

Mental Health Peer Specialist (MHPS) Training and Certification

Steps for peers to become certified to bill Medicaid

Since 2010, Via Hope has provided the only ongoing training and certification program for Certified Peer Specialists in Texas. During the last nine years, we have trained and certified over 1,500 individuals.

Effective January 1, 2019, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission implemented a new peer support benefit for the state Medicaid Program. There is a specific training and certification process that must be followed for peers to be eligible to bill Medicaid. Once certified, individuals will have the credential of “Mental Health Peer Specialist” (MHPS) or Recovery Support Peer Specialist (RSPS), rather than the designation of Certified Peer Specialist (CPS). An RSPS is a peer specialist that works in the substance use area.

Via Hope has changed its’ training approach so that anyone completing our peer specialist training will be eligible to apply for this new certification. Via Hope will no longer issue a separate certification for individuals that complete our training; the Medicaid certification will be the only credential available for peer specialists.

Steps below:

The following is a summary of the steps for this new training and certification process. You must complete each step, in order, to be eligible for certification.

1. Review the online orientation materials below and complete the self-assessment. You must acknowledge at the end that you have reviewed the materials. This will enable you to apply for training on the Core Principles of Peer Support (“Core” training).
2. Apply and take the Core training. Complete the application and submit along with payment by credit card. Application for the Core training is not a competitive process; all eligible applicants are accepted. The current fee is \$75 (no refunds).The Core training is a 6-7 hour, facilitated and interactive webinar. You must register at least one week prior to the next scheduled training. Once your application and payment are received by Via Hope, you will be sent an email with instructions for logging onto the training. At the end of the Core training is a short knowledge assessment. Once you complete and pass the knowledge assessment you will be able to apply for supplemental training.
3. Apply for the supplemental training in either mental health or substance use peer support. The training to become an MHPS or VMHPS (Veterans Mental Health Peer Specialist) are both a competitive process. If you are accepted, you will be sent an invoice for payment by credit card and information about the training. The current registration fee is \$650. The supplemental training is a five day, 40 hour, classroom style training held in various cities around the state. Refer to our training calendar for details [here](#). At the end of the supplemental training, you will get an email with a link

to take an online knowledge assessment. Once you complete and pass the knowledge assessment you will receive instructions for downloading and printing a confirmation that you have successfully completed all the steps in the training process. You will need this document to apply for certification.

4. Apply for certification with (TCB) Texas Certification Board (Refer to their websites for information on how to apply, what documentation is needed, and the cost [Here](#). Via Hope is not involved in this Certification process and cannot provide any additional information. The initial certification is valid for six months. During this time, you must complete 250 hours of supervised work experience. You may then apply for recertification for a full two year certification period.