

CPS Application

Certified Peer Specialist

A certification for mental health or co-occurring peer specialists

PCB

298 S. Progress Ave.
Harrisburg, PA 17109
717-540-4455 (phone)
717-540-4458 (fax)

www.pacertboard.org
info@pacertboard.org

DIRECTIONS/CHECKLIST – READ DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY

Prior to submitting your application to PCB, please review the following list to be sure you have included all the necessary documentation.

1. Documentation of the 75-hour peer specialist certification training from one of the three approved training vendors (Institute for Recovery and Community Integration, RI Consulting and the Copeland Center). Submit a photocopy of the certificate of completion provided by the training vendor.
2. Sign and date the PCB Peer Code of Ethical Conduct – page 11.
3. Notarized release form – page 7.
4. Complete the payment page (page 6). CPS fee is due with your completed application.
5. Complete and return **ONLY** pages 5,6, 7 and 11 and include a copy of your 75-hour peer training certificate.
6. If you have ever been convicted of a felony violation in any state or per federal law, please explain in full on a separate sheet and include the separate sheet with your application. Most convictions will NOT impact your ability to obtain the CPS. It is for information purposes only.

DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION UNTIL YOU HAVE MET ALL REQUIREMENTS.

If there are any problems with the application, you will be notified by mail, phone, or email.

Keep a photocopy of the entire application for your records.

TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION, CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

Mail:

PCB

298 S. Progress Avenue

Harrisburg, PA 17109

Email: info@pacertboard.org

Fax: 717-540-4458

Please allow 5-10 business days for review and processing of your application.

To confirm receipt of your application, or check on the status you must email info@pacertboard.org.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CPS

Experience

- Within the last three (3) years, have either maintained at least 12 months of successful work or earned at least 24 credit hours at a college or post-secondary education institution.
 - Official transcripts sent directly from the education institution to PCB are required to verify credit hours.

Education

- Completion of the 75 hours of approved peer specialist certification training.
 - Copeland Center: <https://copelandcenter.com/our-services/certified-peer-specialist-training-cps>
 - The Institute for Recovery: <http://www.mhrecovery.org/>
 - RI Consulting: <https://riinternational.com/consulting/training/>

Examination

- Pass the Examination for Certified Peer Specialists.

Other

- Signed and dated Code of Ethical Conduct.
- Signed, dated and notarized Release.
- You must either live or work in Pennsylvania at time of application.
- You must be a person with lived experience.
- You must be 18 years of age or older.

Fees

Certification:	\$125 <i>(fee must accompany application and materials)</i>
Retest:	\$75
Exam Cancellation:	\$75

CPS EXAMINATION

The CPS exam is a 50-question multiple choice exam given in paper and pencil format. One and a half hours (1.5) is the time permitted to complete the exam.

Dates and locations for when the examination is given will be provided to candidates **AFTER** they have applied for the CPS and had their application approved. No set exam dates, times or locations are posted nor will they be provided to anyone until a CPS application is approved.

You cannot sit for the examination until you have submitted your completed CPS application and fee to PCB and it has been approved by PCB. You are not permitted to “show up” at an examination location until you have received an official email notice from PCB confirming you are scheduled for an examination.

If you arrive late for your examination, you will **NOT** be permitted to test. Examination results will be mailed to CPS candidates within 2-3 weeks after the examination is completed. Results will **NOT** be provided over the phone or email.

Special Situations: Individuals with disabilities and/or religious obligations that require modifications in exam administration may request specific procedure changes, in writing, to PCB no fewer than 60 days prior to the scheduled exam date. With the written request, candidate must provide official documentation of the disability or religious issue. Contact PCB on what constitutes official documentation. PCB will make arrangements for appropriate modifications to its procedures when documentation supports this need.

CERTIFICATION TIME PERIOD

PCB certification is valid for two years starting on the date the application is approved. Two dates, date of issue and valid through, will appear on the certificate along with a certification number.

RENEWAL OF YOUR CPS EVERY TWO YEARS

To maintain your CPS certification, PCB requires renewal **every two years**.

To renew CPS certification, an individual must:

1. Hold a current and valid certificate issued by PCB;
2. Acquire 36 CEUs of relevant education/training every two years per the following:
 - a. 24 CEUs must be specifically focused on peer support or recovery practices or both;
 - b. 3 CEUs must be in ethics (i.e. boundaries, confidentiality, cultural competence, mental health law, mandated reporting, etc.);
 - c. 9 CEUs are elective and can be any education/training the CPS chooses;
 - d. The education/training hours can be from various sources (online, face-to-face trainings, in-service trainings, college courses, home study trainings, webinars, etc.);
3. Sign and date the PCB Peer Code of Ethical Conduct for CPS;
4. Complete a renewal application and pay the \$50 renewal fee.

APPLICATION FOR CPS CERTIFICATION

Please type or print only.

Date: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Male Female Self-identify _____

Name: _____ SSN: _____
Please print your name as it should appear on your certificate

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

County: _____ Home Phone: _____ Email: _____

Are you currently serving in the military? Yes No

Have you ever served in the military? Yes No

Are you currently employed? Full-time Part-time Unemployed Other _____

If employed, do you work in the behavioral health field? Yes No If no, what field are you working in? _____

RACE/ETHNICITY (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY): AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN ASIAN
 NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER LATINO HISPANIC CAUCASIAN NOT LISTED: _____

If applicable, please complete the following based upon your most current employer or volunteer organization's information:

Organization: _____ Position/Title: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

County: _____ Phone: _____ Ext: _____

Start Date: _____

I attest that I am a person with mental health or co-occurring (mental health & substance use disorder) lived experience.

Applicant signature

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Fee of \$125 can be paid using one of the following:

Payment (circle one): Check Money Order VISA MasterCard Discover American Express

Checks & Money Orders made payable to PCB

Number: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____

3-digit code: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Name on Card: _____

Billing address: _____

(If different than Home Address)

Email address for receipt *(if paying by credit card only)*: _____

TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION, CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS:

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PCB

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Harrisburg, PA 17109

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info@pacertboard.org

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RELEASE

(must be notarized below)

I hereby request that PCB grant the CPS certification to me based on the following assurances and documentation:

I agree to maintain professional conduct in keeping with the PCB Peer Code of Ethical Conduct;

I pledge that the information I have provided in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Falsification of any records or documents in my application will void this application and will result in denial or revocation of the CPS certification;

I agree to allow PCB to gather additional information, if necessary, from any of my education or employment sources and understand that such information will be treated as confidential;

I agree that any allegations of ethical misconduct that may be reported to PCB regarding my ethical behavior may be investigated by PCB and may result in the suspension or loss of my CPS certification.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

On this the _____ day of _____, 201____, by me _____

a notary public, the undersigned officer, personally appeared: _____,

known to me or satisfactorily proven to be the person whose name is subscribed to the within

instrument and acknowledged that she/he executed the same for the purposes therein contained. In

witness whereof, I hereby set my hand and official seal. Sworn and subscribed before me this _____

day of _____, 201_____.

Notary Public

SEAL:

Certified Peer Specialist Code of Ethical Conduct

Prologue

As a Certified Peer Specialist, you have distinguished yourself by becoming a unique and influential member of the mental health community. You have each accepted your mental health diagnosis as a part of who you are, not as a liability, but as your own path of challenges and successes you've had which have helped you build strength, character, and resilience. You have shared your path freely with others to foster openness and eliminate stigma. You have excelled in your recovery to such an extent that you are able to share your story as a source of hope to others and have chosen to do so as a certified professional.

The effectiveness of the Certified Peer Specialist comes from the successful integration of two distinct perspectives: the individual in recovery and the mental health professional. When working with individuals who may be scared, confused, or intimidated by the complexities of the mental health system, it is your experience as a peer that can reassure them and inspire them to continue their own path to recovery. Shared experience creates strong relationships. As a Certified Peer Specialist, however, it is your professional responsibility to guarantee that the relationship between you and your peer adheres to a clear, strong ethical code.

The Pennsylvania Certification Board (referred to herein as "the Board" or "the PCB") provides certification for Certified Peer Specialists as a way of assuring competence to peers, to the public, and to employers. The PCB is dedicated to the principle that individuals in the field of Peer Support must be held to the highest standards of ethical practice. To that end, the PCB has adopted this Code of Ethical Conduct to be applied to all professionals certified by or seeking certification by the board. Individuals are subject to this code from the date of application to the PCB by the applicant. The Code of Ethical Conduct exists for the protection of peers.

Rules of Conduct

The following Rules of Conduct, adopted by the PCB, set forth the minimum standards of conduct which all certified professionals are expected to honor. The PCB is committed to investigate and sanction any failure to comply with an obligation or prohibition set forth in these rules and may result in disciplinary action. Ethical resolution is a critical process and all certified professionals are expected to engage in ethical decision-making that includes the evaluation of context of the situation, meaningful values, the appropriate ethical standards, is consultative in nature, and includes a credible model for ethical decision-making. The Board, through its Ethics Committee, is available and willing to act in a consultative fashion to answer any questions pertaining to ethical conduct or dilemmas faced by certified professionals.

Principle: Recovery First

A certified professional shall role-model wellness and recovery and develop a support team and resources to stay in recovery.

A certified professional shall recognize the effect of impairment on professional performance and shall be willing to seek appropriate treatment for oneself. A certified professional who chooses not to seek support for any substance use disorder, psychiatric or psychological impairment, emotional distress, or for any other physical health related adversity that interferes with their professional functioning shall be in violation of this rule. Where any such conditions exist, and impede their ability to function competently, a certified professional must request inactive status of their PCB credential for medical reasons for as long as necessary.

A certified professional shall not use any illicit substances or use any prescribed psychoactive medication in a manner that is contraindicated or not recommended by his/her prescribing professional to the extent that such use impairs his/her ability to safely and competently provide peer support services.

Principle: Service Approach

The certified professional shall not discontinue professional services to a peer support recipient nor shall they abandon the peer support recipient without facilitating an appropriate closure or transfer of professional services for the peer support recipient.

Principle: Confidentiality

A certified professional shall not reveal confidential information obtained as the result of a professional relationship, without the prior written consent from the recipient of services, except as authorized or required by state and/or federal law.

The certified professional shall not permit publication of photographs, disclosure of peer support recipient names or records, or the nature of services being provided without securing all requisite releases from the peer support recipient, parents or legal guardians of the peer support recipient, or service agencies of the peer support recipient.

Principle: Non-Discrimination

A certified professional may not discriminate against an individual receiving services based on race, color, creed, disability, religious affiliation, ancestry, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age, socio-economic status, political belief, and pathway to recovery and shall observe all applicable state and/or federal statutes and regulations.

Principle: Integrity

As determined by PCB, once certified, a certified professional shall not be convicted for any offense related to the individual's ability to provide peer support and other behavioral health services or that reflects conduct unbecoming a certified professional.

A certified professional shall, under no circumstances:

- Engage in romantic/sexual activities or romantic/sexual conduct with individuals to whom you have provided peer support services, whether such contact is consensual or forced. This prohibition applies to both in-person and electronic interactions or relationships. If a certified professional engages in conduct contrary to this prohibition or claims that an exception to this prohibition is warranted because of extraordinary circumstances, it is the certified professional – not the recipient of peer support services – who assumes the full burden of demonstrating that the former recipient has not been exploited, coerced, or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally.
- Engage in romantic/sexual activities or romantic/sexual contact with peer support recipients' relatives or other individuals with whom peer support recipients maintain a close personal relationship. This prohibition applies to both in-person and electronic interactions or relationships for a period of no less than two years after the recipient no longer receives services from that certified professional.
- Provide peer support services to individuals with whom they have had a prior romantic/sexual relationship. This prohibition applies to both in-person and electronic interactions or relationships.
- Use misrepresentation in the procurement of certification or recertification or assist another in the preparation or procurement of certification or recertification through misrepresentation. The term "misrepresentation" includes, but is not limited to, the misrepresentation of professional qualifications, education, certification, accreditation, affiliations, employment experience, the plagiarism of application and recertification materials, or the falsification of references.
- Use a title designation, credential or license, firm name, letterhead, publication, term, title, or document which states or implies an ability, relationship, or qualification that does not exist and to which they are not entitled.
- Sign or issue, in their professional capacity, a document or a statement that the professional knows to contain a false or misleading statement.

- Knowingly produce, publish, create, or participate in the creation of any false, fraudulent, deceptive, or misleading advertisement.
- When participating in the writing, editing, or publication of professional papers, media resources, brochures, or books fail to act to preserve the integrity of the profession by acknowledging and documenting any materials and/or techniques or people (i.e. co-authors, researchers, etc.) used in creating their opinions/papers, books, etc.
- Initiate, develop, and/or maintain a friendship with peer support recipients and/or family members of peer support recipients. This prohibition applies to both in-person and electronic interactions or relationships for a period of no less than one year after the recipient no longer receives services from that certified professional.
- Misappropriate property from peer support recipients and/or family members of peer support recipients.
- Enter, facilitate, or maintain a financial relationship with a peer support recipient, a peer support recipients' relative, or other individual with whom the peer support recipients maintain any type of relationship.
- Promote to a peer support recipient for a certified professional's personal gain any treatment, procedure, product, or service.
- Ask for nor accept gifts or favors from peer support recipients and/or family members of peer support recipients in accordance to the policy of their agency.
- Offer, give, or receive commissions, rebates, or any other forms of remuneration for a peer support recipient referral.
- Falsify, amend, or knowingly make incorrect entries or fail to make timely essential entries into the peer support recipient record.
- Refer a peer support recipient to a person that he/she knows is not qualified by training, experience, certification, or license to perform the delegated professional responsibility.

Principle: Scope of Practice

A certified professional shall meet and comply with all terms, conditions, or limitations of a certification or license.

A certified professional shall not perform services outside of their area of training, expertise, competence, or scope of practice.

A certified professional shall not fail to obtain an appropriate consultation or make an appropriate referral when the peer support recipients' problem is beyond their area of training, expertise, confidence, or scope of practice.

Principle: Cooperation

All certified professionals are mandated reporters per the Older Adult Protective Services Law, the Adult Protective Services Law, and the Child Protective Services Law.

A certified professional holding a certification, license, or other authorization to practice issued by any certification authority or any state, province, territory, tribe, or federal government whose certification or license becomes suspended, revoked, placed on probation, or other restriction or discipline shall promptly alert the PCB of such disciplinary action.

A certified professional shall cooperate in any investigation conducted pursuant to this Code of Ethical Conduct and shall not interfere with an investigation or a disciplinary proceeding or attempt to prevent a disciplinary proceeding or other legal action from being filed, prosecuted, or completed. Interference attempts may include but are not limited to:

- The willful misrepresentation of facts before the disciplining authority or its authorized representative;
- The use of threats or harassment against, or an inducement to, any peer support recipient or witness to prevent them from providing evidence in a disciplinary proceeding or any other legal action;
- The use of threats or harassment against, or an inducement to, any person to prevent or attempt to prevent a disciplinary proceeding or other legal action from being filed, prosecuted, or completed;

- Refusing to accept and/or respond to a letter of complaint, allowing a credential to lapse while an ethics complaint is pending, or attempting to resign a credential while an ethics complaint is pending.

Violation of this rule under these circumstances will result in the immediate and indefinite suspension of the certified professional’s credential until the ethical complaint is resolved.

A certified professional shall:

- Not make a false statement to the PCB or any other disciplinary authority;
- Promptly alert colleagues informally to potentially unethical behavior so said colleague could take corrective action;
- Report violations of professional conduct of other certified professionals to the appropriate licensing/disciplinary authority when he/she knows or should have known that another certified professional has violated ethical standards and has failed to take corrective action after informal intervention.

A certified professional shall report any uncorrected violation of the Code of Ethical Conduct within 90 days of alleged violation. Failure to report a violation may be grounds for discipline.

A certified professional with first-hand knowledge of the actions of a respondent or a complainant shall cooperate with the PCB investigation or disciplinary proceeding. Failure or an unwillingness to cooperate in the PCB investigation or disciplinary proceedings shall be grounds for disciplinary actions which may include but are not limited to a written reprimand, a time-limited suspension of a credential, or full revocation of a credential.

A certified professional shall not file a complaint or provide information to the PCB, which he/she knows or should have known, is false or misleading.

In submitting information to PCB, a certified professional shall comply with any requirements pertaining to the disclosure of peer support recipient information established by the federal or state government.

My signature below affirms that I have read and promise to uphold the Certified Peer Specialist Code of Ethical Conduct in the performance of my role as a Certified Peer Specialist.

Signature

Date