

California Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification

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In 2020, California passed SB803, becoming the 49th state to create a pathway for peer counselors to become state certified and bill for Medi-Cal services.



A Peer Specialist is...

a person who uses their **lived experience** of ongoing recovery from mental health challenges and/or substance use, within a framework of **skills learned in formal training**, to deliver community mental health support services.

- *Crisis services*
- *Case management*
- *Counseling*
- *Groups*
- *Substance use recovery*
- *Street outreach*



Process to Becoming State Certified

- Peers who were already working in the field could be grandparented in to to take the state exam beginning in 2022
- Peers who were not eligible for the grandparenting process could take an 80-hour course to become eligible
- CalMHSA (California Mental Health Services Authority) oversees the process and approves training vendors



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UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL BY BECOMING A PEER SPECIALIST

Join the RAMS Peer Specialist Mental Health
Certificate Program today and become a
changemaker in mental health for your community.



Sample Topics from Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist RAMS Course

Wellness & Recovery

Boundaries

Counseling Skills

Group Facilitation

Outreach & Advocacy

Trauma-Informed Care

Crisis Intervention

Substance Use & Harm Reduction

Laws & Ethics

Mental Health Diagnoses

System Navigation

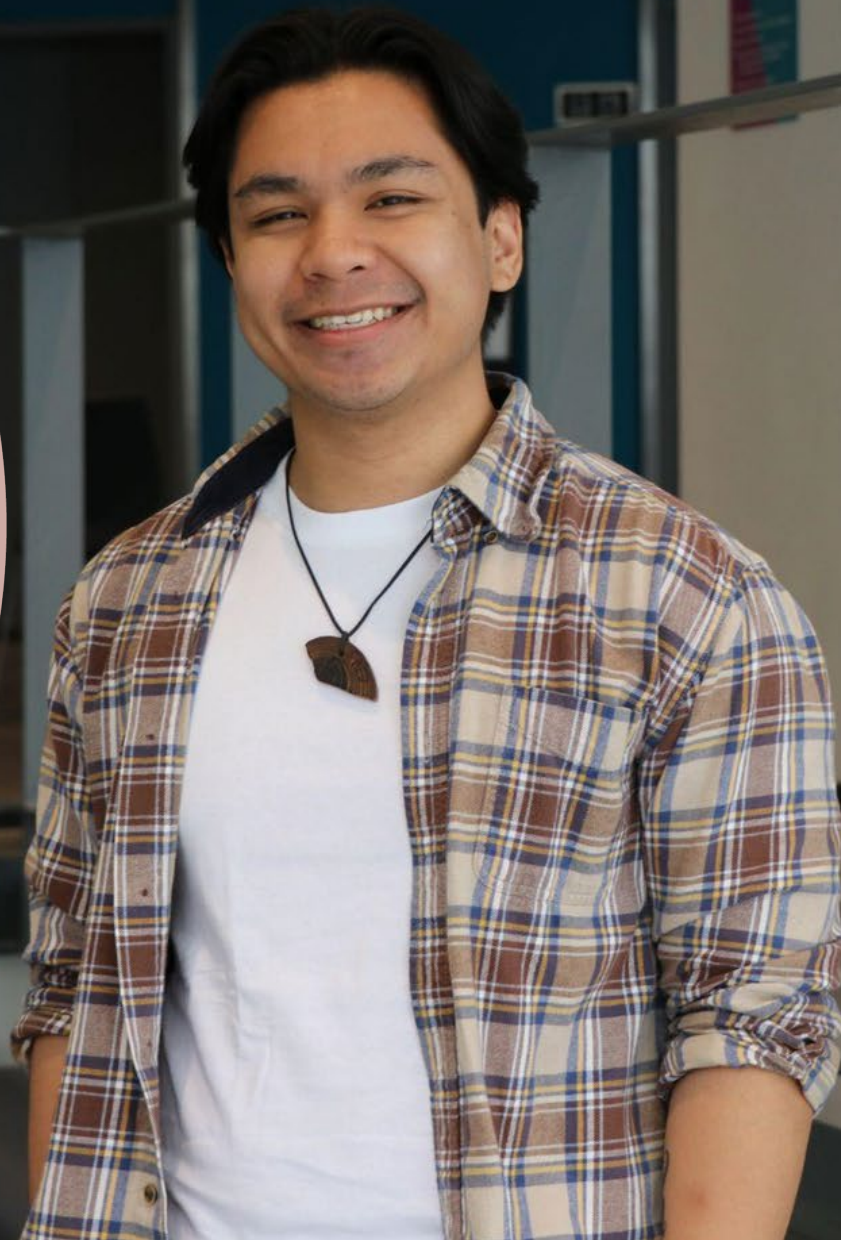
Case Management

Shadow Experience Project



“Being in the course has helped me a lot developing who I want to be in the Mental Health field, but honestly me as a person. Having my fellow classmates around has not only helped me figure out who I want to be, but they have provided support. The general environment we have in class is so supportive of whoever you want to be. It is hard to put into words, but all of the people I met including my mentors and other classmates have shown me so much care and so much love which I will treasure the time I had not only as an educational experience but also as a personal journey.”

-Fred (he/him)-



Why State Certification?

- Provides credibility and legitimacy to the peer counseling profession as an essential role in the behavioral health system of care
- Standardizes foundational training for peers across the state
- Opportunity for professional growth and career advancement
- Creates a peer specialist billing code for Medi-Cal services, expanding the scope of billable services



Currently in San Francisco...

- RAMS peer counselors work alongside DPH staff members as part of a multidisciplinary team at clinics throughout the BHS system of care
- In anticipation of SB803 passing, in 2022 BHS & RAMS piloted peer counselors billing Medi-Cal under other codes (Individual Rehab, Group Rehab, Case Mgmt.) at several BHS clinics (e.g. Chinatown North Beach, Sunset, TAY)



Next Steps in San Francisco

- Our understanding is that some counties in California have already implemented and launched the Peer Specialist billing code, while others (including San Francisco) are still in development
- Upon BHS activating the Peer Specialist code and providing guidance around scope of services, RAMS will train clinic-based staff to utilize this code in Epic and expand billable services



State Certification Resources

- <https://www.calmhsa.org/peer-certification/>
- <https://www.capeercertification.org/training-for-medi-cal-peer-support-specialist/>
- <https://ramsinc.org/programs/peer-based-services/>

