



CPRS APPLICATION

Certified Peer Recovery Specialist

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS – READ CAREFULLY

Prior to applying, all requirements must be met and documented.

Do not apply until all requirements are met.

TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION, CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. **Mail:** VCB, 298 S. Progress Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17109
2. **Email:** info@vacertboard.org *NOTE: Only PDFs are permitted. Photos of applications are not accepted.*
3. **Fax:** 717-540-4458 *NOTE: faxing is an unreliable technology. Receiving a confirmation of fax does not indicate it has been received. To confirm receipt of application, email info@vacertboard.org.*

REVIEW & APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Application submitted to VCB. To confirm receipt of application, email VCB at the above email address.
2. Staff reviews application. Allow up to 10 business days for review and processing.
3. Applicant will be emailed if there is any documentation missing or there are questions regarding an application. Applications with pending problems will be held open for one year from date of receipt after which they will be closed.
4. An application is considered approved when applicant receives an email from the testing company to register for the examination.
5. Follow all instructions to register for the examination provided in the email.
6. If you have not heard from VCB regarding your application or received an email from the testing company to register for the examination after 10 business days, email info@vacertboard.org.
7. Once you pass the examination, you are certified.
8. A certificate will be mailed to you within 10 business days.

ROLE OF CERTIFIED PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST

The Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS) is credential for individuals with personal, lived experience in their own recovery or experience as a family member or loved one. CPRS services are an important component in recovery-oriented systems of care. By offering insight into the recovery process based on their own experience, CPRSs are able to provide a unique perspective to those with similar life experiences.

The role of the CPRS reflects a collaborative and strength-based approach, with the primary goal being to assist individuals and family members in achieving sustained recovery from the effects of substance use and/or mental health issues. CPRSs are not clinicians; they serve in a supportive role within the community and/or treatment setting. They do not replace other professional services; they complement the existing array of support services.

The CPRS is not a sponsor, case manager or a therapist but rather a role model, mentor, advocate and motivator.

Services provided by the CPRS are a critical component of services that will substantially improve an individual's ability to sustain recovery and wellness.

CERTIFIED PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST REQUIREMENTS

All requirements below must be met to apply. All required documentation must be sent in with an application except for the official college transcript which is sent to VCB directly prior to application.

FORMAL EDUCATION

REQUIRED: Minimum high school diploma/GED or Associate degree.

Veterans may provide discharge documentation in lieu of a high school diploma/GED.

A copy of the high school transcript or diploma is acceptable or GED verification. If the school is from outside the United States, an equivalency must be done by an organization that specializes in that process. The applicant is responsible for arranging this process and all costs.

It is recommended you obtain documentation approximately three weeks prior to sending in your application. Documentation of high school/GED or associate degree can be included with your application or can be mailed to VCB or emailed to info@vacertboard.org by the educational institution prior to application.

Degree documentation can be used in lieu of a high school diploma/GED. The degree must be from an accredited college/university that is recognized by the US Department of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation. An official transcript sent directly from college/university is required. If the degree is from outside the United States, a degree equivalency must be done by an organization that specializes in that process. The applicant is responsible for arranging this process and all costs.

Official transcripts are required and must be sent directly from college/university to VCB prior to application. **Official transcripts may be mailed to VCB or emailed to info@vacertboard.org.**

It is recommended you request transcripts approximately three weeks prior to sending in your application.

If you have a sealed official transcript in your possession, you may mail it in the sealed envelope to VCB prior to your application arriving or mail it in with your application.

If you have outstanding debt or other issues which prevent the college/university from releasing your official transcript, you must resolve these issues with the school prior to applying for certification.

PEER RECOVERY WORK EXPERIENCE

REQUIRED: 500 hours of volunteer or paid experience specific to peer recovery services.

Qualifying work experience is defined as providing individuals and family members in recovery with a support system to develop and learn healthy skills and gain access to needed community resources. Peer Recovery Specialists serve people in the recovery process by supporting them in accessing community-based resources, implementing self-directed recovery/wellness plans, and navigating state and local systems (including substance use and mental health treatment systems). They encourage individuals to develop a strong foundation in recovery (e.g., establishing support systems, self-care, independence/self-sufficiency, healthy coping skills) that support long-term wellness and recovery. No other work experience in the behavioral health field can be used for peer recovery specialist certification other than what is stated above.

Qualifying work experience can be from multiple employers to accumulate the required years/hours. If the applicant's work experience requirement is not fulfilled from their current employer, they must include **documentation from previous employer(s)** verifying their title, duties and dates employed with their application. DO NOT submit a resume as proof of previous work experience. Applicant must contact previous employers and request detailed documentation of their employment from them.

Time spent participating in or facilitating mutual support groups is not acceptable.

Examples of positions/titles that typically are not eligible for peer recovery specialist certification include but are not limited to sponsors, case managers, technicians, therapists, counselors, intake/admissions workers, drug court/probation and parole professionals, etc.

CURRENT JOB DESCRIPTION

REQUIRED: Copy of a current job description, if currently employed as a CPRS, obtained from current employer, which must be signed by both the applicant and their immediate supervisor. **If previous employment (or numerous employers) are being used to establish the 500 hours of work experience, job descriptions from those positions must be included. (These job descriptions do not need to be signed and dated)**

The current job description **is provided by your employer** and must be signed and dated by the applicant and their immediate supervisor.

Job descriptions determine and verify eligible current work experience. Job description must clearly delineate peer recovery support services as a primary function of the position.

If you have held different peer recovery specialist positions with your current employer, please provide all relevant job descriptions with the application.

In lieu of job description(s), employer may provide an official position description on agency letterhead. This required documentation must include the applicants' dates of employment (to/from) employment status (full-time or part-time), title of position, a detailed description of the duties and responsibilities for the position, and the average number of hours per week the applicant worked.

ON-THE-JOB SUPERVISION

REQUIRED: 25 hours of on-the-job supervision of qualifying work experience in the peer recovery specialist domains.

Supervision is a formal or informal process that is evaluative, educative, and supportive. It ensures quality of care and extends over time. Supervision includes observation, mentoring, coaching, evaluating, inspiring, and creating an atmosphere that promotes self-motivation, learning, and professional development. In all aspects of the supervision process, ethical and diversity issues must be in the forefront.

VCB has no requirements for who provides supervision. The person providing supervision is at the discretion of the agency and/or state requirements.

Supervision can be provided in an individual, one-on-one setting and/or observation of skills or group supervision setting.

Supervision can be provided by **more than one supervisor**. In this case, provide a copy of page 12 of this application to all the supervisors documenting supervision on your behalf.

EDUCATION/TRAINING

REQUIRED: 72-hour DBHDS CPRS Training Curriculum

DBHDS has developed a curriculum for the CPRS. This is the only education that is accepted. A list of upcoming trainings is here: <https://www.vaprs.org/prs-trainings/>

There is **no deadline to apply for certification** upon completion of the training.

EXAMINATION

REQUIRED: Once application is approved, applicant must pass the IC&RC Examination for Peer Recovery Specialists (PR examination).

Examination information provided on page 6 and on IC&RC's website: www.internationalcredentialing.org.

CERTIFICATION FEE

REQUIRED: \$25.00 (fee includes examination and must accompany certification application)

The application fee is effective for those applying from January 1, 2022 – September 30, 2025

DBHDS is currently offering a scholarship for \$150 to cover most of the application fee of \$175. Therefore, applicants only need to submit \$25 with their application materials. The discounted fee is on a first come, first serve basis.

The **fee may be paid** by check, money order or with VISA, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.

If an employer or organization is paying the fee, they must include the applicants name with the payment.

Fee payment information provided on page 8 of this application. E-receipts will be sent if using a credit card for payment. Receipts for check or money order payments must be requested by applicant to VCB.

Applications received without payment will not be processed.

One-half of the fee is refundable if application is denied or cancelled prior to the examination. No refund will be issued if application is denied or cancelled after examination.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Email addresses provided to VCB must be active accounts that are checked regularly. We will not be able to contact you or register you for the examination without an email address. Please print legibly.

Applicants must either live or work in VA at the time of application.

This certification is an international, reciprocal credential recognized and transferrable to many other states and countries.

APPEAL PROCESS

The purpose of appeal is to determine if VCB accurately reviewed an application that is denied. A letter requesting an appeal must be sent to VCB within 30 days of the notification of VCB's action. An applicant shall be considered notified three days after the relevant date of mailing. The appeal will be sent to the VCB Executive Committee who will thoroughly review the entire application and materials to determine whether or not applicant should have been denied approval. The applicant will be notified in writing as to the findings of the Executive Committee.

FELONIES & DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

While felonies and disciplinary actions from other certification/licensing entities may not prohibit certification, documentation is required to be submitted at the time of application. Certification through VCB does not mean a professional should not disclose this information to potential employers and does not in any way exonerate charges.

REQUESTS TO CHANGE APPLICATION

Professionals who wish to have their application re-reviewed for another credential VCB offers prior to taking the examination or after an unsuccessful attempt at the examination will incur a \$50 application change/review fee.

CERTIFICATION TIME PERIOD

Certification encompasses two calendar years beginning on the date the applicant passes the examination. The certificate issued to the professional lists the following information: name of professional, credential name, date of issue, date of expiration and certification number.

RECERTIFICATION

To maintain the high standards of professional practice and to assure continuing awareness of new knowledge in the field, the Board requires recertification every two years. Professionals should review the Recertification Application for credential specific requirements listed on the Board website well in advance of their expiration date.

EXAMINATION INFORMATION

TYPE OF EXAMINATION

The successful completion of an IC&RC examination is required. The examination is computer based, 75 multiple-choice questions, and offered at approved testing sites statewide. Candidates choose the day, time, and site for their examination. Once an application is approved, candidates will receive an email from the testing company with instructions for scheduling their examination.

TIME PERMITTED

Two hours are permitted to complete the examination.

EXAMINATION CONTENT

The examination is developed from the IC&RC Job Analysis which identifies domains and tasks for competent practice. Domains for the examination are Advocacy; Mentoring/Education; Recovery/Wellness Support; Ethical Responsibility.

CANDIDATE GUIDE

The domains, including the task statements per domain, sample examination questions, and a list of references from the IC&RC Job Analysis are included in the Candidate Guide. Candidate Guides are available from the VCB website.

STUDY MATERIAL

Professional study guides and practice exams have been published for the examination. This information can be found on the IC&RC's website at: www.internationalcredentialing.org.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Individuals with disabilities and/or religious obligations that require modifications in examination administration may request specific procedure changes in writing with official documentation to VCB no fewer than 60 days prior to their examination date. Contact VCB on what constitutes official documentation. VCB will coordinate appropriate modifications to the examination process when documentation supports the need.

CANCELLATION/RESCHEDULING POLICY

Candidates are required to arrive on time for their examination. Candidates who arrive late will not be permitted to take the examination and will be charged a \$100.00 cancellation/rescheduling fee. Candidates who cancel or reschedule their examination less than five days prior to their scheduled date will be charged the full examination fee. Candidates who cancel or reschedule more than five days before their scheduled date will be charged a \$25.00 cancellation/rescheduling fee.

RETESTING

Candidates who fail the examination can retest after a 90-day wait period from the date of their last examination. Candidates will be sent instructions and fee information. Candidates have three (3) opportunities to retake an examination. If a candidate fails the examination four (4) times, they must submit a study plan to VCB and wait one-year from the date of the final failed examination before they will be permitted to retest again.

CPRS: APPLICANT INFORMATION

Application can be completed and saved. You may then print the appropriate pages to submit to VCB.

TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY

Today's Date (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

Applicant Name: _____
Print your name as it should appear on your certificate. Credentials and degrees will not be printed.

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy): _____ SSN (last four): _____

Have you ever received any disciplinary action from another certification/licensing authority? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, provide full details on a separate sheet.

Have you read and understood the VCB Peer Recovery Specialist Code of Ethical Conduct? ☐ Yes ☐ No
The Code of Ethical Conduct is located at www.vacertboard.org/ethics.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Primary Email: _____
REQUIRED: PRINT LEGIBLY: EMAIL IS OUR PRIMARY WAY OF COMMUNICATING WITH YOU.

Secondary Email: _____

DEMOGRAPHICS

Data is never released with identifying information. It is used to report workforce data to state and federal agencies.

What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Nonbinary
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____
- ☐ Prefer not to disclose

Do you identify as transgender?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to disclose

How do you describe your sexual orientation or sexual identity?

- ☐ Heterosexual or straight
- ☐ Gay or lesbian
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Queer
- ☐ Questioning or unsure
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____
- ☐ Prefer not to disclose

Which best describes you?

- ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Native American or Alaska Native
- ☐ White or Caucasian
- ☐ Multiracial or Biracial (please specify): _____
- ☐ Not listed (please specify): _____
- ☐ Prefer not to disclose

What is your yearly income?

- ☐ Less than \$20,000
- ☐ \$20,000 to \$34,999
- ☐ \$35,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ Over \$100,000
- ☐ Unsure

Do you have military experience?

- ☐ Active duty
- ☐ Veteran
- ☐ Not Applicable

Language(s) spoken fluently (check all that apply):

- ☐ American Sign Language
- ☐ Arabic
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ English
- ☐ French
- ☐ German
- ☐ Indigenous Language
- ☐ Italian

- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Polish
- ☐ Portuguese
- ☐ Russian
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Tagalog (Filipino)
- ☐ Vietnamese
- ☐ Other, please specify: _____

Employment plans for the next two years (check all that apply):

- ☐ Obtain full time employment/Increase hours
- ☐ Obtain part-time employment/Decrease hours
- ☐ No change
- ☐ Retire
- ☐ Move to a different career/field
- ☐ Unknown

What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

(If you're currently in school, please check the highest degree you have completed.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED) | ☐ Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS) |
| ☐ Trade, Technical or Vocational School | ☐ Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd) |
| ☐ Some college, no degree | ☐ Professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM) |
| ☐ Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS) | ☐ Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD) |

PAYMENT INFORMATION

FEE OF \$25 CAN BE PAID USING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING (CHECK ONE):

- ☐ Check ☐ Money Order ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Checks & Money Orders made payable to VCB

- ☐ My employer/organization is mailing payment directly to VCB.

Number: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____

Sec. Code: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Name on Card: _____

Billing address: _____

(If different than Home Address) _____

Email for receipt *(if paying by credit card only)*: _____

CPRS: FORMAL EDUCATION

REQUIRED: Minimum high school diploma/GED or Associate degree.

I am documenting my high school diploma/GED. ☐ Yes ☐ No

I am documenting a degree. ☐ Yes ☐ No

College/University: _____

Name on Transcript: _____

Date Transcript Requested: _____

Delivery Method:

☐ Mailed to VCB

☐ Emailed to VCB

CPRS: EDUCATION/TRAINING

REQUIRED: 72-hour DBHDS CPRS Training Curriculum

I have included a copy of my DBHDS CPRS training certificates. ☐ Yes ☐ No

CPRS: ATTESTATION AND STATEMENT OF LIVED EXPERIENCE

REQUIRED: One year of demonstrated recovery time prior to the date of application .

I attest that I have no less than one year of demonstrated recovery time prior to date of application.

Applicant Signature

Date

CPRS: PEER RECOVERY WORK EXPERIENCE & JOB DESCRIPTION

REQUIRED: 500 hours of volunteer or paid experience specific to peer recovery services

REQUIRED: Copy of current job description, if working as a CPRS, obtained from current employer, and which must be signed by both the applicant and their immediate supervisor. If previous employment (or numerous employers) are being used to establish the 500 hours of work experience, job descriptions from those positions must be included.

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Employer Name: _____

Employer City: _____ Zip: _____

Applicant Position/Title: _____

Start Date in Current Position: _____

How many hours do you work per week? _____

Total hours/years worked in current position? _____

I have attached my current peer job description, dated, and signed by both me and my supervisor. ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you need to document previous employment to fulfill the experience requirement? ☐ Yes ☐ No

*If yes, complete the section below **AND** submit a letter (on company letterhead) from previous employer(s) verifying your duties and dates employed must be included with your application.*

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE)

Letter (on company letterhead) from previous employer(s) verifying your title, duties & dates employed must be included with your application.

Organization Name: _____

Organization City: _____ Zip: _____

Applicant Position/Title: _____

Start Date in Position: _____ End Date in Position: _____

How many hours did you work per week? _____

Total hours/years worked in previous position? _____

Organization Name: _____

Organization City: _____ Zip: _____

Applicant Position/Title: _____

Start Date in Position: _____ End Date in Position: _____

How many hours did you work per week? _____

Total hours/years worked in previous position? _____

CPRS: ON-THE-JOB SUPERVISION

REQUIRED: 25 hours of on-the-job supervision of qualifying work experience in the peer recovery specialist domains.

Information below is to be completed by applicant's current and/or previous supervisor(s).

This page is to document the supervision hours provided to the applicant, not their total work hours.

The total hours of supervision should be 25 hours but could be more depending on the applicants' length of employment or could be less if the applicant was provided supervision from a previous employer.

Applicants may copy this page and provide it to previous supervisors.

Applicant Name: _____

SUPERVISOR INFORMATION

Name: _____

Position/Title: _____

Licenses, Certifications and/or Degrees: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Employer Name: _____

Employer City: _____ Zip: _____

SUPERVISION DOCUMENTATION

Supervision was provided to the above-named applicant in the following Domains:

DOMAIN	EXACT NUMBER OF HOURS
☐ Advocacy	_____
☐ Mentoring/Education	_____
☐ Recovery/Wellness Support	_____
☐ Ethical Responsibility	_____
TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS OF SUPERVISION:	_____

Supervisor Attestation:

I attest that the above-named applicant has been provided with supervision as documented above.

Supervisor Signature

Date

CPRS: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & RELEASE

This page must be completed by the applicant. It must be notarized and submitted with the application.

RELEASE

I request that the Virginia Certification Board (VCB) grant the credential to me based on the following assurances and documentation:

- I subscribe to and commit myself to professional conduct in keeping with the VCB Code of Ethical Conduct;
- I certify that the information given herein is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I also authorize any necessary investigation and the release of information relative to my application;
- Falsification of any documents will nullify this application and will result in denial or revocation of certification;
- I consent to the release of information contained in my application and any other pertinent data submitted to or collected by VCB to officers, members, and staff of the aforementioned Board;
- I consent to authorize VCB to gather information from third parties regarding education, employment and/or supervision and understand that such communication shall be treated as confidential;
- Allegations of ethical misconduct reported to VCB before, during, or after application for certification is made will be investigated by VCB and could result in the nullification of the application or denial or revocation of certification.

INITIAL EACH STATEMENT

_____ I have read and understood this Acknowledgements and Release.

_____ I either live or work in Virginia at least 51% of the time.

_____ I understand one-half of the application fee is refundable if application is denied or cancelled prior to the examination and no refund will be issued if application is denied or cancelled after examination.

_____ I understand that my application is open for a period of one year after the date of review. If I fail to fulfill all certification requirements within that year, the application will be closed, and no refund will be issued.

_____ I understand that if I request to have my application re-reviewed for another credential VCB offers prior to the examination, or after an unsuccessful attempt at the examination I will incur a \$50 change/review fee.

Applicant: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____
PRINT NAME LEGIBLY

NOTARY PUBLIC ONLY

Name: _____ Date: _____

I attest that I am a notary public and the above-named applicant satisfactorily proved to be the person whose name is subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged that they executed the same for the purposes therein contained. In witness whereof, I hereby set my hand and official seal.

Notary Public Signature **SEAL:**

CPRS: CHECKLIST

Applicant Name: _____

Page must be completed and submitted with the application. Do not submit your application until checklist is reviewed, completed and all documentation is compiled.

Prior to applying, all requirements must be met and documented. Use the table below as a guide for gathering documentation.

Do not submit any documentation with an application that is not listed on the table or the application unless specifically instructed by a staff member. Do not apply until all requirements are met.

REQUIREMENT	DOCUMENTATION	✓
Application page with payment	• Page 7 & 8	
Formal Education page	• Page 9	
Education	• High School Diploma/GED transcripts or diploma • Copies of training certificates (if applicable)	
Attestation	• Page 10	
Work Experience	• Page 11 • Previous relevant employment documentation (if needed)	
Current job description	• Obtain from employer	
Supervision page	• Page 12	
Acknowledgement & Release page	• Page 13, notarized	
Checklist page	• Page 14	
Disciplinary Actions?	• Include letter of explanation with application	
Convicted of a felony?	• Include letter of explanation with application	
Company paying fee?	• Include applicant name on payment	
Copy entire application for records		

TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION, CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. **Mail:** VCB, 298 S. Progress Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17109
2. **Email:** info@vacertboard.org *NOTE: Only PDFs are permitted. Photos of applications are not accepted.*
3. **Fax:** 717-540-4458 *NOTE: faxing is an unreliable technology. Receiving a confirmation of fax does not indicate it has been received. To confirm receipt of application, email info@vacertboard.org.*

I acknowledge, that to the best of my ability, I have submitted a completed application.

Signature: _____ Date: _____