



Community Based Organization Manual

Peer Service Organizations

July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027



Health and Human Services
Division of Behavioral Health

Peer Service Organizations

The Iowa Behavioral Health Service System Statewide Plan includes enhancing Iowa's peer support capacity for work in crisis services and to further develop the capacity for Peer Operated Respite programs. The strategies outlined in this manual are consistent with Iowa's vision for a person-centered, prevention-focused behavioral health system. Activities outlined support broader goals in the Behavioral Health State Plan including:

- **Recovery Strategy 1:** Create and support a comprehensive and integrated, statewide system of recovery related to the behavioral health needs of individuals, families and communities.
- **Recovery Strategy 2:** Create and follow steps for success in building a comprehensive and integrated, statewide behavioral health recovery system.
- **Recovery Strategy 3:** Help recovery providers increase their behavioral health knowledge and skills.
- **Crisis Strategy 1:** Create and support a comprehensive and integrated, statewide behavioral health crisis system.
- **Crisis Strategy 3:** Create and follow steps for success in building a comprehensive and integrated, statewide behavioral health crisis system.

Peer Service Organizations (PSO) operate in the community and provide peer support services. Peer support workers engage in a wide range of activities:

- Advocating for people in recovery.
- One-to-one peer support
- Sharing resources and building skills.
- Building community and relationships.
- Leading recovery groups.
- Mentoring and setting goals.
- Recovery education, advocacy and community outreach

Peer support roles may also extend to the following:

- Providing services and/or training.
- Supervising other peer workers.
- Developing resources.
- Administering programs or services.
- Educating the public and policymakers.

Peer Support Bridging is a service provided to individuals in addition to the work of their treatment team to support their recovery and re-entry into the community from an inpatient or outpatient setting, such as community-based crisis services, hospitals, respite homes, or other institutions. Peer Support Bridging offers peer support to individuals in facilities prior

and after discharge. Peer Support Bridging functions outside out of the individual's treatment team and does not provide case management or crisis services.

Peer Operated Respite Homes are home-like facilities run by and for individuals who have lived experience of mental health and/or substance use disorders. These programs are intended to serve as a short-term, residential resource for individuals who are experiencing an increase in symptoms, stressors or exacerbations, and who need support and supportive services to aid in their recovery and thereby avert crises and avoid hospitalization. Facilities are generally between four and six beds in private rooms, serving adults of both genders with mental health and/or substance use disorders free of charge. Entry is through self-referral, and the respites do not provide medication management or other formal medical services. Wellness and recovery-oriented activities are offered within the program, along with opportunities for guests to participate in the community.

Recovery Peer Coaching Services include but are not limited to: resource brokering and system navigation, education and information, communication skills, recovery wellness plans, and multiple pathways of recovery.

Peer Wellness Centers and Recovery Community Centers promote health equity, are trauma-informed, and focus on resilience, empowerment and personal autonomy by utilizing the services of individuals with lived experience and specific peer training. The peer-run centers are welcoming and have a low barrier to entry. Utilizing evidence-based services, this service is for individuals who are interested in a pathway outside or alongside traditional treatment for behavioral health disorder/s and for those looking for support in their recovery. The peer-run centers will offer a variety of recovery-oriented programs including mutual aid groups, training opportunities and community building events.

Required Activities

- Identifying linkages to services in addition to treatment through use of system navigation, service coordination and connection to recovery services and supports.
- Creating and support a comprehensive and integrated, statewide system of recovery related to the behavioral health needs of individuals, families and communities.
- Educating recovery providers to increase their behavioral health knowledge and skills.
- Continued development of workforce recruitment and retention strategies including training and technical assistance.
- Continued support of Iowa's peer workforce, including supervision and management.
- Determining how to create sustainable funding for recovery supports and services.
- All Impact Strategies in Recovery directly relate to the work of peer support and peer respite.

Compliance

Peer Service Organizations hire the following positions in peer support, family peer support and recovery coach positions:

A Peer Support Specialist (PSS)

- An individual who is personally living well in recovery from a serious mental illness.
- A Peer Support Specialist uses their recovery story to instill hope and assist service recipients in reaching and maintaining personal recovery goals.
- Serves as an advocate, provides information, help access community resources, and model competency in recovery and wellness.
- Peer Support Specialists promote skills for improving wellbeing and increasing resiliency. They promote self-determination and support in maintaining relationships and increasing a higher level of control and satisfaction.

Peer Support Specialists are employed in behavioral health facilities, social service agencies, peer-run recovery centers, peer-run respites, integrated health homes, hospitals, prisons, with law enforcement agencies and other healthcare organizations. Peer Support Specialists may also serve on a variety of advisory boards and committees at local, state, and national levels.

A Family Peer Support Specialists (FPSS)

- Sharing expertise by providing information, teaching coping skills, providing emotional support and helping parents become advocates.
- Family Peer Support Specialists often help families navigate the child serving systems and help them understand available options for their child.
- Family Peer Support Specialists may accompany parents to meetings to ensure the parents' voices are heard.
- They assist families by modeling good communication skills and sharing their own experiences in a positive manner.

Family Peer Support Specialists may be employed at social service agencies, clinics, residential programs and other community-based organizations. Family Peer Support Specialists may also serve on a variety of advisory boards and committees at local, state, and national levels.

A Recovery Coach (RC) is an individual with lived experience of substance misuse who is living well in recovery.

- A RC uses their lived experience and recovery story to instill hope.
- They discuss recovery issues from a peer perspective and support adult peers in reaching and maintaining their own personal recovery goals.
- A RC may serve as an advocate, guide peers on accessing resources, and model competency in recovery and wellness.
- RCs promote skills for improving wellbeing and increased resiliency.

- They promote self-determination, recognize there are multiple pathways of recovery, and help peers become and stay engaged in their own recovery.

RCs are employed in substance use treatment facilities, social service agencies, peer-run recovery centers, peer-run respite, hospitals, prisons, law enforcement agencies, mobile crisis teams, and other community-based organizations. RCs may also serve on a variety of advisory boards and committees at local, state, and national levels.

Reporting

Peer Service Organizations contracted with BH-ASO shall submit data for ASO-funded peer services by way of the Iowa HHS provided BeePurple platform by the 15th of the following month. This platform will store information including but not limited to demographics, attendance, services provided, and referrals made. The PSO will be provided with access to dashboards and reports to validate and track data in real time. It is the PSO's responsibility to submit all required data into the platform in a timely fashion.

Iowa HHS in partnership with BH-ASO will implement a data quality action plan to ensure each agency is submitting timely and accurate data. Specific items Iowa HHS will be focusing on are timely data submission, quality of responses submitted, and compliance / communication around identified issues.

Invoicing

Administrative & Indirect Costs (Where Applicable)

CBOs may request reimbursement for administrative and/or indirect costs. Administrative costs may include but are not limited to, costs that have been incurred for common or joint purposes or objectives, benefitting more than one cost objective, and/or cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective.

For the purposes of this Contract, examples of administrative costs may include but are not limited to general administration and general expenses such as accounting, expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, costs of operating and maintaining the facility, rent and lease payments, utilities, data collection and data processing costs, printing, communications equipment and services, depreciation, and other costs necessary to support the delivery of services.

CBOs may request reimbursement for administrative/indirect costs with a standard capitation of 15% of direct costs. CBOs may only request a rate above 15% if they have a current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Please note that even once a current NICRA is approved, Iowa PCA reserves the right to negotiate the application of the Indirect Rate per individual contract. Iowa PCA is not required to accept the federally approved rate automatically. Accordingly, if a future NICRA is obtained, Iowa PCA retains the discretion to negotiate the application of that rate, including application at a lower percentage. Iowa PCA does not anticipate accepting a rate higher than 15%.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- CBO will achieve a 10% increase in total visits compared to the previous state fiscal year.
- CBO will conduct and document a minimum of five community outreach events annually
- CBO will submit accurate and timely data that aligns with reported activities and supporting documentation.
- CBO will submit complete and accurate monthly invoices that include allowable, properly documented costs and align with reported activities and approved budget.

Training

- State approved training certification through the Iowa Peer Workforce Collaborative and the Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery. This training certification is recognized by Iowa Medicaid for billing purposes.
- Continued Education is required by for certification by the Iowa Board of Certification and is not mandated by Iowa HHS.
 - [Iowa Peer Workforce Collaborative | The University of Iowa](#)
 - <https://addictionrecoverytraining.org/certification/>

Peer Support Specialist Trainings

To be eligible for this training, you must:

- Be at least 18 years old,
- Have a GED or high school diploma,
- Have or had a serious mental illness and be living well in recovery as identified by the individual.

Family Peer Support Specialist Trainings

To be eligible for the FPSS training, you must:

- Be at least 21 years of age,
- Have a GED or high school diploma, and
- be the parent or primary caregiver of a child who was diagnosed with a serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbance before the age of 21.

Recovery Coach Trainings (Offered through CCAR's Recovery Coach Academy or an entity authorized to train by CCAR)

To apply for this training, you must:

- Be at least 18 years old,
- Have a GED or high school diploma,
- Have a substance use disorder and be living well in recovery or be a family member of a person in recovery from a substance use disorder.

Resources and Tools

- Iowa Peer Workforce Collaborative
 - [Iowa Peer Workforce Collaborative | The University of Iowa](#)
 - [Supervisor Resources | Iowa Peer Workforce Collaborative - The University of Iowa](#)
- Division of Behavioral Health SAMHSA Guidance
 - [Consumer-Operated Services Evidence-Based Practices \(EBP\) KIT | SAMHSA Library](#)
- The [Pillars of Peer Support](#) provides ongoing resources to promote Peer Support Services in state mental health systems of care. The original Pillars of Peer Support Summits brought together nationally recognized experts from across the U.S. to identify fundamental elements that greatly facilitate the use of Peer Support Services. Each summit produced a unique toolkit for building a foundation for the successful implementation of peer support services.
- Recovery Iowa website: <https://recovery-iowa.org/>



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