

**New York State Department of Civil Service**  
DIVISION OF CLASSIFICATION & COMPENSATION

Classification Standard

**Occ. Code 5572200**

**Peer Specialist, Grade 9**

Brief Description of Class

Peer Specialists provide advocacy and non-clinical support services to individuals with mental illness in emergency, inpatient, outpatient, community, and residential settings. Incumbents assist individuals in the development and application of skills and strategies for empowerment and successful community living; organize groups and teach self-help techniques and activities; and assist individuals in accessing and obtaining mental health and other support services essential to recovery.

Positions are non-competitive and classified in the Office of Mental Health.

Distinguishing Characteristics

*Peer Specialist.* paraprofessional; interacts with individuals as a peer and provides non-clinical support services; advocates for the needs of individuals; facilitates the establishment of support systems and services; and teaches skills, techniques, and strategies for empowerment and successful community living.

Illustrative Duties

*Peer Specialist*

Serves as a role model and provides advocacy and support services to individuals.

- Assists individuals in identifying, developing, and practicing personalized coping and crisis management skills to deal with their psychiatric symptoms.
- Interacts with individuals as a peer and shares common experiences; and assists individuals in identifying areas in which they need support.
- Organizes and facilitates self-help groups and activities; teaches self-help techniques and group process skills; and facilitates the establishment of peer, natural, and social support networks.

- Helps individuals carry out tasks defined in their treatment plans, and actively participate in their treatment planning process.
- Instructs and assists individuals in identifying or clarifying rehabilitation and recovery goals, and in developing daily living, educational, social, vocational, and other skills for empowerment and successful community living.
- Assists individuals in understanding and obtaining access to available community resources and benefits; provides information; and links individuals to essential supports, such as legal, housing, education, medical, and financial services.
- Advocates for the needs of individuals; and provides education and training on their perspectives to other mental health and human service providers.

### Minimum Qualifications

#### *Peer Specialist*

Non-competitive: two years of experience participating in mental health self-help activities, peer support or advocacy programs, or similar organizations.

#### Attachment

**Note:** Classification Standards illustrate the nature, extent, and scope of duties and responsibilities of the classes they describe. Standards cannot and do not include all of the work that might be appropriately performed by a class. The minimum qualifications above are those which were required for appointment at the time the Classification Standard was written. Please contact the Division of Staffing Services for current information on minimum qualification requirements for appointment or examination.

Date: 12/2023

KAB

## Parenthetic Attachment

*Peer Specialist (OASAS)*: provides advocacy and non-clinical support services to individuals with addiction, substance use disorder (SUD), and impulse control disorders (ICD) in emergency, inpatient, outpatient, community, and residential settings.

Positions are non-competitive and classified in the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS).

## Minimum Qualifications

### *Peer Specialist (OASAS)*

Non-competitive: current certification as a Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (CRPA) or CRPA-Provisional by the New York Certification Board; and four or more hours of medication assisted treatment training.

*Peer Specialist (Youth Services)*: provides advocacy and non-clinical support services to youth in foster care, detention, and homeless residential settings, or provides advocacy services to parents/caregivers who have youth placed in OCFS care.

Positions are non-competitive and classified in the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS).

## Minimum Qualifications

### *Peer Specialist (Youth Services)*

Non-competitive: two years of experience participating in self-help activities, peer support or advocacy programs, or similar organizations. Must have been in child welfare placement for two years or more above the age of 8 and had juvenile justice placement or received homeless youth services in New York State or are a parent who has had a child involved in the juvenile justice system.