



The Peer Specialist Certification Process in New York State

New York Peer Specialist Certification Board

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Why Certification?

- Standards
- Public Protection
- Ethics
- Identifying & Engaging a “Peer Group”
- Recognition
- Identity
- Professionalism
- Systems Change
- Employment
- Economic Opportunity

History of the NY Peer Specialist Certification Process- How did we get here?

- The NYS Office of Mental Health began to develop a Peer Specialist Certification in consultation with peer leaders from across NY State to ensure continued opportunities for peer services.
- The Academy of Peer Services, online courses which fulfill the training requirement of the certification, was created in collaboration with these peer leaders and Rutgers University (formerly UMDNJ).
- NYPSCB - New York Peer Specialist Certification Board officially began to meet in 2014 in order to issue NYCPS certification

The New York Peer Specialist Certification Board (NYPSCB)- Early Stages



- The Academy of Peer Services was officially launched in January 2014.
- OMH convened a group of peer leaders representing all regions of NY State, many of whom had been involved in creating the Academy, to develop the certification process and begin to form the certification board.
- At the same time, ASAP (Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers of NY State) is awarded a contract to administer the certification because of their expertise in certification.



NYPSCB Mission Statement

To preserve the integrity of Peer Support through the development of standards of competency and practice

Certification- What is it?

Certification:

- Identifies minimum standards for training and experience.
- Promotes a skilled workforce.
- Identifies professionals who are specialists in their field.
- Designed to recognize the skills acquired by peers qualifying them to assist others in their recovery journey.

How do I become Certified???

To become certified as a New York Certified Peer Specialist (NYCPS) one must:

- Meet *all* standards for NYCPS Certification.
- Complete either the NYCPS or NYCPS-Provisional application and submit it and *all required documentation* to the NYPSCB.
- Read and agree to abide by the Code of Ethical Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

Tip- Use the checklist on Page One of the application to make sure you are submitting all of the documentation required.

For more information and to download the Applications and Code of Ethical Conduct please visit us at: <http://nypeerspecialist.org/>

NYCPS Certification Standards

Peer Status

- Must identify as actively in recovery from a mental health condition or major life disruption and self-disclose one's mental health recovery journey.

Education

- A minimum of a high school diploma or the equivalent

Training and Education

- Complete all 13 Core Courses of the Academy of Peer Services:
www.AcademyofPeerServices.org
Successfully complete post-tests for all Core Courses
AND
- Complete a minimum of 5 additional APS Electives (15 hours of training total)

Professional References

- Submit three signed references from individuals able to speak to your ability as a peer specialist directly to the NYPSCB.
Please see the letter of reference form for guidelines regarding acceptable letters of reference.

Supervised Work/Volunteer Experience

- Document 2000 hours of peer specialist experience under the supervision of a qualified supervisor.

Supervised Internship

- There is currently no supervised internship requirement for the NYCPS Certification

NYCPS-Provisional Certification Standards

Peer Status

- Must identify as actively in recovery from a mental health condition or major life disruption and self-disclose one's mental health recovery journey.

Education

- A minimum of a high school diploma or the equivalent

Training and Education

- Complete all 13 Core Courses of the Academy of Peer Services:
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Successfully complete post-tests for all Core Courses

Professional References

- Submit three signed references from individuals able to speak to your ability as a peer specialist directly to the NYPCB.
Please see the letter of reference form for guidelines regarding acceptable letters of reference.

Supervised Work Experience

- There is currently no work experience requirement for the NYCPS-Provisional Certification

Supervised Internship

- There is currently no supervised internship requirement for the NYCPS-Provisional Certification

NYCPS Application Review Process

Board Roles

- The NYPCB sets the standards of the Peer Specialist Certification as well as the criteria by which applications are reviewed and certifications issued.
- **Only the Board is authorized to approve applications.**

Staff Roles

- Staff provide administrative support to the board, review and prepare applications for the board's review, etc.

The certification board sets standards - staff implement them.

NYCPS and NYCPS-Provisional Certification

Two levels of certification are currently available, reflected by two separate applications on the NYPCB website. They are: New York Certified Peer Specialist (NYCPS) and the NYCPS-Provisional (which does not require work experience.)

Tip: Trying to decide which level is the best fit for you?

Review the Requirements on Page 4 of each application!

Contact us with any questions at: info@nypeerspecialist.org

Initially *only* NYCPS-Provisional certification was offered in order to “jump start” the process and certify as many professionals as possible as quickly as possible.

The NYPCB launched the full NYCPS certification in the spring of 2016 by offering it first to anyone holding an active Provisional certification *or* with an application in progress who was able to document the additional requirements.

For more information including the applications visit: nypeerspecialist.org

Keep in mind- both levels of certification are professional certifications.

NYCPS-Provisional Renewal Standards

Training Requirement:

- 10 hours of Peer Specialist specific training annually (20 hours total)
- Must have been completed after initial NYCPS-P certification date
- The NYPCB has launched our simple online Renewal Form, access it here: <http://nypeerspecialist.org/renewal>
- Training requirement can be fulfilled by taking APS Elective Courses
- The NYPCB is working to identify what additional peer specialist specific training may be accepted towards renewal.

More Details will be Announced Soon!

NYCPS-P Renewal or Upgrade to NYCPS?

Upgrade Requirements

For candidates who hold/ meet the requirements for NYCPS-Provisional certification, the additional documentation required for the Upgrade to full NYCPS is:

- **Training** - Complete all 12 Core Courses of the Academy of Peer Services (APS) *PLUS* an additional 5 APS courses (15 hours minimum)
- **Letters of Recommendation** – Three signed letters of recommendation *including a letter from current or most recent supervisor*
- **Work/Volunteer Experience** - Document 2000 hours of peer work/volunteer experience under the supervision of a qualified supervisor

Please visit the eNews section of the NYPSCB website for information regarding NYCPS-Provisional Renewal or the Upgrade to NYCPS.

<http://nypeerspecialist.org/resources-publications>

New York Peer Specialist Certification 2016- In Summary

Accomplishments since the Launch of NY Peer Specialist Certification

- Developed standards for NYCPS and NYCPS-Provisional certifications, released applications for each, as well as NYPSCB Code of Ethical Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.
- Created, launched and updated the NY Peer Specialist website, <http://nypeerspecialist.org/>
- More than 1350 applications have been received.
- ***Most importantly, over 1000 professionals have been issued certifications as New York Certified Peer Specialists!***

What's Next?????

- More information on renewal standards and additional training opportunities coming soon!
- Supervisor certification being developed
- **Join us! Save the Date for the NYPSCB's
Inaugural New York Peer Specialist Conference!**

When: October 26 & 27 Where: Crowne Plaza Hotel, White Plains, NY

SAVE THE DATE!

Join Us for the Inaugural New York Peer Specialist Certification Board Conference



- **October 26th Celebration of Peer Support @ 5 pm–10 pm**
- **October 27th Full Day Conference @ 9 am–5:00 pm**
- *Registration, Agenda and Hotel Accommodation info coming soon*
- *Early Bird Discounted Registration and Scholarship application will be available soon.*
- *Sponsorship and Exhibit opportunities are available!*
- *Please visit www.NYPSCB.org
or email info@nypeerspecialist.org*





Questions?
We're here to help!

New York Peer Specialist Certification Board

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