



Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Training Policies & Procedures

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1. INTRODUCTION TO LSSSC’s MEDI-CAL PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST TRAINING PROGRAMS

Funded, in part, by a grant from the CA Dept. of Health Care Access & Information (HCAI) and administered by the Workforce Education & Training (WET) Grant Program, LSSSC began training and supporting individuals seeking to become Peer Support Specialists in 2020. Peer Support Specialists (PSS) are individuals with lived experience in mental health and/or recovery that provide support, advocacy, encouragement, affirmation, acceptance, resources, and hope to consumers. PSS play a critical role in supporting individuals and families in the recovery process by sharing their personal experiences including how to navigate the public mental health and/or



recovery systems of care. PSS can help consumers break down barriers and empower them to find and follow their own recovery paths.

The value of a PSS's experience and role is recognized as part of an evidence-based model of care in the state's delivery of mental health and substance use disorder treatment by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Through the passage of Senate Bill 803, Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists are now recognized as a new provider type offering a distinct service type under the Medi-Cal programs for Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) and the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) in California. In alignment with SB 803, the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), and through community stakeholder input, statewide standards for the Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification in California have been established. These standards are set forth in the Behavioral Health Information Notice 21-041 (BHIN 21-041). The California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA), a joint powers authority, develops and implements programs on behalf of counties serving California's Medi-Cal beneficiaries through specialty mental health and substance use disorder services. CalMHSA, in partnership with the County Mental Health Plans, is the certifying entity for the state-approved Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification (PSSC) program in California (herein referred to as "Certifying Entity" or "CalMHSA"). CalMHSA administers all functions of the state-approved certification program and must adhere to all standards set forth by the California Department of Health Care Services.

This document re-states and expands upon current Lutheran Social Services of Southern California (LSSSC) policies and procedures for the expressed purpose of addressing the needs of those Program Participants who have selected LSSSC to complete the Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Training. All policies herein have been developed with guidance from the Department of Health Care Services and with consideration from stakeholder input.

2. LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR MEDI-CAL PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST TRAINING POLICIES RELATED TO THE TRAINING SCHEDULE

a. General Provisions

- i. Certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists provide recovery-oriented, culturally appropriate services that promote engagement, socialization, self-sufficiency, self-advocacy, promote natural support and are trauma aware.
- ii. Certification under this policy is designed for individuals who are 18 years of age or older, who self-identify as having lived experience with the process of recovery from mental health issues, substance use disorder, or both, either as a consumer of these services or as the parent or family member of the consumer.



- iii. The certification is administered by the California Mental Health Services Authority, CalMHSA, (Certifying Entity) through established policies, procedures, and documents specific to the certification program.
- iv. Peer Support Specialists certified through the certification program administered by CalMHSA will be recognized as Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists by all counties who elect to participate in the Medi-Cal Peer Benefit under agreement with the Department of Health Care Services.

b. Definitions

As used in this manual, the terms defined below have the following meaning, unless otherwise noted.

- i. Adult” means an individual who is 18 years of age or older.
- ii. “Beneficiary/Recipient” means an individual who receives peer services from a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist.
- iii. “California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA)” means CalMHSA is the certifying entity approved by the California Department of Health Care Services to certify peer support specialist, peer support specialist training entities, peer support specialist continuing education providers.
- iv. “Certificant” means an individual who has been certified as a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist by CalMHSA.
- v. “Certification” means all requirements of a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist have been met.
- vi. “Certifying Entity” indicates CalMHSA, the organization selected by California Counties, with a plan approved by the Department of Health Care Services, to certify Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists, including components such as training entities and continued education providers.
- vii. “Code of Ethics” means a set of guidelines a certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist in California adheres to around their roles and responsibilities and levels of responsibility in which they function professionally.
- viii. “Continued Education” refers to the education a Certificate receives to further develop their professional knowledge around best practices, updated laws, and/or specialized training.
- ix. “Core Competencies” refers to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) definition, “clusters of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes a person needs to have to successfully perform a role or job”.
- x. “County Reciprocity” refers to the recognition of an individual who has received certification as a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist in any participating county, beyond the one in which they originally received their certification.



- xi. “Culturally Appropriate Services” means a certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist is promoting engagement in a manner that best aligns with the cultural beliefs and practices of the person they serve.
- xii. “Dual Relationship” is defined as a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist’s non-therapeutic relationship with a recipient of care. It includes any activity identified as not allowed within the Code of Ethics.
- xiii. “Grandparenting Process” is the process by which an individual who is employed as a peer on January 1, 2022, or prior to that date, are eligible to seek certification as a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist so long as they meet the eligibility criteria and successfully pass the state-approved exam.
- xiv. “Initial Certification” is the process for an applicant to become certified as a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist for the first time so long as they meet the eligibility criteria and successfully pass the state-approved exam.
- xv. “Lived Experience” refers to an individual’s first-hand experience with a mental health and/or substance use disorder.
- xvi. “Medi-Cal” is California’s Medicaid health care program that includes a variety of medical services for children and adults with a qualifying income or medical condition.
- xvii. “Natural Supports” refers to the personal connections to an individual’s community that enhances the quality of their life.
- xviii. “Out-of-State Reciprocity” refers to the recognition that an individual has received certification for peer support from another state and they meet the qualifications specified under the policies in this document.
- xix. “Peer” refers to persons who share similar understanding of experiences with mental health and/or substance use disorders.
- xx. “Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist” is an individual who is 18 years of age or older, who has self-identified as having lived experience with the process of recovery from mental illness, substance use disorder, or both, either as a consumer of these services or as a parent or family member of the consumer, and who has been granted certification under a county Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist certification program.
- xxi. “Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Services” means culturally appropriate services that promote engagement, socialization, recovery, self-sufficiency, self-advocacy, development of natural supports, and identification of strengths. Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist services include, but are not limited to, prevention services, support, coaching, facilitation, or education that is individualized and is conducted by a certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist.
- xxii. “Prevalent Languages” means a non-English language identified by the California Department of Health Care Services as a threshold language under the state’s Medi-Cal programs.
- xxiii. “Program Participant” is an individual enrolled in a Lutheran Social Services of Southern California certified Medi-Cal peer support specialist program.



- xxiv. “Recertification” refers to meeting the requirements set forth in this policy for renewal of one’s Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist certification. The recertification occurs in two-year intervals.
- xxv. “Recovery” means a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential. This process of change recognizes cultural diversity and inclusion and honors the different routes to resilience and recovery based on the individual and their cultural community.
- xxvi. “Resiliency” is an individual’s capacity to successfully meet life’s challenges, nurtured to have a sense of self-determination, mastery, and hope.
- xxvii. “Training Entity” is an organization that has received approval from the Certifying Entity to provide training for the Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist certification program.
- xxviii. “Trauma Focused” refers to maintaining awareness of the impact traumatic experiences may have on an individual and the influence this trauma may have on the choices they make in their life.
- xxix. “Valid Certificate” means a certificate that is active, in good standing, and is not expired, suspended, revoked or inactive.
- xxx. “Wellness” is the conscious and deliberate process of creating and adapting patterns of behavior that lead to improved health in the following dimensions: emotional, financial, social, spiritual, educational/occupational, physical, intellectual, and environmental.
- xxxi. “Program Registration” is the one time only process in which the participant creates a user account within the LSSSC Peer Training System.

c. Standards For Certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists, Specializations, and Supervisors

- i. A Peer Support Specialist must complete the certification requirements, as identified, and receive certification, prior to providing services as a Certified Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist.
- ii. An applicant seeking certification is required to view the orientation and self-assessment video as a part of their registration process. The video will provide the applicant with an overview of the certification process, and its requirements.
- iii. The Certifying Entity will ensure that each applicant meets all requirements for certification as applicable.
- iv. A Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist:
 - 1. Must be at least 18 years of age.
 - 2. Provide a government-issued identification with photograph, such as driver’s license, identification card, or passport.



3. Possess a high school diploma or general equivalency degree (GED). Submission of educational transcripts are required.
4. Self-identify as an individual with lived experience, be willing to share their experience as a person with lived experience and have a strong dedication to recovery.
5. Agree, in writing, to adhere to the California Department of Health Care Services Code of Ethics for Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists in California.
6. Successfully complete and demonstrate completion of an 80-hour training covering California's 17-core competencies for Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists. Training must be obtained from a CalMHSA-approved training program.
7. Successfully passed the state-approved Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification exam.

d. Training Methodologies

Safe and State of the Art learning in PSS online training. LSSSC began training and supporting individuals seeking to become Peer Support Specialists, as defined by the US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), following the receipt of a grant from the CA Department of Health Care Access & Information (HCAI) and administered by the Workforce Education & Training (WET) Grant Program in 2020. LSSSC Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Training improves upon the original process, including training delivery, methodology and content of these previous programs. The current LSSSC Medi-Cal Peer Support Training covers the California Medi-Cal Peer Support training program and is CalMHSA approved curriculum:

1. The concepts of hope, recovery, and wellness.
2. The role of advocacy.
3. The role of consumers and family members.
4. Psychiatric rehabilitation skills and service delivery, and addiction recovery principles, including defined practices.
5. Cultural and structural competence training.
6. Trauma-informed care.
7. Group facilitation skills.
8. Self-awareness and self-care.
9. Co-occurring disorders of mental health and substance use.
10. Conflict resolution.
11. Professional boundaries and ethics.
12. Preparation for employment opportunities, including study and test taking skills, application and resume preparation, interviewing, and other potential requirements for employment.
13. Safety and crisis planning.
14. Navigation of, and referral to, other services.



15. Documentation skills and standards.
16. Confidentiality.
17. Digital literacy.

The Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Training combines a curriculum component of 80 hours with an internship of 20 hours for an overall 100-hour training program. The curriculum training is on-line, delivered as an on-demand, self-paced program. The experiential component consists of a 20-hour internship at an agency near the participant.

Online “Just-In-Time” Training Curriculum

Working with Health Core Possibilities (HCP), LSSSC adapted the original HCP 2016 curriculum utilizing the HCP ongoing review of national studies and surveys, as well as the experiences of their own staff delivering peer type services. The original curriculum was developed and approved with support from the California's Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD). This curriculum implements principles of PSS knowledge and practice. The curriculum utilizes “just-in-time” access which means each participant can initiate and complete training according to their personal needs and schedule. Understanding the role of a peer support specialist, how to build peer partnerships, set appropriate boundaries and follow a code of ethics is explored at the onset of the training to provide an interpersonal paradigm. The peer relationship is “based on shared understanding, respect and mutual empowerment between people in similar situations” (Mead, S., Hilton, D. & Curtis, L., 2001, Peer support: A theoretical perspective: *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 25(2), 134-141). The curriculum LAO meets criteria identified as key principles and practices in the SAMHSA Core Competencies for Peer Workers in Behavioral Health Services (2015).

LSSSC and HCP are committed to promoting collaboration among mental health providers in an inclusive approach to developing mental health curricula that enables a holistic and comprehensive services approach.

The Gateway page is the participant’s primary access point for all aspects of the LSSSC PSS training programs and contains access points for all of the participant accessible functions via tabs. The Gateway page contains an overview of the entire program and provides details for each of the areas of training provided. The participant’s email account is the primary method of communication.

e. Evaluation of Training

Continuous evaluation of the LSSSC Peer Support Training Program is primarily achieved through four methods:



- i. The course surveys that are embedded within the program presentation. These surveys are primarily in place to help the LSSSC staff evaluate the participant's course/lesson progress and serve as a first level indication of the continued appropriateness and timeliness of the lesson content.
- ii. The use of regular group and individual review sessions. During these sessions, the LSSSC support staff and the participants have the opportunity to discuss a wide range of topics regarding the program. These can and do include lessons and course topic questions.
- iii. A course competition evaluation. Upon the completion and issuance of the completion certificate, the participant is asked to complete a brief questionnaire regarding the course that they have just finished.
- iv. Direct email and phone interactions between the participant and LSSSC support staff.

f. Registration and Enrollment Process

Program Participants initiate and complete the enrollment process on-line via the program Gateway Website located at the following url: pss-training-lsssc.org.

The initial registration and enrollment include the following steps:

- i. Create a User Account. The Gateway page has a tab "Create a User Account." On this page, the Program Participants enter specific information which will be used for contact and verification purposes.
- ii. Email Verification. Upon completion of the User Account, the Program Participant will receive an automatically generated email for them to confirm the provided email. The participants will receive their user credentials after they validate their email address.
- iii. Registration Completion. Upon e-mail verification, the participant will be directed to complete their enrollment: the collection of additional background information and one or more survey questionnaires.
- iv. Course Selection. After registration into the LSSSC Peer Training system, the participant will be asked to select the course they what to take as there are several courses from which to select. The participant only needs to register once. They will use their program credentials to access any and all courses they wish to take, or to access the materials from a course in progress, or a prior completed course that they wish to review.
- v. Access via Gateway Page. The participant will access all functions of the LSSSC Training Program, via the Gateway page, using their Username and Password (Program Credentials).



g. Hours of Operation

The PSS training is an online program with all the training and most of the support provided via the Gateway Website (pss-training-lsssc.org). Shadowing is set-up between the participant and site location, with mutually agreed upon hours.

The Program Coordinator facilitates the Social Support Room Hours and Group Meeting Hours established for the program. [<https://meet.goto.com/MirianR>]

Social Support Room Hours

Monday: 12:00pm - 2:30pm

Wednesday: 12:00pm - 2:30pm

Group Meeting Hours

Tuesday: 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Thursday: 3:00pm - 4:00pm

Saturday: 9am – 10am (2 Saturdays per month)

Additional times may be scheduled and posted on the Gateway as the need arises.

LSSSC has several service delivery locations within the greater Southern California area. These are found on our website (www.LSSSC.org). This program is administered from our main office located in Orange, California, under the overall supervision of:

Gia R. Hamilton, PsyD, LMFT
Chief Program Officer
Lutheran Social Services Southern California
999 Town and Country Road, Suite 100
Orange, CA 92868
Office Hours: 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday.
Closed for major holidays.

The primary support contacts for this program are:

Mirian Rodriguez, MSW
Program Coordinator
Email: mrodriguez@lsssc.org
Phone: (951) 588-2000
Office Hours: 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday.
Closed for major holidays.

Ramona Jimenez
Peer Support Advocate



Email: ramona.jimenez@lsssc.org
Phone: 760-399-0565
Office hours: 8am- 5:00pm, Monday -- Friday
Closed for major holidays.

h. Request for Accommodations

The LSSSC Peer Support Training Programs are designed for on-demand, on-line, and self-paced training and support, with an on-site internship and/or shadowing component. There is a limited number of course hours that require physical in-person participation.

Access to a computer/workstation with a current internet browser is required. For those without the needed equipment, there are public libraries that may provide access, and the participant may reach out to the Program Coordinator for assistance in finding a location with the needed equipment and internet access required to engage in the training.

There are no location or network restrictions that should limit the ability of a participant to access the training tools. The participant should be able to reach the LSSSC PSS Training Gateway and the provided tools without restriction though any basic ISP internet service. This means they can access their account from home, office, a friend's residence, or any public location (library, internet café, etc.).

The internships and/or shadowing experiences are in place to provide the participants with a "hands on" learning and "practice of trade" opportunities. These normally do require the Program Participants to be physically present at a given location for a determined amount of time.

LSSSC wants everyone who has access to and can complete the training, to go on to become a Certified Peer Support Specialist. LSSSC will accommodate religious practices and those qualified individuals with disabilities where the accommodation does not pose an undue hardship.

Please address your Request for Accommodations to the Program Coordinator via email. The Program Coordinator will review your request with the Program staff. The Program Coordinator will respond to you via email within five business days. The Program Coordinator's contact information is below:

Mirian Rodriguez, MSW
Program Coordinator
Email: mrodriguez@lsssc.org
Phone: (951) 588-2000
Office Hours: 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday.
Closed for major holidays.



If you are not satisfied with the accommodation offered by the Program Director, and/or wish to appeal the decision, please send an additional email to the Program Coordinator asking for an appeal. Please provide a detailed reason for your appeal. All appeals will be reviewed by the Program Director. Appeal decisions will be made within five business days and will be communicated to you via email within seven business days.

i. Requests for Leave of Absences

Completing any type of training program is generally time sensitive. Traditional training programs have set beginning and ending times, with a fixed schedule of class time in order to complete the required lessons.

This training program is self-paced and taken using an on-demand on-line web-based methodology. The participant is expected to complete the on-line lessons, which would include any Reflective Exercises, within four months of enrollment. Following completion of the on-line course work, the participant will be expected to complete any required internship or shadowing experience within an additional four-month period.

A Leave of Absence of up to two months will be granted upon application. Examples may include personal or family reasons such as extended long-term illness, long term care for a sick child or a parent, or military service. Please contact the Program Coordinator via email to request a Leave of Absence if you believe that you will need additional time to complete the lessons, internship and/or shadowing experience. The Program Coordinator will contact you within 3 business days regarding your request.

If you believe you need additional time beyond the two month Leave of Absence already granted, please send an additional email to the Program Coordinator asking for an appeal. Please provide a detailed reason for the additional time beyond the granted Leave of Absence. All appeals will be reviewed by the Program Director. Appeal decisions will be made within five business days and will be communicated to you via email within seven business days.

The Program Coordinator's contact information is below:

Mirian Rodriguez, MSW
Program Coordinator
Email: mrodriguez@lsssc.org
Phone: (951) 588-2000
Office Hours: 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday.
Closed for major holidays.

j. Makeup of Assignments or Coursework

The primary coursework and reading assignments (curriculum component) are all self-paced and online for the Program Participants' convenience. By default, there are no late



or missed assignments or coursework. The participant progresses through the program in the order in which the lessons are presented at their own pace. When they finish a lesson, they will complete the lesson quiz and then move to the next lesson.

k. Under the Influence Policy

Lutheran Social Services of Southern California is concerned about the use of alcohol, marijuana, illegal drugs, or controlled substances as it affects the educational process and outcomes of its overall operations. Use of these substances, whether on or off LSSSC property (virtual or otherwise) can detract from the Program Participants' performance, efficiency, safety, and health, and may seriously impair general operations of the organization. In addition, the use or possession of these substances on LSSSC property constitutes a potential danger to the welfare and safety of other employees and exposes LSSSC to the risks of property loss or damage, or injury to other persons.

Internship and shadowing site locations may have differing policies related to this topic.

l. Anti-Harassment Policy

It is the policy of LSSSC to maintain an education and work environment that is free from all forms of unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all LSSSC operations, programs, and activities and includes all Peer Support Training Programs. All staff and personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment. This policy applies to unlawful conduct occurring on LSSSC property, or at another location if such conduct occurs during an activity sponsored by LSSSC.

LSSSC will vigorously enforce its prohibition against discriminatory harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") that are protected by Federal civil rights laws (hereinafter referred to as unlawful harassment), and encourages those within the LSSSC community as well as third parties, who feel aggrieved to seek assistance to rectify such problems. LSSSC will investigate all allegations of unlawful harassment and in those cases where unlawful harassment is substantiated, LSSSC will take immediate steps to end the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

LSSSC's policy prohibiting harassment applies to all persons involved in the operation of the organization. LSSSC prohibits harassment, disrespectful or unprofessional conduct by any Program Participant, employee, including supervisors, managers, and co-workers. This anti-harassment policy also applies to vendors, customers, independent contractors, unpaid interns, volunteers, persons providing services pursuant to a contract and other persons with whom you come into contact while working.



Prohibited harassment, disrespectful or unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations, comments, posts, or messages.
- Visual displays such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures.
 - Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work because of sex, race, or any other protected basis.
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests or sexual advances as a condition of continued employment, or to avoid some other loss and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favors.
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment; and
- Communication via electronic media of any type that includes any conduct that is prohibited by state and/or federal law or by company policy. Employees will not be retaliated against for inquiring about or discussing wages. However, Lutheran Social Services of Southern California is not obligated to disclose the wages of other employees.

LSSSC will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint or participating in any investigation or complaint process, and will not tolerate or permit retaliation by management, employees, co-workers, or fellow participants.

m. Non-Discrimination Policy

Lutheran Social Services is committed to compliance with all applicable laws providing equal employment and educational opportunities. This commitment applies to all persons involved in the organization's operations. LSSSC prohibits unlawful discrimination against any job applicant, employee, participant or unpaid intern, and Program Participants by any employee of the organization, including supervisors and coworkers.

Pay discrimination between employees of the opposite sex or between employees of another race or ethnicity performing substantially similar work, as defined by the California Fair Pay Act and federal law, is prohibited. Pay differentials may be valid in certain situations defined by law.

Employees will not be retaliated against for inquiring about or discussing wages. However, Lutheran Social Services of Southern California is not obligated to disclose the wages of other employees.

LSSSC will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint or participating in any investigation or complaint process, and will not tolerate or permit retaliation by management, employees, co-workers, or fellow participants.



n. Availability of Material in Prevalent Languages

Currently the entire LSSSC Peer Training Program (all available courses) are only available in English.

The LSSSC Program Coordinator, Mirian Rodriguez, is bilingual/bicultural and can provide support in both English and Spanish to Program Participants.

o. Confidentiality of Other Participants Policies

As with most programs that involve group settings, there is always the concern about personal privacy and encouraging confidentiality within the group.

When individuals participate in a group session, there is an expectation that anything they say during a meeting will be kept confidential by other group members. It is for this reason that we keep all group meetings/sessions anonymous. Other than the LSSSC employees leading the discussion, we encourage all the Program Participants to limit their personal identification.

The anonymity model is used in group activities to protect Program Participants and help mitigate some of the risk involved in sharing confidential information in a group setting. All group Program Participants are expected to adhere to these rules:

- Use first names only when engaged in any group activity.
- Respect the right of other Program Participants to maintain their own anonymity at whatever levels they wish.
- Exercise caution not to break their anonymity when posting, texting, or blogging, and exercise vigilance not to inadvertently break the anonymity of others.
- Maintain the personal anonymity of all Program Participants in writing any articles and/or autobiographies.

p. Maintenance of Records Policy

All participant enrollment, demographic information, and training records are protected by secure data storage and encryption. Access is limited and controlled to only those needing the data, and any/all reporting is done in a blind manner. Although not required, we provide our participant data with the same levels of protection that you would find with HIPAA.

The Program Participants have real-time access to ALL their records via their username and password. All participant information is maintained and stored electronically.

All participant records will be maintained for no less than 3 years from the date of training course completion.



q. Complaints and Grievance Policy

If you believe that you have been the subject of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or other prohibited conduct, bring your complaint to the Program Coordinator (Mirian Rodriguez at mrodriguez@lsssc.org, or the Program Director (Dr. Gia Hamilton at gia.hamilton@lsssc.org), as soon as possible after the incident. If you need assistance with your complaint, or if you prefer to make a complaint with someone other than these individuals, contact LSSSC Human Resources office at hr@lsssc.org. Please provide all known details of the incident or incidents, names of individuals involved and names of any witnesses. It would be best to communicate your complaint in writing (email), but it is not mandatory.

The Program Director must refer all complaints involving harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or other prohibited conduct to the LSSSC Human Resources office so LSSSC can try to resolve the complaint. When LSSSC receives allegations of misconduct, it will immediately undertake a fair, timely, thorough, and objective investigation of the allegations in accordance with all legal requirements. LSSSC will reach reasonable conclusions based on the evidence collected. The LSSSC Human Resources office will respond to all complaints via email using the address supplied by the participant.

If there is a grievance directed towards the Program Coordinator, Peer Support Advocate, other LSSSC staff or the Program in general, please contact the Program Director, Dr. Gia Hamilton, at gia.hamilton@lsssc.org,

If the grievance is directed towards the Program Director, the complaint should be directed to the LSSSC Human Resources office at hr@lsssc.org.

LSSSC will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible. However, LSSSC cannot promise complete confidentiality. LSSSC's duty to investigate and take corrective action may require the disclosure of information to individuals with a need to know.

Complaints will be:

- Responded to in a timely manner
- Kept confidential to the extent possible
- Investigated impartially by qualified personnel in a timely manner
- Documented and tracked for reasonable progress
- Given appropriate options for remedial action and resolution
- Closed in a timely manner

If LSSSC determines that harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or other prohibited conduct has occurred; appropriate and effective corrective and remedial action will be taken in accordance with the circumstances involved. LSSSC will also take appropriate action to deter future misconduct.

Any Program Participant determined by LSSSC to have engaged in harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or other prohibited conduct will be subject to appropriate



disciplinary action, up to, and including termination. Program Participants should also know that if they engage in unlawful harassment, they may be held personally liable for the misconduct.

r. Refund/Cancellation Policy

There are currently two sets of tuition and fees for the LSSSC Peer Training Courses.

- i. Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Training
Individual: \$299
Cohort: \$249 (3 or more individuals)
- ii. Specialized PSS Training Courses
Individual: \$149
Cohort: \$99 (3 or more individuals)

There are a variety of payment options that exist.

Payment options:

- Third party scholarships
- LSSSC scholarships and discounts
- Employers. Special group rates may be available, contact the Program Coordinator for more information.
- Participant Self-Pay

Basic Cancellation Policy

The participant may cancel their participation in the LSSSC training program at any time. Refunds will be prorated from the time a participant started the program and the time they cancelled. Prorated refunds will only be issued for Program Participants who notify LSSSC that they are terminating the program prior to the end of the third month of activity, based on their start date.

Calculating a Refund

Refunds are based on the number of months the participant has been engaged in their training. This program allocates four months for completion.

If the participant cancels within the first week of starting the program (lessons started) they will receive a full refund.

If the participant cancels within the first month, but after the first week, they will receive a 75% refund.

If the participant cancels during the second month, they will receive a 50% refund.

If the participant cancels during the third month, they will receive a 25% refund.



There are no refunds for those Program Participants who fail to cancel prior to the end of the third month, or for those Program Participants who fail to cancel and do not complete the program.

Returning the Refund

All funds paid directly by the participant will be returned to the participant. Those funds paid by a third party or employer will be returned to the payor source.

Refund Times for the Participant

Once we issue your refund, it takes additional time for your financial institution to make funds available in your account. Refer to the following table for more details.

Refund Method	Refund Time (After Refund Is Processed)
Credit card	Three to five business days
Debit card	Up to 10 business days
Checking account	Up to 10 business days
SNAP EBT card	Up to 10 business days
Promotional Certificate	No refund issued
Pre-paid credit card	Up to 30 days (depending on the issuer of the card)

s. Issuance of Certificate of Completion

Upon completion of the course, the participant will be presented with an option to print and/or download a PDF version of the Certificate of Completion.

This certificate will be available for participants to access from the system at any time.

Last Updated: 2024 March 26

