

1 H.847

2 Introduced by Committee on Health Care

3 Date:

4 Subject: Professions and occupations; peer support providers; recovery support  
5 specialists; certification

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the  
7 Office of Professional Regulation to certify peer support providers and  
8 recovery support specialists.

9 An act relating to peer support provider and recovery support specialist  
10 certification

11 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

12 Sec. 1. 3 V.S.A. § 122 is amended to read:

13 § 122. OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

14 The Office of Professional Regulation is created within the Office of the  
15 Secretary of State. The Office shall have a director who shall be qualified by  
16 education and professional experience to perform the duties of the position.

17 The Director of the Office of Professional Regulation shall be a classified  
18 position with the Office of the Secretary of State. The following boards or  
19 professions are attached to the Office of Professional Regulation:

1 \* \* \*

2 (52) Peer support providers

3 (53) Recovery support specialists

4 Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 123 is amended to read:

5 § 123. DUTIES OF OFFICE

6 \* \* \*

7 (j)(1) The Office may inquire into the criminal background histories of  
8 applicants for initial licensure and for license renewal of any Office-issued  
9 credential, including a license, certification, registration, or specialty  
10 designation for the following professions:

11 \* \* \*

12 (I) speech-language pathologists licensed under 26 V.S.A. chapter  
13 87; and

14 (J) peer support providers and recovery support specialists certified  
15 under 26 V.S.A. chapter 60; and

16 (K) individuals registered on the roster of psychotherapists who are  
17 nonlicensed and noncertified.

18 \* \* \*

19 ~~Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 125 is amended to read.~~

20 ~~§ 125. FEES~~

21 ~~\* \* \*~~

1 ~~(b) Unless otherwise provided by law, the following fees shall apply to all~~  
2 ~~professions regulated by the Director in consultation with advisor appointees~~  
3 ~~under Title 26:~~  
4 ~~\* \* \*~~  
5 ~~(4) Biennial renewal, \$275.00, except biennial renewal for:~~  
6 ~~\* \* \*~~  
7 ~~(V) Peer support provider or recovery support specialist, \$50.00.~~  
8 ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

*Sec. 3. 3 V.S.A. § 125 is amended to read:*

*§ 125. FEES*

*\* \* \**

*(b) Unless otherwise provided by law, the following fees shall apply to all  
professions regulated by the Director in consultation with advisor appointees  
under Title 26:*

*\* \* \**

*(2) Application for licensure or certification, \$115.00, except  
application for:*

*\* \* \**

*(Q) Peer support providers or recovery support specialists, \$50.00.*

*\* \* \**

*(4) Biennial renewal, \$275.00, except biennial renewal for:*

\* \* \*

(V) Peer support provider or recovery support specialist, \$50.00.

\* \* \*

*Sec. 3a. 3 V.S.A. § 125 is amended to read:*

*§ 125. FEES*

\* \* \*

*(b) Unless otherwise provided by law, the following fees shall apply to all professions regulated by the Director in consultation with advisor appointees under Title 26:*

\* \* \*

*(2) Application for licensure or certification, \$115.00, except application for:*

\* \* \*

*(Q) Peer support providers or recovery support specialists, ~~\$50.00~~  
\$75.00.*

\* \* \*

1 Sec. 4. 26 V.S.A. chapter 60 is added to read:

2 CHAPTER 60. PEER SUPPORT PROVIDERS AND RECOVERY

3 SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

4 § 3191. DEFINITIONS

5 As used in this chapter:

1           (1) “Certified peer support provider” means an individual who holds a  
2 certificate to engage in the practice of peer support services under this chapter.

3           (2) “Certified recovery support specialist” means an individual who  
4 holds a certificate to engage in the practice of recovery support services under  
5 this chapter.

6           (3) “Code of Ethics for Certified Peer Support Providers” means the  
7 code of ethics for certified peer support providers approved and adopted by the  
8 Department of Mental Health.

9           (4) “Office” means the Office of Professional Regulation.

10          (5) “Peer support provider credentialing body” means the entity  
11 authorized by the Department of Mental Health to, in addition to other duties:

12           (A) issue credentials to peer support providers to demonstrate that a  
13 peer support provider has met the qualifications for certification under the  
14 chapter; and

15           (B) approve acceptable continuing education courses.

16          (6) “Peer support” means the provision of those services that address  
17 mutually agreeable issues or areas of life consistent with the Code of Ethics for  
18 Certified Peer Support Providers that are reasonably related to increasing an  
19 individual’s capacity to live a self-determined life of their own choosing and  
20 that are provided in a mutual relationship between individuals with a lived  
21 experience of trauma, mental health, or substance use challenges. “Peer

1 support” emphasizes a nonjudgmental, values-driven approach that promotes  
2 multiple perspectives, advocates for human rights and dignity, and focuses on  
3 genuine, mutual relationships that enrich the lives of those involved. “Peer  
4 support” includes providing health and wellness supports; supporting  
5 individuals in accessing community-based resources and navigating State and  
6 local systems; providing employment supports, including transitioning into  
7 and staying in the workforce; and promoting empowerment and a sense of  
8 hope through self-advocacy. “Peer support” does not include the provision of  
9 psychotherapy as defined in section 4082 of this title.

10 (7) “Practice of peer support” means the provision of peer support in a  
11 manner consistent with the Code of Ethics for Certified Peer Support  
12 Providers.

13 (8) “Practice of recovery support services” means the practice of  
14 recovery support services.

15 (9) “Recovery support services” means a set of culturally competent,  
16 nonclinical, evidence-based activities coordinated through a written  
17 individualized recovery plan of care that documents a substance use disorder  
18 and reflects the need and preferences of the individual in achieving the  
19 specific, individualized, measurable goals specified in the plan. “Recovery  
20 support services” include a range of social and other services that facilitate  
21 recovery from substance use disorder, support health and wellness, and link

1 individuals with service providers and other supports shown to improve quality  
2 of life for persons, and their families, in and seeking recovery from substance  
3 use. “Recovery support services” do not include the provision of  
4 psychotherapy as defined in section 4082 of this title.

5 (10) “Recovery support specialist credentialing body” means the entity  
6 authorized by the Department of Health to, in addition to other duties:

7 (A) issue credentials to recovery support specialists to demonstrate  
8 that a recovery support specialist has met qualifications for certification under  
9 this chapter; and

10 (B) approve acceptable continuing education courses.

11 § 3192. PROHIBITIONS; PENALTIES

12 (a) Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to prohibit the practice of  
13 peer support by a noncertified provider. However, a person shall not use in  
14 connection with the person’s name any letters, words, or insignia indicating or  
15 implying that the person is a certified peer support provider unless that person  
16 is certified in accordance with this chapter.

17 (b) Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to prohibit the practice of  
18 recovery support services by a noncertified provider. However, a person shall  
19 not use in connection with person’s name any letters, words, or insignia  
20 indicating or implying that the person is a certified recovery support specialist  
21 unless that person is certified in accordance with this chapter.

1       (c) A person who violates this section shall be subject to the penalties  
2 provided in 3 V.S.A. § 127(c).

3 § 3193. DUTIES OF THE DIRECTOR

4       (a) The Director shall:

5           (1) provide general information to applicants for certification as  
6 certified peer support providers or certified recovery support specialists, or  
7 both;

8           (2) receive applicants for certification; grant and renew certifications in  
9 accordance with this chapter; and deny, revoke, suspend, reinstate, or condition  
10 certifications as directed by an administrative law officer;

11           (3) explain appeal procedures to certified peer support providers,  
12 certified recovery support specialists, and applicants;

13           (4) explain complaint procedures to the public;

14           (5) administer fees collected in accordance with this chapter and  
15 3 V.S.A. § 125; and

16           (6) refer all disciplinary matters to an administrative law officer  
17 established under 3 V.S.A. § 129(j).

18       (b) After consultation with the Commissioners of Health and of Mental  
19 Health, the Director shall adopt and amend rules as necessary pursuant to  
20 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to perform the Director's duties under this chapter.

21 § 3194. ADVISOR APPOINTEES

1        (a)(1) After consultation with the Commissioners of Health and of Mental  
2        Health, the Secretary of State shall appoint two certified peer support  
3        providers, two certified recovery support specialists, one representative from  
4        the Department of Health, and one representative from the Department of  
5        Mental Health to serve as advisors to the Director in matters relating to peer  
6        support and recovery support. Advisors shall be appointed to five-year  
7        staggered terms to serve as advisors in matters related to the administration of  
8        this chapter. At least one of the initial appointments shall be less than a five-  
9        year term.

10        (2) A certified peer support provider serving as an advisor shall:

11                (A) have at least three years' experience as a peer support provider  
12        immediately preceding appointment;

13                (B) be certified as a peer support provider in Vermont at the time of  
14        appointment and during incumbency; and

15                (C) remain actively engaged in the practice of peer support in this  
16        State during incumbency.

17        (3) A certified recovery support specialist serving as an advisor shall:

18                (A) be certified as a recovery support specialist in Vermont at the  
19        time of appointment and during incumbency; and

20                (B) remain actively engaged in the practice of recovery support  
21        services in this State during incumbency.

1        (b) The Director shall seek the advice of the advisor appointees in carrying  
2        out the provisions of this chapter. Advisors who are not employed by the State  
3        shall be entitled to compensation and necessary expenses in the amount  
4        provided in 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for attendance at any meeting called by the  
5        Director for this purpose.

6        § 3195. ELIGIBILITY

7        (a) To be eligible for certification as a certified peer support provider, an  
8        applicant shall complete and submit an application in the manner as the  
9        Director prescribes in rule, accompanied by the applicable fees, and evidence  
10       satisfactory to the Director that the applicant:

11            (1) is at least 18 years of age;

12            (2) has received a credential from the peer support provider  
13        credentialing body; and

14            (3) has passed criminal history and registry checks as described in rule.

15        (b) To be eligible for certification as a recovery support specialist, an  
16        applicant shall complete and submit an application in the manner as the  
17        Director prescribes by the rule, accompanied by the applicable fees, and  
18        evidence satisfactory to the Director that the applicant:

19            (1) is at least 18 years of age;

20            (2) has received a credential from the recovery support specialist  
21        credentialing body; and

1           (3) has passed criminal history and registry checks as described in rule.

2           § 3196. CERTIFICATE RENEWAL

3           A peer support specialist provider certification and a recovery support  
4           specialist certification shall be renewed every two years upon application,  
5           payment of the required fee in accordance with 3 V.S.A. § 125, and proof of  
6           compliance with such continuing education or periodic reexamination  
7           requirements established in rule. The fee shall be paid biennially upon  
8           renewal.

9           § 3197. UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

10           (a) Unprofessional conduct means misusing a title in professional activity  
11           and any of the conduct listed in 3 V.S.A. § 129a, whether committed by a  
12           certified peer support provider, a certified recovery support specialist, or an  
13           applicant.

14           (b) The Office may discipline a certified peer support provider or a  
15           certified recovery support specialist for unprofessional conduct as provided in  
16           3 V.S.A. § 129a.

17           Sec. 5. RULEMAKING; PEER SUPPORT PROVIDERS AND RECOVERY  
18           SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

19           On or before September 1, 2024, the Director of Professional Regulation  
20           shall file an initial proposed rule with the Secretary of State pursuant to

1 3 V.S.A. § 836(a)(2) for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of  
2 26 V.S.A. chapter 60.

3 ~~6. EFFECTIVE DATES~~

4 ~~This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025, except this section and Sec. 5~~  
5 ~~(rulemaking; peer support providers and recovery support specialists) shall~~  
6 ~~take effect on passage.~~

*Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES*

*This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025, except:*

- (1) this section and Sec. 5 (rulemaking; peer support providers and recovery support specialists) shall take effect on passage; and*
- (2) Sec. 3a (fees) shall take effect on July 1, 2027.*