

**CLASS SPECIFICATION  
PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST**

**PAY GRADE: 54  
CLASS CODE: 30003526  
EFFECTIVE: March 17, 2021**

**CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY**

Reports to a Manager or other management-level position. Under general direction, and in partnership with a Mental Health Crisis Clinician and a Portland Fire & Rescue (PF&R) Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), the Peer Support Specialist (PSS) is a frontline first responder to calls that present no criminal intent, fire, or medical emergency. The PSS is a peer with lived experience in mental health and/or substance use who supports individuals who exhibit behavior and substance abuse conditions. The PSS meets with individuals being served in the community and/or their homes to establish and maintain a positive and trusting relationship that is person-centered, strength-based, and trauma-informed.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

This standalone classification is distinguished from other classifications by the focus of providing a compassionate, trauma-informed response to individuals undergoing a mental health crisis and following up to offer assistance in navigating external agency services.

The Peer Support Specialist is distinguished from the Mental Health Crisis Clinician and the EMT in that incumbents in the latter classifications are not required to hold or be in the process of obtaining a Peer Support Specialist certification by Oregon Health Authority or a comparable jurisdiction, and may not have lived experience in mental health and/or substance use.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

Depending on the assignment, the incumbent may perform a combination of some or all of the following duties, and perform related duties as assigned.

General Duties:

1. Provide crisis intervention and support to individuals experiencing distress.
2. Conduct follow up and assist individuals being served in identifying, engaging, and navigating various community resources and external agency services.
3. Perform welfare checks.
4. Document support services in a program database in a manner that assures compliance with policies, program procedures and local, state, and federal regulations.
5. Maintain accurate and up-to-date documentation as required by program deliverables.
6. Attend and participate in team meetings to gain knowledge and communicate program goals and the needs of the individuals being served.
7. Participate in program planning, evaluation, and policy development.
8. Act as an advocate for individuals being served when appropriate, both within the organization and also with other entities.

9. Offer individuals being served and colleagues educational opportunities to explore new resources, information and alternatives to utilizing the emergency department for non-emergent needs.
10. Administer outcome measurement tools with individuals being served and participate in data collection.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Reports to a Manager or other management-level position.

This classification has no supervisory responsibilities.

### **KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS/ABILITIES REQUIRED**

1. Knowledge and understanding of privacy rules and laws, mandatory reporting, and legal responsibilities to clients and the community and other related laws, rules, and regulations including HIPPA, City of Portland Policies and Procedures.
2. Knowledge and understanding of cultural differences, especially as they relate to race, sexual orientation, gender-equality, socio-economic status and their intersections.
3. Fluency in the English language, both oral and written.
4. Skilled in racial, gender, and class analysis.
5. Skilled in active listening.
6. Skilled in engaging clients and others in problem-solving.
7. Skilled and efficient in information-gathering.
8. Able to utilize the 911 dispatch radio and CAD system.
9. Able to convey information to clients clearly, accurately, and completely.
10. Able to establish a collaborative relationship with clients.
11. Able to present a courteous, empathic, and professional manner.
12. Able to work effectively and collaboratively in multi/intra disciplinary settings with other first responders, and health and community agencies.
13. Able to simultaneously talk, type data into an electronic record, and look at various screens to locate client information.
14. Able to work as part of a team in a first-responder capacity.
15. Able to seek support when resolving ethical dilemmas.
16. Able to adhere to program policies and procedures.

### **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OR QUALIFICATIONS:**

Possession of or in the process of obtaining the following certification, required within six months of hire:

- Certified Peer Support Specialist by Oregon Health Authority or comparable jurisdiction

AND

- Lived experience with mental health or substance use addiction (must be in recovery for two or more years).

### **Preferred Qualifications:**

Bi-lingual fluency preferred.

Bargaining Unit: Non represented

FLSA Status: Covered

HISTORY

Established 3/17/2021 by Ordinance

Revision Dates: