



FAQ'S: Certified Peer Recovery Specialist

BACKGROUND

In 2015, the Virginia Certification Board (VCB) began certifying Certified Peer Recovery Specialists (CPRSs) in the Commonwealth of Virginia with the support of DBHDS. This process started with an 18-month grandparenting period. Beginning in January 2017, a multiple-choice examination was required, as well as a 72 hour DBHDS approved training. In late 2016, reimbursement for peer recovery specialists was approved.

DO I NEED TO KEEP MY CPRS CURRENT?

While it is not necessary to keep your certification current for reimbursement purposes, certification is a very important professional requirement.

- Certification provides public protection and quality care. It is an outward sign to other professionals and those you serve that you have met experience, education, and supervision standards.
- Certified professionals hold themselves to the highest standard by demonstrating competence and proves the Peer is well-trained, education and skilled in providing appropriate services.
- If a CPRS was grandparented into the certification, and their certification expires for one year or more, they will need to pass the examination and complete the DBHDS 72-hour training in order to be re-credentialed.
- Active CPRS's can reciprocate their certification to any other state that offers the Peer Recovery certification through IC&RC.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CPRS AND THE CPRSS OFFERED THROUGH NAADC?

Recently, NAADAC opened up a year-long test waiver period for their CPRSS. There are several differences between the certifications. Most notably:

- You still need to complete the 72-hour DBHDS training – even though it isn't specified. If you do not do this, no reimbursement is possible.
- In addition to the above training, you will also need to complete 8 hours in HIV/communicable disease training.
- There is no reciprocity.
- The CPRS through VCB is the most recognizable peer certification in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Over 500 CPRSs have been certified.
- Application processing time: NAADAC application states it can take up to 8 weeks to process the application; VCB reviews applications daily. The maximum amount of time for feedback to be received on the application, or to be registered for the examination is 10 business days.
- Application submission: NAADAC only accepts submissions via mail; VCB accepts application via email, fax and mail.

WHY ARE THERE MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO REIMBURSEMENT?

In an effort to maximize the ability to reimburse for peer recovery support services, multiple pathways were established. At a minimum, those providing peer recovery services must be registered with the Virginia Board of Counseling and complete the 72-hour DBHDS training. To maintain this status, 8 hours of continuing education is required 1 hours must be in ethics. Other options include being a CPRS and maintaining the certification, and other certification options.