

Code of Ethics for Alaska Peer Support Professionals

(This code is a compilation of elements from both the Code of Ethics from the Alaska Peer Support Consortium and the NAADAC National Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialist Code of Ethics adopted by Peer Support Advisory Board on 9/21/20)

A peer support provider is a person in recovery from a behavioral health issue, or the family member of a person in recovery from a behavioral health issue, who plays a vital role in supporting similar individuals in their recovery journey (e.g. person to person, family member to family member).

The peer-support worker is responsible for providing an array of support services and interventions designed to inspire hope, support personal responsibility, promote understanding, offer education, and promote self-advocacy and self-determination.

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to outline the basic values and expectations of peer support practice. The code will serve as a guide for Peer Support Professionals (PSP) in Alaska by defining professional responsibility and ethical standards for the profession.

The primary responsibility of the peer support worker is to assist individuals in achieving their own needs, wants, and goals. PSPs are guided by the principle of self-determination for all and shall serve as advocates for the people they serve. Peer Support Professionals will maintain high standards of personal conduct and conduct themselves in a manner that fosters their own recovery journey.

Peer Support Professionals perform services within the boundaries of their expertise and shall be aware of the limits of their training and capabilities. Peer Support Professionals work in collaboration with other professionals to best meet the needs of the individual(s) served. The intention of a Peer Support Professional will be to preserve an objective and professional relationship. This Certification does not endorse, suggest, or intend that a Peer Support Professional will serve independently. The Peer Support Professional will only work under supervision.

Values

People have a right to be treated with respect and dignity and have their own human rights respected.

People have a right to privacy and confidentiality.

Self-directed recovery is possible for everyone.

Sharing our recovery experiences fosters mutual relationships, reduces isolation, inspires hope, and strengthens the ongoing recovery process.

People have the capacity to live the full and meaningful lives they envision for themselves.

People have the right to make their own informed choices about treatment even if others think it is not in their best interest.

Peer support values the importance of community building, cultural supports, and natural supports (family, church, NA, AA, friends, etc.)

Relationship with Clients

As a Peer Support Professional (PSP):

1. I will clearly explain my role and responsibilities to those I serve.
2. I will inform peers of the cost of my services as established by the agency for which I am employed.
3. I will not intimidate, threaten, harass, use undue influence, physical force, or verbal abuse; neglect, ignore or make unwarranted promises of benefits to peers I support.
4. I will affirm diversity among other Peer-support workers and peers regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic/racial background, religious or spiritual beliefs, marital status, political beliefs, mental or physical disability. I will relate to all peers with empathy and understanding regardless of diagnosis or personal history.
5. As a peer support worker, I will respect the privacy and confidentiality of peers I support except where my peer has given specific, written, informed, and limited consent. I will also inform the peer I support that I am a Mandatory Reporter. I am obligated to breach confidentiality in cases where there is reasonable cause to believe that there is known or suspected child abuse or neglect, neglect or abuse of a vulnerable adult, or an individual is a threat to themselves or others.
6. I will advocate for the peers I support with impartiality and objectivity. I will not impose my personal values on peers. I will respect my peers' individual human rights to self-determination when making their own informed decisions that they consider in their own best interest.
7. I will advocate for the person to achieve full integration/citizenship in society.
8. I will terminate the relationship with a person(s) served when services appear no longer of benefit and to respect the rights of the person served to terminate services at his/her request.
9. I will request a change in my role as a PSP with a person being served if the person served requests a change.

Conflicts of Interest

As a Peer Support Professional (PSP):

1. I will disclose any existing or pre-existing professional, social, or business relationships with person(s) served. I will determine, in consultation with my professional supervisor, whether existing or pre-existing relationships interfere with my ability to provide peer support services person(s) served.
2. I will not engage in romantic relationships nor engage in sexual/intimate behaviors with the peers I am supporting or members of the immediate family of person(s) served.

3. I will not accept substantial gifts or loans from peers I support; nor will I give gifts or loans to the peer I am supporting.

NOTE: Given the diversity of peer support services and agencies or organizations, as a peer-support worker, I shall avoid any acceptance of gifts or loans or give gifts or loans to peers as deemed inappropriate or unacceptable by the agency or organization; adhering to policies, procedures, or guidelines I work under.

4. I will not sponsor individuals with whom I have previously served or currently serve as a PSP.

Conduct

As a Peer Support Professional:

1. I will be available for a minimum of two (2) supervision sessions per month totaling at least 2 hours of documented supervision. I will utilize supervision to address challenging personal issues, behaviors, or conditions that may negatively affect my own recovery.
2. I will accurately identify my qualifications, expertise, and certifications to all whom I serve and to the public.
3. I will make public statements or comments that are true and reflect current and accurate information.
4. I will remain free from any substances that impair my ability and capacity to perform my duties as a PSP.
5. I will maintain required documentation in client records as required by my agency making certain that records are documented honestly and stored securely.
6. I will protect the privacy and confidentiality of persons served in adherence with Federal Confidentiality, HIPAA laws, local jurisdiction and state laws and regulations. This includes electronic privacy standards (Social Media, Texting, Video Conferencing etc.).
7. I will use client contact information only in accordance with agency policy.
8. I will not create my own private practice.
9. I understand that a significant violation of this Code of Ethics may result in the suspension or revocation of my certification.

I hereby attest that I have read, understand, and will adhere to the ACBHC Peer Support Professional Code of Ethics, as described above.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____