- **Texas HHS Peer Recovery Webpage:**

<https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/behavioral-health-services-providers/peer-support-services>

- **Texas Certification Board of Addiction Professionals:**

<https://www.tcbap.org/>

- **Via Hope**

<https://www.viahope.org/>



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Thank You!

Who Can Bill?



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Facilities or provider types that are already delivering Medicaid mental health or substance use disorder treatment, such as:

- Chemical Dependency Treatment Facilities
- Local Mental Health Authorities
- Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Physician groups
- Clinic/group practices

NOTE: Peer services will not be separately reimbursed to providers who are currently paid an encounter rate or bundled rate.