
GREAT PLAINS CREDENTIALING BOARD PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

The Great Plains American Indian Credentialing Board (GPAICB) are proud to announce the newly added credential of Peer Recovery Specialist (PRS). This certification is for those individuals who will provide peer-to-peer recovery support services to others with a Substance Use Disorder. A PRS have the lived experience to inspire and empower others seeking recovery support. A PRS who complete the specialized educational and training requirements will increase their skills, knowledge and understanding of those served.

This certification adheres to the Peer Recovery requirements of the International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC) of whom we are a member-board. The GPAICB PRS handbook defines the role, functions, benefits, and responsibilities of a Peer Recovery Specialist.

It is the goal and commitment of the GPAICB to expand professional development and professional recognition of American Indian professionals in the field of addiction services. Tribal communities in the Great Plains region will benefit from an abundance of valued, professionally certified workers serving to increase healthy persons, families, and communities.



Peer Recovery Specialist (PRS)

Education: High School Diploma or GED, and 46 hours specific to each Domain; except Ethics which requires 16 hours: Candidate must complete hours within 9 months of application date received by GPAICB.

1. **Advocacy** – 10 Hours
2. **Mentoring/Education** - 10 Hours
3. **Recovery Support/Wellness** – 10 Hours
4. **Ethical Responsibility** – 16 Hours

Experience/Practicum Requirements

A minimum of 500 hours of work/practicum/volunteer experience specific to the Domains. Documentation of these hours are included in the application and verified by the supervisor. Candidate must complete practicum hours within 18 months of application submission.

Recovery/Lived Experience:

Self-attestation of on-going recovery from substance use disorder. Applicant must have demonstrated 24 consecutive months of self-directed recovery. The GPAICB accepts the definition by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) on “Recovery”: “A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential”, and this may include support through a Medically Assisted Treatment program on a short-term or long-term basis.

Supervision Requirements

An applicant is required to have a minimum of 25 hours of direct supervision specific to the Domains. Supervision must be provided by an organization’s documentation and qualified supervisory staff per their job description. Documentation of these hours are included in the application and verified by the supervisor.

Examination

Applicants must pass the IC&RC Certified Peer Recovery (CPR) examination.

Certification Process

The certification period will be two years. The certification process will commence the first day of the month following approval from the Great Plains American Indian Credentialing Board (GPAICB). Renewal process will be required by the end of the calendar year.

Application Process

Applications will be found on the GPAICB website (www.GPAICB.com) or by contacting the GPAICB Administrator.

To complete the application, follow these steps:

1. The applicant is required to complete the application and sign the Peer Recovery Code of Ethics form and submit it to the GPAICB administration and the non-refundable **fee of \$150**. The application fee includes one exam fee and the first two years certification.
2. When the application is received, the administrator will review and notify the applicant if anything further is needed. The completed application will be forwarded to the Peer Recovery Credentialing Committee (PRCC) for review. Once they concur the application is complete, they will schedule an interview with the applicant to determine their eligibility as a candidate to be certified as a Peer Recovery Specialist. If they deny the applicant a formal notice will be sent to the candidate with the reasons for denial. The applicant can then follow the appeal process found in the GPAICB Policy & Procedures Manual.
3. The PRCC will forward their recommendation for approval to the administrator who will then pre-register the applicant to take the IC&RC computer-based PR exam and pay testing fees to the IC&RC. Once the administrator has pre-registered the applicant and paid the testing fees, the administrator will notify the applicant. It is then applicant's responsibility to complete the IC&RC registration process. This includes scheduling a testing date and a testing location.
4. If the applicant fails the exam on the first attempt, they will have one more opportunity to retest without additional fees. If the applicant fails the exam a second time, it is their financial responsibility to retake the test.
4. Once the applicant passes the exam, the GPAICB administrator will be notified. Once notified that the applicant has passed the exam, the testing results will be submitted to the GPAICB for review and approval. Once approved by the GPAICB, a certificate will be mailed to the applicant.

Recertification Process

The recertification process is done every two years. The certified professional must submit 20 hours of continuing education every two years. A renewal application must be completed along with the **renewal fee of \$100** and proof of 20 CE credits when submitting renewal application.



Peer Recovery Specialist

Code of Ethics

The Great Plains American Indian Credentialing Board (GPAICB) Peer Recovery Specialist Code of Ethics outlines basic values and principles of peer recovery support practice. This Code serves as a guide for responsibility and ethical standards for GPAICB Peer Recovery Specialists.

Peer Recovery Specialists have a responsibility to help persons in recovery achieve their personal recovery goals by promoting self-determination, personal responsibility, and the empowerment inherent in self-directed recovery. Peer Recovery Specialists shall maintain high standards of personal conduct and conduct themselves in a manner that supports their own recovery. Peer Recovery Specialists shall serve as advocates for the people they serve.

Peer Recovery Specialists shall not perform services outside of the boundaries and scope of their expertise, shall be aware of the limits of their training and capabilities, and shall collaborate with other professionals and Recovery Support Specialists to best meet the needs of the person(s) served. Peer Recovery Specialists shall always preserve an objective and ethical relationship. This credential does not endorse, suggest, or intend that a Peer Recovery Specialist will serve independently. The Peer Recovery Specialist shall only work under supervision.

I. Conduct

As a Peer Recovery Specialist, I will:

- 1 Agree to a minimum of two (2) clinical supervision sessions per month.
- 2 Accurately identify my qualifications, expertise, and certifications to all whom I serve and to the public.
- 3 Conduct myself in accordance with the GPAICB Code of Ethics.
- 4 Make public statements or comments that are true and reflect current and accurate information.
- 5 Remain free from any substances that affect my ability and capacity to perform my duties as a Peer Recovery Specialist.
- 6 Recognize personal issues, behaviors, or conditions that may impact my performance as a certified Peer Recovery Specialist.

- 7 Maintain regular supervision and ongoing support so I have a person with whom I can address challenging personal issues, behaviors, or conditions that may negatively affect my own recovery. I understand that misconduct may result in the suspension of my credentials.
- 8 Maintain required documentation for and in all client records as required by my agency or the Federal requirements making certain that records are documented honestly and stored securely. Agency disposal of records policies shall be adhered to.
- 9 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.).
- 10 Use client contact information in accordance with agency policy.

II. Conflict of Interest

As a Peer Recovery Specialist, I will:

1. Reveal any perceived conflict of interest immediately to my professional supervisor and remove myself from the peer recovery support relationship as required.
2. Disclose any existing or pre-existing professional, social, or business relationships with person(s) served. I shall 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.
3. I will not sponsor individuals with whom I have previously served or currently serve as a Peer Recovery Specialist.

III. Support Specialist/Client Relationship

As a Peer Recovery Support Specialist, I will:

- 1 Clearly explain my role and responsibilities to those serve.
- 2 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.
- 3 Request a change in my role as a PRS with a person being served if the person served requests a change.
- 4 Not engage in sexual activities or personal relationships with persons served in my role as a PRS, or members of the immediate family of person(s) served.
- 5 Set clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries with all persons served.
- 6 If at any point I feel I am unable to meet any of these requirements, I will immediately cease performance as a Peer Recovery Specialist and seek professional assistance.

PERFORMANCE DOMAINS PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST

Educational/Training areas needed for certification.

ADVOCACY: (10 hours)

1. Relate to an individual as an Advocate.
2. Advocate within systems to promote self-centered recovery/wellness support services.
3. Describe the individual's rights and responsibilities.
4. Practice effective communication skills.
5. Collaborate with individual to identify, link and coordinate choices with resources.
6. Recognize the importance of a holistic approach to recovery/wellness.

ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY: (16 hours)

1. Recognize risk factors that may affect the individual's welfare and safety.
2. Report suspicions of abuse or neglect to appropriate authority.
3. Maintain documentation and collect data as required.
4. Recognize and adhere to the rules of confidentiality.
5. Recognize and adhere to professional and personal boundaries.
6. Practice non-judgmental behavior.

MENTORING AND EDUCATION: (10 hours)

1. Serve as a Role-Model for an individual
2. Recognize the importance of self-care.
3. Establish and maintain a collaborative relationship rather than a hierarchical relationship.
4. Educate through shared experiences.
5. Support the development of healthy behavior that is based on choice.
6. Assist the individual to identifying and establishing healthy relationships.
7. Support the development of conflict resolution skills.
8. Support the development of problem-solving skills.
9. Apply principles of empowerment.

RECOVERY/WELLNESS SUPPORT: (10 hours)

1. Assist the individual with setting goals.
2. Recognize that there are multiple pathways to recovery/wellness.
3. Contribute to the individual's recovery/wellness team.
4. Recognize the stages of change.
5. Assist the individual in identifying support systems.
6. Practice a strength-based approach to recovery/wellness.
7. Assist the individual in identifying basic needs.
8. Recognize and understand the impact of trauma.

PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST

EDUCATION/TRAINING RESOURCES:

Mountain Plains – ATTC: Peer Support Specialist – Online Course (**46-hour** self-paced course designed to provide a foundation for providing peer support services – **FREE** (*\$99 value) [Peer Support Services Addiction Technology Transfer Center \(ATTC\) Network](#)

pAUL aLVES – Supervisor Training - CHOICE Recovery Coaching, Inc. [Choice Recovery Coaching – Because we have been in your shoes](#) (30 CEU's available)

IC&RC Peer Recovery Candidate Guide: [CANDIDATE GUIDE \(internationalcredentialing.org\)](#)
Includes Sample Questions (pg.14)

PEER RECOVERY TOOLKIT

[Peer Support Toolkit \(dbhids.org\)](#)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS A PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST (PRS)?

A PRS is a person who has lived experience from addiction, mental health or co-occurring disorder and has gone from illness to wellness and wants to help others in their recovery.

WHY IS A PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST IMPORTANT?

A PRS can help a person navigate the recovery process. Act as an advocate, provide added resources to enhance recovery process and outcomes, share lived experience from their recovery journey relating to persons challenges and successes, role-model recovery and provide hope in recovery.

WHO CAN BE A PRS?

Peer workers need to be skillful in telling their recovery stories and using their lived experiences as a way of inspiring and supporting a person living with behavioral health conditions.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING A PRS?

May increase self-esteem, self-confidence, treatment experience, hope for recovery, self-motivation to engage in recovery process, increase self-care, social support and social functions.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A PRS AND A SPONSOR OR COUNSELOR?

Knowledge/Skills	Counselor	PRS	Sponsor
Formal or Basic Knowledge	Emphasis is on formal education and specific training related to field of discipline (Addictions/ Mental Health)	Emphasis is on lived experience & recovery knowledge and PRS training. Certified recovery support role	Emphasis is on experience in recovery, known within community of recovery
Organizational Knowledge	Works in a treatment setting	May work/Volunteer in a treatment setting, recovery environment, or networking agency.	Recovery environment
Service/Support relationship	Clear separation of counselor/client relationship. Specific ethical guidelines	Peer-to Peer relationship, well-defined ethical guidelines	Sponsor/Sponsee relationship Clear ethical guidelines
Use of Self	Self-Disclosure discouraged unless there is a therapeutic benefit	Strategic use of PRC's own story, Role-model expectation	Strategic use of self-disclosure, Role-model expectation

PEER RECOVERY SUPERVISORY REQUIREMENTS

PRS Supervisor Requirements :

PLEASE NOTE - ALL CANDIDATES MUST IDENTIFY A PEER RECOVERY SUPERVISOR PRIOR TO APPLYING FOR THE PRS CERTIFICATION WITH GPAICB

The amount, duration, and scope of supervision of Peer Recovery Specialists may range from direct supervision to periodic care consultation.

- Must be 18 years of age.
- High School Diploma or GED
- 30 hours – Supervisor Training to include Recovery/Wellness Support, Ethical Responsibilities, Advocacy, Mentoring/Education

Supervisors will follow the core principles:

1. Supervisors are trained in quality supervisory skills.
2. Supervisors understand and support the role of the PRS.
3. Supervisors understand and promote recovery in their supervisory roles.
4. Supervisors advocate for PRS's and for peer support services across the organization and in their community.

SUPERVISORY TRAINING: Must complete Peer Recovery Supervision training that includes understanding how to support the role of Peer Recovery Specialists within 6 months PRIOR to supervising a Peer Recovery Specialist candidate.

EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE: Fulfill at least one of the following criteria:

Has a minimum of two (2) years' experience in his/her area of practice, **OR**

Are qualified by education and/or experience for the specific duties of their position; and

Are trained in alcohol and/or other drug abuse specific information or skills. (Examples of types of training include, but are not limited to, alcohol or other drug abuse specific in-services, workshops, and academic coursework and internships).

Supervisory Duties may include:

Administrative:

- Planning, assigning and delegating work
- Monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating work
- Coordinating work
- Sharing information
- Liaising with community
- Assisting with time management

Formative:

- Assessing strengths and growth opportunities
- Identifying the knowledge and skills necessary to do the work
- Providing teaching, , training, and learning resources, including professional and leadership development
- Educating other staff on the role of peer support

Supportive:

- Advocating
- Reassuring
- Encouraging
- Recognizing efforts
- Providing opportunities to “vent”
- Giving perspective
- Encouraging self-care
- Creating opportunities for connecting with other peer staff