



Peer Support in Kentucky

The Basics

Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential. - SAMHSA

Who are peer support workers?

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) describes peer support workers as “people who have been successful in the recovery process who help others experiencing similar situations.”³

What do peer support workers do?

The role of peer support workers varies widely, but many peer support workers:²

- Support recovery from mental health or substance use disorders
- Teach and practice skills that promote recovery
- Mentor people in recovery both individually and in groups
- Raise awareness of personal, interpersonal, and community resources
- Advocate for and represent people in recovery

Kentucky's Peer Support Programs

What peer support trainings are offered in Kentucky?¹

The Kentucky Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) approves training curricula to become a [Kentucky Peer Specialist \(KPS\)](#). There are four different types of peer support trainings in Kentucky: Adult Peer Support Specialist, Family Leadership Academy, Family Peer Support Specialist, and Youth Leadership Academy. Though Kentucky DBH ensures that all curricula meet requirements, individual programs may differ from one another. Training programs typically require training fees, which also vary depending on the training organization.

How do you become a peer support worker in Kentucky?

Trainings in Kentucky are 30 hours long, and applicants must pass both a written and oral test. Kentucky Peer Specialists are also required to receive regular supervision, and they must attend 6 hours of continuing education per year. More specific training topics and competencies depend on the training curriculum, which vary depending on the training provider.



The Status of Peer Support in Kentucky

How many mental health care providers in Kentucky offer peer support services?⁴

A high proportion of community mental health centers in Kentucky offer peer support. Other provider types have similar peer support uptake rates to regional and national averages, with the exception of inpatient psychiatric units, Veterans Administration medical centers, and outpatient mental health facilities.

Facility type	Total count	# with peer services	% with peer services	% in Southeast	National %
Psychiatric hospital	11	4	36%	24%	29%
Inpatient psychiatric unit of a general hospital	18	1	6%	11%	16%
Residential treatment center for children	25	3	12%	8%	9%
Residential treatment center for adults	4	3	75%	24%	26%
Veterans Administration medical center	13	5	38%	53%	54%
Community mental health center	105	48	46%	39%	36%
Partial hospitalization/day treatment facility	2	1	50%	18%	15%
Outpatient mental health facility	29	3	10%	19%	21%
Multi-setting mental health facility	7	2	29%	32%	31%

Does Kentucky Medicaid cover peer support services?⁵

Kentucky Medicaid provides reimbursement for peer services with a copayment of \$3.

References

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4. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. National Mental Health Services Survey 2018. In. Rockville, MD2018.
5. Kaiser Family Foundation. Medicaid Behavioral Health Services: Peer Support Services. In:2018.