



RECOVERY PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST

REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR VOLUNTEERS

What do recovery peer support specialists do?

Recovery peer support specialist volunteers serve as on-call advocates for people looking for substance use treatment information and/or services. Volunteers respond to requests for substance use advocacy at all Birmingham area emergency rooms and the local Crisis Center offices. The volunteer provides emotional support, answers questions, explains the Recovery Resource Center process, and assists clients in completing necessary intake paperwork. They inform the client about the services offered by the Recovery Resource Center and will provide them with an appointment to have their state assessment (ASAM) completed if necessary. Additionally, they may offer support or answer questions for the family at the medical facility, but the client remains our primary concern and focus of attention.

Must I have any special training or experience in order to apply?

Yes. All recovery peer support specialist volunteers must be either CRSS or FORMLL certified. If you are not certified, then you can still apply to be a recovery peer support specialist, but your certification needs to be complete before your first shadow shift can be scheduled.

What are the requirements that I must meet before making an application?

You must be a high school graduate at least 18 years old with a genuine interest in helping others. You must not be currently receiving services provided by any Crisis Center program. Recovery peer support specialist volunteers must also have access to reliable transportation and carry automobile liability insurance.

What's involved in the screening process?

You will be asked to complete an oral/or written exercise and be interviewed by a professional staff member. The entire process takes about an hour. Some of the qualities screened for include dependability, emotional maturity, stability, absence of harsh or judgmental attitudes, and personal insight. Information on your

application will be verified by a background check. Three personal references must also be provided. All of the information you give us is held confidential.

What happens if I'm accepted?

Once accepted, volunteers will receive approximately 30 hours of training. Topics include Substance Abuse Treatment, Attitudes About Recovery, Suicide Intervention, and Communication and Counseling Techniques. Trainees must complete all training before they will be allowed to serve in an on-call capacity.

What's expected of me once I finish training?

Because the Recovery Resource Center makes a considerable investment in training volunteers, a minimum commitment of one year's service from the date of graduation is asked from each volunteer in return. Recovery peer support specialist volunteers are asked to take two 12-hour on-call shifts per month. While on call, a volunteer goes about their normal routine outside the Center and is only contacted if a client requires their services. Following each on-call period, recovery peer support volunteers will be contacted by a staff member to discuss calls, both to provide quality control of services delivered to victims and to provide the volunteer with support and continuing education for the many varied situations she may encounter. Paperwork must be completed and turned in to the Center within 24 hours following completion of an on-call shift. All information about clients must be held in the strictest confidence.

