

Working Well Together Code of Ethics for Peer Providers in California

<p>Purpose</p>	<p>Peer Support is a fundamental building block of recovery-oriented and resiliency-focused services for those managing behavioral health challenges as well as the parents, family members and care-givers that support them. Peer Support services are evidence based practices that provide role models to inspire hope, demonstrate a life of recovery and resiliency and encourage real advocacy.</p> <p>This Values and Ethics document promotes a consistent message to those who are providing, receiving and supervising services from a Peer Provider. The Values and Ethics described here formalize Peer provided services and further the profession as a meaningful way to provide behavioral health services.</p> <p>For the purpose of this document Peer Provider refers to anyone who is providing services in the behavioral health field using his or her “lived experience” to establish mutuality and build resiliency and recovery; including Peer Support Specialists, Family Advocates and Parent Partners</p>
<p>Values</p>	<p>Ethical Standards</p>
<p>Hope</p>	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspire hope in those they serve by living a life of Recovery and/or Resiliency.
<p>Person-Driven</p>	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support adults, young adults and older adults, within the context of their worldview, to achieve their goals based upon their needs and wants. ▪ Focus on self-determination, as defined by the person served, and support the person’s participation in his or her own recovery. ▪ Inform others about options, provide information about choices, and then respect peers’ decisions. ▪ Encourage people to look at the options, take risks, learn from mistakes, and grow from dependence on the system toward healthy interdependence with others. ▪ Uphold the principle of non-coercion as essential to recovery and encourage those served to make their own decisions, even when the person served is under mandated treatment. ▪ Assist those they serve to access additional resources. ▪ Disclose personal stories of recovery in a way that maintains the focus on and is beneficial to the person served. ▪ Support the recovery process for the peer, allowing the person to direct their own process. ▪ Shall not force any values or beliefs onto the person served. ▪ Recognize there are many pathways to recovery that can be very different than their own journey.

Working Well Together Code of Ethics for Peer Providers in California

<p>Family Driven and Child- Centered</p>	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the family member’s ethical decision-making and personal responsibility consistent with that family member’s culture, values and beliefs. ▪ Respect and value the beliefs, opinions and preferences of children, youth, family members, parents and caregivers in service planning. ▪ Promote the family members’ voices and the articulation of their values in planning and evaluating behavioral health related issues. ▪ Support other family members as peers with a common background and history. ▪ Disclose personal stories of building resiliency in a way that focuses on and is beneficial to the child, youth, family member, parent or caregiver served. ▪ Build supports on the strengths of the child, youth, family or caregiver. ▪ Build partnerships with others who are involved in the care of our children, youth or adult family members. ▪ Communicate clearly and honestly with children, youth, family members and caregivers.
<p>Holistic Wellness</p>	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice in a holistic manner that considers and addresses the whole health of those served. ▪ Recognize the impact of co-occurring challenges (substance use, developmental and physical challenges) in the recovery/resiliency journey, and provide supports sensitive to those needs. ▪ Recognize the impact of trauma on the recovery/resiliency journey and provide the support specific to those challenges. ▪ Honor the right of persons served to choose alternative treatments and practices including: culturally specific traditional methods, healing arts including acupuncture and meditation, spiritual practices or secular beliefs and harm reduction practices.
<p>Authenticity</p>	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice honest and direct communication in a culturally relevant manner, saying what is on their mind in a respectful way. Difficult issues are addressed with those who are directly involved. Direct communication moves beyond the fear of conflict or hurting other people to the ability to work together to resolve issues with caring and compassion. ▪ Practice healthy disclosure about their own experience focused on providing hope and direction toward recovery and/or resiliency. ▪ Work within their scope of practice as defined by this Code of Ethics and their employing agency. ▪ Remain aware of their skills and limitations and do not provide services or represent themselves as an expert in areas for which they do not have sufficient knowledge or expertise.

Working Well Together Code of Ethics for Peer Providers in California

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Know that maintaining the authenticity and integrity of their role is critical to the effectiveness of Peer Support. ▪ Seek supervision, Peer Support, and/or other contact with peer colleagues or other supports to stay in the peer role.
Cultural Relevancy	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strive to provide culturally competent and relevant services to those they serve. ▪ Respect cultural identities and preferences of those served and their families_and respect the right of others to hold opinions, beliefs, and values different from their own. ▪ Shall not discriminate against others on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, mental or physical differences. ▪ Shall not discriminate against others on the basis of any other preference, personal characteristic, condition, state or cultural factor protected under Federal, State or local law. ▪ Seek further information, education and training in cultural competence as necessary to assist those they serve.
Respect	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a welcoming environment for persons served. ▪ Approach each person, youth, parent or family member with openness, genuine interest and appreciation. ▪ Accept each person/family and situation as unique. ▪ Provide empathy and able to “put oneself in the other person’s shoes.” ▪ Will make an honest effort to empathize with the emotional connection and cultural context that the persons served bring to the recovery/ resiliency relationship. ▪ View everyone as having something important and unique to contribute. ▪ Value and treat others with kindness, warmth, dignity and without judgment. ▪ Accept each other and are open to sharing with people from many diverse backgrounds including ethnicity, educational levels, socio-economic background, sexual preference, religion/spirituality. ▪ Honor and make room for everyone’s opinions and see each other as equally capable of contributing. ▪ Demonstrate respect toward those served, colleagues and the community. ▪ Use language that is respectful, “person-first” and culturally mindful to, and with, those served, colleagues and the community. ▪ Never use language that could be construed as or is derogatory, insulting or demeaning in written, electronic or verbal communications. ▪ Communicate with co-workers and colleagues in ways that promote conflict resolution.
Integrity	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Act in accordance with the highest standards of professional integrity.

Working Well Together Code of Ethics for Peer Providers in California

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid relationships or commitments that conflict with the interests of persons served, impair professional judgment, imply a conflict of interest, or create risk of harm to those served. ▪ Conduct themselves in a way that does not jeopardize the integrity of the peer relationship. ▪ Seek supervision to handle any real or potential conflicts when and if a dual relationship is unavoidable. ▪ Follow organizational policies and guidelines regarding giving and receiving gifts. ▪ Consider the cultural context and other potential considerations related to gifts. ▪ Do not lend, give, or receive money or payment for any services to, or from, persons they serve. ▪ Demonstrate accountability in fulfilling commitments. ▪ Resist influences that interfere with professional performance.
<p>Advocacy</p>	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the formulation, development, enactment, and implementation of public policies of concern to the profession. ▪ Demonstrate and promote activities that respect diversity. ▪ Support and defend human rights and freedoms regardless of nationality, national origin, gender, ethnicity, religion or spiritual persuasion, language, disability, sexual identity, or socio-economic status. Human rights include civil and political rights, such as the right to life, liberty and freedom of expression; social, cultural and economic rights including the right to cultural expression, the right to have basic needs met, and the right to work and receive an education. ▪ Advocate for inclusion of those served in all aspects of services. ▪ Advocate for the full involvement of those served in the communities of their choice and will promote their value to those communities. ▪ Understand, encourage and empower self-advocacy. ▪ Recognize that all individuals/families have the right to live in the safest and least restrictive, culturally congruent environment. ▪ Strive to eliminate stigma and discrimination.
<p>Confidentiality</p>	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect the rights, dignity, privacy and confidentiality of persons served at all times. ▪ Respect the right to privacy of those served and should not solicit private information from those served unless it is essential. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply. ▪ Respect confidential information shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and interactions, unless such information relates to an unethical or illegal activity. ▪ Comply with all applicable federal and state confidentiality laws and guidelines.

Working Well Together Code of Ethics for Peer Providers in California

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss with persons served, and other interested parties, the nature of confidentiality and limitations of the right to confidentiality.
Safety & Protection	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Never engage in romantic or sexual/intimate activities with the persons served. ▪ Shall not provide services to individuals with whom they have had a prior romantic or sexual relationship. ▪ Shall not engage in exploitive relationships with coworkers or those they serve to further their personal, religious, political or business interests. ▪ Follow applicable Federal, State and Local laws in the prevention of harm as identified in Statute. ▪ Inform appropriate persons when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to persons served or other identifiable person. In all instances, Peer Providers should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose. ▪ Never intimidate, threaten, harass, use undue influence, physical force or verbal abuse, or make unwarranted promises of benefits to persons served. ▪ Recognize the unique nature of the Peer relationship and seek supervision and/or peer support, as necessary, to maintain appropriate boundaries with persons served. ▪ Treat colleagues with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith, and uphold the Code of Ethics. ▪ Strive to provide a safe environment that is respectful of the impact of trauma on persons served.
Education	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remain current regarding new developments in recovery, resiliency and wellness theories, methods and approaches of related disciplines/systems with whom those who are served interface. ▪ Accept responsibility for continuing education and professional development as part of their commitment to provide quality services. ▪ Become familiar with local resources for self-sufficiency, including benefits and employment opportunities and supportive resources for families, parents and caregivers.
Mutuality	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage in a relationship of mutual responsibility where power is shared and the peer provider and the persons served are equally responsible for the peer relationship. ▪ Take responsibility for voicing their own needs and feelings. ▪ Make decisions in collaboration with persons served and do not make decisions for persons served. ▪ Ensure that people give and take the lead in discussions, everyone is offered a chance to speak, and decisions are made in collaboration with each other.
Reciprocity	<p>Peer Providers:</p>

Working Well Together Code of Ethics for Peer Providers in California

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that the relationship is reciprocal. Every participant in the peer relationship both gives and receives in a fluid, constantly changing dynamic. ▪ Believe that in peer relationships there is no hierarchy; no one is more qualified, advanced, or better than another.
Strengths-based	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide strength based services acknowledging that every person has skills, gifts, and talents they can use to better their lives. ▪ Focus on what is strong not what is wrong. ▪ Assist others to identify these strengths and explore how they can be used for their benefit.
Wellness, Recovery and Resiliency	<p>Peer Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage in and model regular self-care activities. ▪ Communicate and behave in ways that promote wellness, recovery and resiliency. ▪ Use language that reflects wellness, recovery and resiliency principles. ▪ Shall not impose limitations on the possibility for wellness, recovery and resiliency of those served. ▪ Recognize the importance of supportive relationships and community in wellness, recovery and resiliency and encourage persons to identify and develop natural supports. ▪ Promote self-sufficiency in the wellness, recovery and resiliency journey.

Sources:

- 41 Developmental Assets, San Mateo County
- Adolescent developmental assets
- Alaskan Core Competencies
- Amnesty International
- IAPS Survey on Peer Support values and standards
- IPSTA Code of Ethics (Iowa)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness: Values and Excellence
- National Association of Peer providers Values & Standards Draft; 2012
- National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics
- National Center on Trauma-Informed Care
- Northeast Behavioral Health Partnership (NBHP) PS Code of Ethics
- NM CPSW Code of Ethics
- Ohio Resiliency consensus and Ohio Resiliency principles of care
- Parent Support Provider Code of Ethics 2012 (NFFCMH)
- “Peer Support: What Makes it Unique?” Shery Mead and Cheryl MacNeal; Defining Peer Support
- Recovery Innovations (RI) Employment Module with Code of Ethics
- SAMHSA’s 2012 Recovery Principles
- United Advocates for Children & Families Principles

Working Well Together Code of Ethics for Peer Providers in California

- USPRA Code of Ethics
- Values Ethics Chart 11.7.12 (Gitane Williams)
- Wellness Wheel Adapted from Peggy Swarbrick