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TITLE 450

CHAPTER 53. STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR CERTIFIED PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

Effective November 18, 2026

Authority: Oklahoma Board of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; 43A O.S. §§ 2-101, and 3-326

History: Codified 07/01/2011, Added at 28 OK Reg 915, effective 07/01/2011; Amended 31 OK Reg 2066, effective 10/01/2014; Amended at 36 OK Reg 1160, effective 11/01/2019; Amended at 39 OK Reg 2006, effective 09/15/2022; Amended at 41 OK Reg 1438, effective 09/01/2024; Amended at 42 OK Reg 1857, effective 09/01/2025

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SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

450:53-1-1. Purpose

[Issued 07-01-2011]

This Chapter implements 43A O.S. § 3-326, which authorizes the Board of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, or the Commissioner upon delegation by the Board, to certify Peer Recovery Support Specialists. Section 3-326 requires the Board to promulgate rules and standards for certification of Peer Recovery Support Specialists addressing criteria and fees for certification and renewal, including minimum education requirements, examination and supervision requirement, continuing education requirements, professional standards, and rules of professional conduct.

450:53-1-2. Definitions

[Revised 09-01-2024]

The following words or terms, when used in this Chapter, shall have the following meaning unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

"Board" means the State Board of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

"Consumer" means an individual who has applied for, is receiving or has received evaluation or treatment services from a facility operated or certified by ODMHSAS or with which ODMHSAS contracts and includes all persons referred to in OAC Title 450 as client(s) or patient(s) or resident(s) or a combination thereof.

"Department" or **"ODMHSAS"** means the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

"Dual relationship" means a familial, financial, business, professional, close personal, sexual or other non-therapeutic relationship with a consumer, or engaging in any activity with another person that interferes or conflicts with the Peer Recovery Support Specialists' professional obligation to a consumer.

"Family Support" means using lived experience to ensure engagement and active participation of the family throughout the treatment process and assist family members in developing knowledge and skills to promote their family member's recovery.

"Family Peer Recovery Support Specialist" or **"F-PRSS"** means any person who is certified by ODMHSAS to offer family peer support services in accordance with this Chapter.

"Peer Recovery Support Specialist" or **"PRSS"** means any person who is certified by ODMHSAS to offer peer support services in accordance with this Chapter.

"Peer Support" means using lived experience to navigate treatment, foster relationships with community resources and supports, and develop a plan for overall well-being. These services and supports are valued as a component of treatment and integrated into the continuum of care to promote individual growth and enhance social connection.

"Recovery" means a journey of healing and transformation enabling people with mental health and/or substance use challenges to live a meaningful life in the community of their choice while striving to achieve their full potential. The process of recovery leads individuals toward the highest level of autonomy of which they are capable. Key characteristics of recovery include:

(A) Recovery is self-directed, personal and individualized (not defined by treatment providers or agencies);

(B) Recovery is holistic. Recovery is a process through which one gradually achieves greater balance of mind, body and spirit in relation to other aspects of one's life that can include family, work and community;

(C) Recovery moves beyond symptom reduction and relief (i.e. meaningful connections in the community, developing specific skill sets, establishing a sense of quality and well-being);

(D) Recovery is both a process of healing (regaining) and a process of discovery (moving beyond);

(E) Recovery encompasses the possibility for individuals to explore, make mistakes and try again; and

(F) Recovery can occur within or outside the context of professionally directed treatment.

"Wellness" means an active process of becoming aware of and making choices toward a healthy and fulfilling life. Wellness is more than being free from illness, it is a dynamic process of change and growth.

450:53-1-3. Authority of the Commissioner and Department

[Revised 09-01-2024]

(a) The Commissioner or designee shall have the authority and duty to issue, renew, revoke, deny, suspend and/or place on probation certifications to offer peer recovery support services.

(b) The Department shall have authority to:

(1) Receive and deposit fees as required by 43A O.S. § 3-326(C);

(2) Examine all qualified applicants for Peer Recovery Support Specialists training and certification;

(3) Investigate complaints and possible violation of the rules and standards of Peer Recovery Support Specialists;

(4) Make recommendations regarding the outcome of formal complaints; and

(5) Enforce the recommendations of the formal complaint process.

SUBCHAPTER 3. PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION APPLICATION

450:53-3-1. Qualifications for certification

[Revised 11-18-2026]

Applicants for certification as a Peer Recovery Support Specialist shall:

(1) Possess a High School Diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED), High School Equivalency (HSE) Credential, or college or university degree;

(2) Have demonstrated self-driven recovery from a mental health and/or substance use disorder, or have experience utilizing strategies as a family member/caregiver to support recovery of a child or adolescent with a mental health and/or substance use disorder;

(3) Be at least eighteen (18) years of age;

(4) Be willing to self-disclose about their own recovery or their experience as a family member/caregiver of a child or adolescent with a mental health and/or substance use disorder;

(5) Be employed by or intern with from the date the application was submitted:

(A) The State of Oklahoma, an Oklahoma municipality, or an Oklahoma county;

(B) A behavioral health services provider contracted with ODMHSAS or other

state agency to provide behavioral health services;
(C) A behavioral health services provider certified by ODMHSAS;
(D) A tribe or tribal facility that provides behavioral health services; or
(E) An Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs or United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility.
(6) Be actively working on recovery and/or overall wellness;
(7) Complete training in accordance with this Chapter;
(8) Pass a competency examination in accordance with this Chapter;
(9) Not be engaged in any practice or conduct which would be grounds for denying, revoking or suspending a certification pursuant to this Title; and
(10) Otherwise comply with rules promulgated by the Board implementing 43A O. S. § 3-326.

450:53-3-2. Applications for certification

[Revised 09-01-2024]

(a) Applications for certification as a Peer Recovery Support Specialist (PRSS) shall be submitted to the Department on a form and in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner or designee.

(b) An application shall include the following items:

(1) Application form completed in full according to its instructions;
(2) Employment status verification form(s) showing current status as an employee or intern at an eligible employer in accordance with 450:53-3-1. The employment status verification form(s) must be sent to ODMHSAS by the employer but may be provided up to six (6) months after submission of the application form and other required materials;
(3) Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) name-based criminal history report. The report must be an official OSBI document. If there is an incident of stolen identity, a Criminal History Record Theft number and letter must be submitted with the application. The report may be supplied by the applicant or the applicant's employer;
(4) Official high school transcript, General Equivalency Diploma (GED), High School Equivalency (HSE) Credential, or college or university transcript. An unofficial transcript may be accepted if the document can be substantiated by the Department;
(5) Documentation of age;
(6) Detailed information, as requested on the application, demonstrating self-recovery from or family/caregiver experience with mental illness and/or substance use disorder; and
(7) Fees.

(c) An applicant, who meets the requirements for certification and otherwise complied with the Chapter, shall be eligible for certification.

(d) An application must be submitted at least fourteen (14) days prior to attending PRSS training.

(e) Applications shall be submitted and approved by the Department prior to eligibility of taking the PRSS training.

(f) The applicant is not considered certified until verification of employment, exam approval results, and proof of the required training has been submitted.

(g) Applications shall only be valid for a period up to six (6) months.

450:53-3-3. Duration of certification

[Revised 11-19-2026]

(a) **Issuance.** ODMHSAS will issue an appropriate certification to all applicants who successfully complete the requirements for certification as specified in this Chapter.

(b) **Renewal.** Unless revoked, certification issued pursuant to this Chapter must be renewed every two (2) years. Beginning on November 1, 2026, any active one-year certifications in effect will not require renewal until the expiration of two years from the date of certification/renewal. The date(s) of the renewal deadline(s) will be established by ODMHSAS and posted online on the agency's website. Renewal is accomplished by submitting:

(1) The renewal application;

(2) Report of continuing education units with accompanying documentation; and

(3) The renewal fee, per Oklahoma Administrative Code 450:53-3-4.

(c) **Expiration and Reinstatement.** Certifications automatically expire at the end of the current certification period unless timely renewed within thirty (30) days before the certification period ends.

(1) Individuals who have let their certification lapse will be provided with a six (6) month grace period after the expiration of the applicable certification to complete the renewal process. An expired certification may be renewed by submitting the required fees and documentation of continuing education to the Department.

(2) If an individual does not renew within the six (6) month grace period, they will need to submit a new application for certification under the initial application procedures outlined and specified in this Chapter.

450:53-3-4. Fees

[Issued 07-01-2011]

(a) **Application Fee.** The application fee shall be submitted with the application form. The application fee shall not exceed fifty dollars ($50.00).

(b) **Renewal Fee.** The renewal fee shall be submitted with the renewal form and required continuing education documentation. The renewal fee shall not exceed twenty-five dollars ($25.00).

450:53-3-5. Fitness of applicants

[Revised 09-01-2024]

(a) The purpose of this section is to establish the fitness of the applicant as one of the criteria for approval of certification as a Peer Recovery Support Specialist and to set forth the criteria by which the Commissioner or designee shall determine the fitness of the applicants.

(b) The substantiation of any of the following items related to the applicant shall be, as the Commissioner or designee determines, the basis for the denial of or delay of certification of the applicant:

(1) Lack of necessary skills and abilities to provide adequate services;

(2) Misrepresentation on the application or other materials submitted to the Department;

(3) Any action that would otherwise be considered a violation of the rules of professional conduct set forth in this Chapter; or

(4) Certain felony conviction(s), as determined by the Department.

(c) The Department shall obtain document(s) necessary to determine the fitness of an applicant.

(d) The Department may require explanation of negative references prior to issuance of

certification.

SUBCHAPTER 5. PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION TRAINING AND COMPETENCY EXAM

450:53-5-1. Training requirements

[Revised 09-01-2024]

(a) In order to obtain certification as a Peer Recovery Support Specialist, each applicant must:

(1) Attend and complete a PRSS training block covering various aspects of recovery, ethics and/or boundaries, mental health and substance use as specified by the Department. Applicants for certification as a Family Peer Recovery Support Specialist must attend and complete a training block that includes Family Support training as prescribed by the Department.

(2) Attend the entire training block. Absences are excused only for emergencies. An absence lasting over one day shall cause the trainee to be subject to retaking the entire training block at the next scheduled training course.

(3) Complete required homework during the training block.

(4) Demonstrate their ability to verbally share their recovery journey or experience as a family member/caregiver with others in a safe, concise, and trauma-informed manner.

(b) The Department shall have the authority and responsibility for providing Peer Recovery Support Specialists training classes a minimum of three times during the year.

(c) Request for attending the certification training must be made to the Department at least fourteen (14) days prior to the beginning of scheduled classes.

450:53-5-2. Competency exams

[Revised 09-01-2024]

Examinations shall be held at such times, at such places and in such manner as the Commissioner or designee directs. The examination shall cover such technical, professional and practical subjects as relate to the practice of a Peer Recovery Support Specialist.

(1) Certification exams consist of a written exam covering all aspects of the training block.

(2) An applicant must score at least a seventy-five percent (75%) to pass the exam and be certified. A score of seventy-four percent (74%) or less will result in an applicant being required to test again at the next scheduled test date, or at a time and manner approved by the Department.

(3) Applicants who fail to complete and pass the certification exam within six (6) months of application must reapply.

450:53-5-3. Continuing education requirements

[Revised 09-01-2024]

(a) Peer Recovery Support Specialists must complete twelve (12) hours of continuing education per year and submit documentation of attendance for the continuing education to the Department annually.

(b) The Department will use the following criteria to determine approval of acceptable CEU courses:

(1) Provides information to enhance delivery of peer recovery support services and has

been approved by ODMHSAS; or

(2) Is a required undergraduate or graduate course in a behavioral health related field and pertains to direct interaction with consumers (three (3) hours of course work is equal to twelve (12) hours of CEUs); and

(3) At least three (3) of the continuing education hours must be in ethics.

(4) Continuing education accrual from teaching continuing education or sharing recovery stories may also be accrued when the PRSS teaches in programs such as seminars, workshops and conferences, or shares lived experience in settings such as community events, public forums, and news articles, when the content conforms to Peer Support and is not a required part of the PRSS regular employment. No more than three (3) hours of continuing education may be accrued per year through teaching and sharing activities.

(c) Peer Recovery Support Specialists shall retain documents verifying attendance for all continuing education units claimed for the reporting period. Acceptable verification documents include:

(1) A continuing education validation form or certificate furnished by the presenter indicating the topic and number of CEUs given for the course; or

(2) A copy of the agenda showing the content and presenter for the course; and

(3) A signed copy of PRSS Attestation Form.

(d) Failure to complete the continuing education requirements and submit the required documentation by the renewal date renders the certification in suspension, and results in the loss of all rights and privileges of a Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialists. The Peer Recovery Support Specialists certification may be reinstated if all requirements are met in accordance with 450:53-3-3.

SUBCHAPTER 7. RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

450:53-7-1. Responsibility

[Revised 09-01-2024]

It shall be the responsibility of Peer Recovery Support Specialists, in their commitment to assist consumers in regaining control of their lives and recovery processes, to value objectivity and integrity, and in providing services, to strive to maintain the highest standards of their profession. Peer Recovery Support Specialists shall accept responsibility for the consequences of their work and make every effort to ensure that their services are used appropriately. Peer Recovery Support Specialists shall not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonestly, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation. Peer Recovery Support Specialists shall not exploit their relationships with consumers for personal advantage, profit, satisfaction, or interests.

450:53-7-2. Competence and scope of practice

[Revised 09-01-2024]

(a) Peer recovery support services are an EBP model of care which consists of a qualified Peer Recovery Support Specialist (PRSS) who assists individuals with their recovery from mental illness and/or substance use disorders.

(b) Family Peer Recovery Support Specialists focus on the family unit of a child or adolescent in recovery, ensuring the engagement and active participation of both the child/adolescent and the family in treatment and guiding families toward taking a proactive role in their family member's recovery.

(c) A PRSS must possess knowledge about various mental health settings and ancillary services (i.e., Social Security, housing services, and advocacy organizations). A PRSS provides peer support services; serves as an advocate; provides information and peer support. The PRSS performs a wide range of tasks to assist consumers in regaining control of their lives and recovery processes. The PRSS will possess the skills to maintain a high level of professionalism and ethics in all professional interactions. The scope of practice of a PRSS includes the following:

(1) Utilizing their knowledge, skills and abilities the PRSS will:

(A) Teach and mentor the value of every individual's recovery experience;

(B) Model effective coping techniques and self-help strategies;

(C) Prioritize self-care and role model that recovery is possible for all people.

(D) Assist service recipients or their family members in articulating personal goals for recovery; and

(E) Assist service recipients or their family members in determining the objectives needed to reach recovery goals.

(2) Utilizing ongoing training the PRSS may:

(A) Proactively engage consumers or their family members using communication skills to introduce new concepts, ideas, and insight to others;

(B) Facilitate peer support groups;

(C) Assist in setting up and sustaining self-help (mutual support) groups;

(D) Support consumers in using a wellness plan;

(E) Assist in creating a crisis plan/ Psychiatric Advanced Directive as instructed in the PRSS Training;

(F) Utilize and teach problem solving techniques with consumers or their family members.

(G) Teach consumers how to identify and combat negative self-talk and fears;

(H) Support the vocational choices of consumers and assist him/her in overcoming job-related anxiety;

(I) Assist in building social skills in the community that will enhance quality of life. Support the development of natural support systems;

(J) Assist other staff in identifying program and service environments that are conducive to recovery;

(K) Attend treatment team and program development meetings to ensure the presence of the consumer voice and to promote the use of self-directed recovery tools.

(3) Possess knowledge about various behavioral health settings and ancillary services (i.e. Social Security, housing services, advocacy organizations);

(4) Maintain a working knowledge of current trends and developments in the behavioral health field;

(A) Attend continuing education assemblies when offered by/approved by the Commissioner or designee.

(B) Develop and share recovery-oriented material with other Peer Recovery Support Specialists at peer-specific continuing education trainings.

(5) Serve as a PRSS by:

(A) Providing and advocating for effective recovery oriented services;

(B) Assist consumers in obtaining services that suit that individual's

recovery needs;
(C) Inform consumers and their family members about community and natural supports and how to utilize these in the recovery process; and
(D) Assist consumers in developing empowerment skills through self-advocacy.

450:53-7-3. Proficiency
[Revised 09-01-2024]
(a) Peer Support: A PRSS shall practice only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, state credentials, and appropriate professional and personal experience.
(b) Specialty: A PRSS shall not represent themselves as specialists in any aspect unless so designated.
(c) Impairment: A PRSS shall not offer or render professional services when such services may be impaired by a personal physical, mental or emotional condition(s). A PRSS should seek assistance for any such personal problem(s) with their physical, mental or emotional condition, and, if necessary, limit, suspend, or terminate their professional activities. If any PRSS possesses a bias, disposition, attitude, moral persuasion or other similar condition that limits their ability to provide peer recovery support services in that event the they shall not undertake to provide services and will terminate the relationship in accordance with these rules.

450:53-7-4. Wellbeing of the people served
[Revised 09-01-2024]
(a) **Discrimination.** A PRSS shall not, in the rendering of their professional services, participate in, condone, or promote discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, sexual orientation, gender, religion, diagnosis, behavioral health condition, or national origin.
(b) **Confidentiality**. A PRSS shall maintain the confidentiality of any information received from any person or source about a consumer, unless authorized in writing by the consumer or otherwise authorized or required by law or court order. A PRSS shall be responsible for complying with the applicable state and federal regulations in regard to the security, safety and confidentiality of any counseling record they create, maintain, transfer, or destroy whether the record is written, taped, computerized, or stored in any other medium.
(c) **Dual relationships**. A PRSS shall not knowingly enter into a dual relationship(s) and shall take any necessary precautions to prevent a dual relationship from occurring. When the PRSS reasonably suspects that he or she has inadvertently entered into a dual relationship the PRSS shall record that fact in the records of the affected person(s) and take reasonable steps to eliminate the source or agent creating or causing the dual relationship. If the dual relationship cannot be prevented or eliminated and the PRSS cannot readily refer the person to another PRSS, the PRSS shall complete the following measures as necessary to prevent the exploitation of the person and/or the impairment of the professional judgment of the PRSS:
(1) Consult with the PRSS supervisor to understand the potential impairment to the professional judgment of the PRSS and the risk of harm to the person of continuing the dual relationship.
(2) Fully disclose the circumstances of the dual relationship to the consumer and secure the consumer's written consent to continue providing services.
(d) **Providing services to persons of prior association**. A PRSS shall not undertake to provide services to any person with whom the PRSS has had any prior sexual contact or close personal

relationship.
(e) **Interaction with former people with whom a PRSS has provided services**. A PRSS shall not knowingly enter into a close personal relationship, or engage in any business or financial dealings with a former recipient of service. A PRSS shall not engage in any activity that is or may be sexual in nature with a former recipient of service after the termination of the professional relationship. A PRSS shall not exploit or obtain an advantage over a former recipient of services by the use of information or trust gained during the peer recovery support professional relationship.
(f) **Invasion of privacy**. A PRSS shall not make inquiry into persons or matters that are not reasonably calculated to assist or benefit the peer recovery support process.
(g) **Referral.**

(1) If a PRSS determine that they are unable to be of professional assistance to a client, the PRSS shall not enter a professional relationship. A PRSS shall refer people to appropriate sources when indicated. If the person declines the suggested referral, the PRSS shall terminate the relationship.
(2) A PRSS shall not abandon or neglect current recipients of service in treatment without making reasonable arrangements for the continuation of such treatment.
(3) When a PRSS becomes cognizant of a disability or other condition that may impede, undermine or otherwise interfere with the duty of responsibility to the current client, including a suspension of certification or any other situation or condition described in these rules, the PRSS shall promptly notify the recipient of service and the facility in writing of the presence or existence of the disability or condition and take reasonable steps to timely terminate the relationship.

450:53-7-5. Professional standards
[Revised 09-01-2024]
(a) It shall be the responsibility of Peer Recovery Support Specialists, in their commitment to peer support, to value self-determination, and in providing peer services, and to strive to maintain the highest standards of their profession.
(b) A PRSS shall accept responsibility for the consequences of their work and make every effort to ensure that their services are used appropriately.
(c) It shall be unprofessional conduct for a PRSS to violate a state or federal statute, if the violation directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of the PRSS or if the violation involves moral turpitude.
(d) A PRSS shall not render peer recovery support services while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or misused substances or disruptive symptoms.

450:53-7-6. Reimbursement for services rendered
[Revised 09-01-2025]

Peer Recovery Support Specialists shall only use the title if employed by an eligible employer in accordance with 450:53-3-1(5). Reimbursement for services rendered shall not be collected outside of the agency's system of service reimbursement.

450:53-7-7. Failure to comply
[Revised 09-01-2024]

A Peer Recovery Support Specialist who does not comply with the Rules of Professional

Conduct shall be guilty of unprofessional conduct and subject to disciplinary action.

450:53-7-8. Personal Problems and Conflicts
[Revised 09-01-2024]
(a) Peer Recovery Support Specialists shall refrain from initiating an activity when they know or should know that there is a substantial likelihood that their personal problems will prevent them from performing their work-related activities in a competent manner.
(b) When Peer Recovery Support Specialists become aware of personal problems that may interfere with their performing work-related duties adequately, they should take appropriate measures, such as obtaining professional consultation or assistance, and determine whether they should limit, suspend, or terminate their work-related duties.

450:53-7-9. Supervision
[Revised 09-01-2024]
All C-PRSS shall report to a supervisor that has successfully completed an ODMHSAS approved Supervising PRSS Training

SUBCHAPTER 9. ENFORCEMENT

450:53-9-1. Enforcement
[Revised 09-01-2024]
(a) ODMHSAS may deny the certification of any person to be a Peer Recovery Support Specialists who fails to qualify for, or comply with, the provisions of this Chapter.
(b) ODMHSAS may reprimand, suspend, revoke or deny renewal of the certification of a person who fails to qualify for or comply with the provisions of this Chapter.
(c) In the event ODMHSAS determines action should be taken against any person certified under this Chapter, the proceeding shall be initiated pursuant to the rules of ODMHSAS as set forth in Oklahoma Administrative Code, Title 450, Chapter 1, Subchapter 5 and the Administrative Procedures Act.

450:53-9-2. Reasons to deny, revoke or suspend certification
[Issued 07-01-2011]
(a) The Department may deny, revoke, suspend or place on probation any certification issued pursuant to the provisions of 43A O.S. § 3-326 to a Peer Recovery Support Specialist, if the person has:
(1) Engaged in fraud or deceit in connection with services rendered or in establishing needed qualifications to the provisions of the law;
(2) Engaged in unprofessional conduct as defined by the rules established by ODMHSAS;
(3) Engaging in negligence or wrongful actions in the performance of his/her duties; or
(4) Misrepresented any information required in obtaining a certification.
(b) No certification shall be suspended or revoked, nor a Peer Recovery Support Specialist placed on probation until notice is served upon the Peer Recovery Support Specialist and a hearing is held in conformity with 450:1-1-1, et. seq.

SUBCHAPTER 11. SPECIAL PROVISIONS

450:53-11-1. Special Provisions

[Revised 09-01-2025]

(a) Upon request, individuals Credentialed as Peer Recovery Support Specialists by the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services as of June 1, 2009 through the effective date of this Chapter shall be issued Certification as a Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialist as provided in this Chapter.

(b) Upon request, individuals Credentialed as Peer Recovery Support Specialists by the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services from December 1, 2004 through May 31, 2009 that have demonstrated providing peer support in their employment, volunteerism or advocacy to others as peers shall be issued Certification as a Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialist as provided in this Chapter.