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MANUAL

Certified Peer Support Specialist, Certified Peer Recovery Specialist & Certified Peer Supervisor



Welcome to the Addiction Professionals of South Carolina’s (APSC) Peer Support Specialist certification process. We are excited to help you on your path toward becoming a Peer Support Specialist, Peer Recovery Specialist or Peer Supervisor. Please be aware that, just as our field is changing, this manual will be changed / revised at the discretion of the APSC Peer Support Specialist Certification Commission (PSSCC). Please ensure that you are using the most recent version of the Peer Support Specialist Certification Manual. The most recent version can be found on the APSC website (www.addictionprofessionalsofsouthcarolina.org).

APSC does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

This Certification Manual was revised on March 31, 2025.

Eligibility, Practice Guidelines, Activities, Domains, and Basic Knowledge	3
Reciprocity of Certification	12
Certification Process	13
Written Examination for CPRS	15
Recertification Procedure	16
Refusal, Suspension, or Revocation Certification	17
Guidelines for CPSS, CPRS and CPS Continuing Education Trainings	17
Guidelines for Becoming an Approved Training Center	18

Appendices

Appendix I Frequently Asked Questions; Code of Ethics; Recovery Bill of Rights	19-23
Appendix II Application to Attend Peer Support Specialist Certification Training	24-27
Form A. Application Form	
Form B. CPSS Code of Ethics Agreement	
Appendix III Application for Peer Recovery Specialist (PRS) Certification	28-31
Form A. 500 hours of Volunteer or Paid Work Experience	
Form B. Supervisor Evaluation	
Appendix IV Application for Approval as a PSS Training Center	32-35
Form A. Training Center Agreement	
Form B. Application for Approval as a PSS Training Trainer	
Appendix V Fees	36

The Peer Support Specialist Certification Commission (PSSCC) offers three levels of certification: the Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS), the Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS), and the Certified Peer Supervisor (CPS).

Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS)

Education and Prerequisite Training

High school diploma or jurisdictionally certified high school equivalency (e.g. GED).

Self-identify as having continuous, sustained one (1) year of lived experience in Recovery from Substance Use Disorders (SUD) verified by two (2) references.

Successful completion of 46-hour training from a South Carolina PSSCC approved Training Center.

Successful completion of PSSCC Peer Support Specialist (PSS) Certification Examination.

100 hours of volunteer or paid experience as a Peer Support Specialist specific to the four domains (Advocacy, Mentoring/Education, Recovery Support, and Ethical Responsibility). Volunteer or paid Practical Experience that must be verified by current employers or an administrator of volunteer organizations.

Certified Peer recovery Support Specialist (CPRS)

Education and Prerequisite Training

High school diploma or jurisdictionally certified high school equivalency (e.g. GED).

Self-identify as having continuous, sustained one (1) year of Lived Recovery from SUD experience verified by two (2) references.

Successful completion of 46-hour training from a South Carolina PSSCC Approved Training Center.

Successful completion of PSSCC PSS Certification Examination.

500 hours of volunteer or paid experience specific to the four domains (Advocacy, Mentoring/Education, Recovery Support, and Ethical Responsibility). Volunteer or paid Practical Experience that must be verified by current and/or previous employers or an administrator of volunteer organizations.

Successful completion of the IC&RC written examination.

Certified Peer Supervisor (CPS)

Education and Prerequisite Training

Be either a substance use or mental health professional who is a Certified Peer Support Specialist in South Carolina and has five (5) years of workforce experience providing peer support. Additionally, the applicant has provided peer supervision under supervision of a Clinical Supervisor (CS), Certified Peer Supervisor (CPS) or other Licensed Behavioral Health Practitioner with documentation of 30 hours of Individual Supervision.

- Completed the twelve (12) hour Supervising Peer Support Specialists Training offered by the Addiction Professionals of South Carolina (APSC) through its Peer Support Specialist Certification Commission (PSSCC), or an equivalent Twelve (12) hour Supervising Peer Support Specialist training that has been approved by the PSSCC.
- Submit a letter of recommendation from the individual who provided their supervision which includes verification of five years' work experience and the 30 hours of individual supervision. Include a copy of Supervising Peers Training Certificate.

OR an individual who has the following minimum qualifications:

A Master's degree and two (2) years of substance use or mental health direct care experience which may include experience in peer support services. Additionally, the applicant has provided peer supervision under supervision of a Clinical Supervisor (CS), Certified Peer Supervisor (CPS) or other Licensed Behavioral Health Practitioner with documentation of 30 hours of Individual Supervision.

- Completed the twelve (12) hour Supervising Peer Support Specialists Training offered by the Addiction Professionals of South Carolina (APSC) through its Peer Support Specialist Certification Commission (PSSCC) or an equivalent Twelve (12) hour Supervising Peer Support Specialist training that has been approved by the PSSCC.
- Submit a letter of recommendation from the individual who provided their supervision which includes verification of five years' work experience and the 30 hours of individual supervision. Include a copy of Supervising Peers Training Certificate.

A Bachelor's degree and three (3) years of substance use or mental health direct care experience which may include experience in peer support services. Additionally, the applicant has provided peer supervision under supervision of a Clinical Supervisor (CS), Certified Peer Supervisor (CPS) or other Licensed Behavioral Health Practitioner with documentation of 30 hours of Individual Supervision.

- Completed the twelve (12) hour Supervising Peer Support Specialists Training offered by the Addiction Professionals of South Carolina (APSC) through its Peer Support Specialist Certification Commission (PSSCC) or an equivalent Twelve (12) hour Supervising Peer Support Specialist training that has been approved by the PSSCC.
- Submit a letter of recommendation from the individual who provided their supervision which includes verification of five years' work experience and the 30 hours of individual supervision. Include a copy of Supervising Peers Training Certificate.

ELIGIBILITY

SPECIALTIES

CPSS	CPRS	CPS
<p>High school diploma or jurisdictionally certified high school equivalency (e.g. GED)</p>	<p>High school diploma or jurisdictionally certified high school equivalency (e.g. GED)</p>	<p>Substance use or mental health professional who is certified as a Peer Support Specialist with five (5) years' workforce experience providing peer support</p> <p>OR</p> <p>A Master's Degree and two (2) years of substance use or mental health direct care experience which may include experience in peer support services, A Bachelor's Degree and three (3) years of substance use or mental health direct care experience which may include experience in peer support services</p>
<p>Self-identify as having continuous, sustained one (1) year of lived experience in Recovery from SUD verified by two (2) references **</p>	<p>Self-identify as having continuous, sustained one (1) year of lived experience in Recovery from SUD verified by two (2) references**</p>	
<p>Successful completion of 46-hour training from an APSC PSSCC Approved Training Center</p>	<p>Successful completion of 46-hour training from an APSC PSSCC Approved Training Center</p>	<p>Successful completion of 12 hour "Supervising Peer Support Specialist" offered by the PSSCC</p>
<p>Successfully complete PSSCC PSS Certification Exam</p>	<p>Successfully complete PSSCC PSS Certification Exam</p>	
	<p>500 hours of volunteer or paid experience specific to the four domains (Advocacy, Mentoring/ Education, Recovery Support, and Ethical Responsibility)</p>	<p>30 hours of individual supervision from a Clinical Supervisor (CS), Certified Peer Supervisor (CPS) or other Licensed Behavioral Health practitioner providing peer supervision under supervision</p>
	<p>Successful completion of the IC&RC written examination</p>	

** See "Frequently Asked Questions", Appendix I page 17, for an explanation of "continuous, sustained one (1) year of lived recovery from SUD experience."

Practice Guidelines, Activities, Domains, and Basic Knowledge for CPSS and CPRS

The primary role of a CPSS and CPRS is to establish a safe and authentic non-clinical therapeutic alliance while assisting participants in the recognition of solution-focused activities which will support successful stabilization, recovery, and actualization. To this end, the following CPSS and CPRS practice guidelines, activities, and domains are utilized in the certification process to assure competence of the Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) and Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS):

Practice Guidelines for Peer Support Specialists

- Peer support is **Voluntary**
- Peer support is **Trauma-Informed**
- Peer supporters are **Hopeful**
- Peer supporters are **Open-minded**
- Peer supporters are **Empathetic**
- Peer supporters are **Respectful**
- Peer supporters **Facilitate Positive Change**
- Peer supporters are **Honest and Direct**
- Peer supporters are **Mutual and Reciprocal**
- Peer support is **Equally Shared Power**
- Peer support is **Strengths-Focused**
- Peer support is **Transparent**
- Peer support is **Results Driven**

Activities for Peer Support Specialists and Peer Support Recovery Specialists

- 1 Promote hope through understanding, social adaptation, and alternative solutions to improve quality of life.
- 2 Help engage in recovery-oriented thoughts and behaviors while reducing preoccupation with negative thoughts and acute withdrawal/post-acute withdrawal symptoms.
- 3 Promote the expression of needs, feelings, and thoughts in a supportive and safe environment.
- 4 Assist with establishing and maintaining recovery-oriented relationships.
- 5 Assist to restore self-efficacy which may have lost due to substance use, misuse, and commonly cooccurring mental health challenges.
- 6 Encourage verbalization of thoughts, feelings, and ideas in a supportive environment.
- 7 Promote self-advocacy and the safe, effective use of community resources.
- 8 Promote the understanding and practice of recovery-oriented daily living routines.
- 9 Improve concentration and attention, problem solving skills, ethics development, and time management to promote and enhance recovery engagement.

- 10 Assist with identifying and reducing stressors, developing recovery-oriented coping skills and techniques used to prevent mental health decompensation and return to dysfunctional behavior and/or substance use/misuse.
- 11 Promote the enhancement of self-care, wellness, and resilience.
- 12 Assist with identifying, developing, and practicing abilities to maintain a healthy recovery-oriented living environment.
- 13 Identify and manage symptoms, attitudes, and behaviors that both interfere with and reinforce engaging the process of recovery-oriented living, working, and vocation.

Domains for Peer Support Specialist and the Peer Support Recovery Specialist

1: Advocacy

Job Tasks that should be performed by the Peer Recovery Specialist in the Advocacy domain are:

Task 1	Relate to the individual as an advocate.
Task 2	Advocate within systems to promote person-centered recovery/wellness support services
Task 3	Describe the individual's rights and responsibilities.
Task 4	Apply the principles of individual choice and self-determination.
Task 5	Explain importance of self-advocacy as a component of recovery/wellness.
Task 6	Recognize and use person-centered language.
Task 7	Practice effective communication skills.
Task 8	Differentiate between the types and levels of advocacy.
Task 9	Collaborate with individual to identify, link, and coordinate choices with resources.
Task 10	Advocate for multiple pathways to recovery/wellness.
Task 11	Recognize the importance of a holistic (e.g., mind, body, spirit, environment) approach to recovery/wellness.

2: Ethical Responsibility

Job Tasks that should be performed by the Peer Recovery Specialist in the Ethical Responsibility domain are:

Task 1	Recognize risk indicators that may affect the individual's welfare and safety.
Task 2	Respond to personal risk indicators to assure welfare and safety.
Task 3	Communicate to support network personal issues that impact ability to perform job duties.
Task 4	Report suspicions of abuse or neglect to appropriate authority.
Task 5	Evaluate the individual's satisfaction with their progress toward recovery/wellness goals.
Task 6	Maintain documentation and collect data as required.
Task 7	Adhere to responsibilities and limits of the role.
Task 8	Apply fundamentals of cultural competency.
Task 9	Recognize and adhere to the rules of confidentiality.
Task 10	Recognize and maintain professional and personal boundaries.
Task 11	Recognize and address personal and institutional biases and behaviors.
Task 12	Maintain current, accurate knowledge of trends and issues related to wellness and recovery.
Task 13	Recognize various crisis and emergency situations.
Task 14	Use organizational/departmental chain of command to address or resolve issues.
Task 15	Practice non-judgmental behavior.

3: Mentoring/Education

Job Tasks that should be performed by the Peer Recovery Specialist in the Mentoring/Education domain are:

Task 1	Serve as a role model for an individual.
Task 2	Recognize the importance of self-care.
Task 3	Establish and maintain a peer relationship rather than a hierarchical relationship.
Task 4	Educate through shared experiences.
Task 5	Support the development of healthy behavior that is based on choice.
Task 6	Describe the skills needed to self-advocate.
Task 7	Assist the individual in identifying and establishing positive relationships.
Task 8	Establish a respectful, trusting relationship with the individual.
Task 9	Demonstrate consistency by supporting individuals during ordinary and extraordinary times.
Task 10	Support the development of effective communication skills.
Task 11	Support the development of conflict resolution skills.
Task 12	Support the development of problem-solving skills.
Task 13	Apply principles of empowerment.
Task 14	Provide resource linkage to community supports and professional services.

4: Recovery/Wellness Support

Job Tasks that should be performed by the Peer Recovery Specialist in the Recovery/Wellness Support domain are:

Task 1	Assist the individual with setting goals.
Task 2	Recognize that there are multiple pathways to recovery/wellness.
Task 3	Contribute to the individual's recovery/wellness team(s).
Task 4	Assist the individual to identify and build on their strengths and resiliencies.
Task 5	Apply effective coaching techniques such as Motivational Interviewing.
Task 6	Recognize the stages of change.
Task 7	Recognize the stages of recovery/wellness.
Task 8	Recognize signs of distress.
Task 9	Develop tools for effective outreach and continued support.
Task 10	Assist the individual in identifying support systems.
Task 11	Practice a strengths-based approach to recovery/wellness.
Task 12	Assist the individual in identifying basic needs.
Task 13	Apply basic supportive group facilitation techniques.
Task 14	Recognize and understand the impact of trauma.

Basic Knowledge for Peer Support Specialist & Peer Support Recovery Specialist

- 1 Human Behavior:** Relationship of substance use to human behavior, values, lifestyle and attitude; Influences of culture and society on human behavior.
- 2 Signs and Symptoms of Substance Use Disorder:** Classification of mood-altering drugs and their effects; Use of combinations of drugs and resultant complications; Withdrawal syndrome; Stages of severe use and behavioral patterns of severe use.
- 3 Recovery Service Techniques:** Practical application of peer support approaches in individual, group and family support; Use of appropriate approaches with participants of various ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds; Philosophy and objectives of various peer recovery and social model theories; Evaluation of progress for engagement, continuing care, and follow-up.
- 4 Continuum and Continuity of Care:** The coordination of recovery-oriented systems of care; Availability of treatment, support, and integrated recovery community resources to individuals, families, and communities.
- 5 Federal and State Guidelines:** Application of regulations and guidelines that directly relate to individuals, family, or community members who are identified as experiencing psychiatric, traumatic, or substance use challenges; Participant's' Bill of Rights and Confidentiality Regulations that protect both CPSS or CPRS and participant.

The PSSCC considers certification reciprocity for peers holding a certification from a certifying authority in another state. For those seeking reciprocity from a state where the certifying authority is affiliated with IC&RC, applicants will be required to submit an application (Appendix III) to include proof of current certification, pay required fees (Appendix VII) and complete the PSSCC South Carolina Medicaid webinar or submit documentation of an equivalent SC Medicaid training (course description and PDF copy of presentation) for approval by the PSSCC.

For those seeking reciprocity from a non-IC&RC affiliated certifying authority, applicants will be required to successfully complete the CPSS training from a South Carolina PSSCC Approved Training Center. For individuals holding a Certified Peer Supervisor (CPS) credential (or its equivalent) the PSSCC will consider reciprocity on a case-by-case basis.

Certification Process for CPSS/CPRS Reciprocity

- A** Applicants are required to create an account in the APSC Certemy System. <https://www.addictionprofessionalsofsouthcarolina.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Certemy-How-To.pdf> Once they have created this account, applicants will need to upload their Application Packet and pay the current Application for Certification Fee (Appendix VII).
- B** Required documentation:
 - Copy of Current State Certification Certificate
 - Proof of Completion of PSSCC Medicaid Course (or include course description and pdf copy of other SC Medicaid Training for approval)
- C** The APSC PSSCC upon review of the applicant's file will approve their certification as a Peer Support Specialist. At this time, an applicant is authorized to use the CPSS credential

Certification Process for CPS Reciprocity

- A** Applicants are required to create an account in the APSC Certemy System. <https://www.addictionprofessionalsofsouthcarolina.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Certemy-How-To.pdf> Once they have created this account, applicants will need to complete the CPSS certification application.
- B** Required documentation:
 - Copy of Current State Certification Certificate
- C** The APSC PSSCC will review the applicant's file and make the determination if reciprocity will be granted. The PSSCC will advise the applicant of the results of the review. If the application is approved the applicant will need to pay the current Application for CPS Certification Fee ((Appendix VII). At this time, an applicant is authorized to use the CPSS credential.

All levels of certification shall be valid for a period of two years. No applicant should use the CPSS, CPRS or CPS certification or refer to being certified as such until obtaining the designation.

CPSS Process

- A** The applicant must review Addiction Professionals of South Carolina (APSC) Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS), Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS) and Certified Peer Supervisor Manual, available online. 10 Applicants should use the forms contained in the Manual (Appendix II) to apply to take the 46 Hour PSS Certification Course at a PSSCC Approved Training Center. Applicants must submit the Application Packet to the Training Center. The cost of the 46-hour Certification Training is determined by the individual training center. Applicants are responsible for covering the costs of the Certification Training Course.
- B** The Application Packet should include:
- Application Form (Appendix II Form A)
 - CPSS Code of Ethics Agreement (Appendix II Form B)
 - Written sample of Lived Recovery and Practical Experience (applicant's recovery philosophy)
 - Three (3) letters of reference confirming the applicant's lived recovery experience from individuals not related to the applicant.
- C** Individual Training Centers will approve applicants for attending the 46-Hour Training Course.
- D** Upon successful completion of the 46-hour Certification Training, Applicants must take the 100-question online PSSCC Certification Examination which will be proctored by the Training Center Staff. Note: Training Center staff can also administer the Certification Exam on site should conditions prevent use of the online examination. Participants are required to obtain a minimum score of 70 to pass the examination.
- E** Upon completion of the 46-hour Certification Training and successfully passing the Certification Examination, applicants will receive a "Certificate of Completion".
- F** Applicants are required to create an account in the APSC Certemy System. <https://www.addictionprofessionals.southcarolina.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Certemy-How-To.pdf> Once they have created this account, applicants will need to upload their Certificate of Completion.
- G** Applicants are required to complete 100 hours of paid or volunteer work as a Peer Support Specialist. Upon completion of the 100 hours the applicant's supervisor will provide a letter verifying the completion (on agency letterhead). The applicant will then upload this letter into their Certemy account (NOTE: The employer listed in the applicant's Certemy account needs to be the employer providing the verification of completion letter) and pay the current Application for Certification Fee (Appendix V).
- H** The APSC PSSCC upon review of the applicant's file will approve their certification as a Peer Support Specialist. At this time, an applicant is authorized to use the CPSS credential.

CPRS Process

- A** The applicant must review Addiction Professionals of South Carolina (APSC) Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) /Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS) and Certified Peer Supervisor (CPS) Manual, available online. <https://www.addictionprofessionalsofsouthcarolina.org/wpcontent/uploads/2023/05/Peer-Support-Specialist-Manual-feb-edit.pdf> Applications must be made online using forms contained in Appendix IV of this Manual. It is the responsibility of the applicant to make sure that they are using the most recent version of the application.
- B** As a CPSS, the applicant is applying to “upgrade” their certification to a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist.
- C** Email certification@scaadac.org and request that the CPRS Credential be added to their Certemy account.
- D** Applicant will complete application in Certemy and upload required forms and documentation.
- E** Required forms and documentation:
- Copy of the Current CPSS Certification
 - Documentation of 500 hours of volunteer or paid experience in the domains. (Appendix III Form A)
 - Evaluation completed by a supervisor who is a CPS, CS to include documentation of supervised domains. (Appendix III Form B)
 - Examination fee (Appendix V)
 - Upon receipt of all elements of an application, an administrative review of the file will be conducted
- F** After approval of completed CRPS Application and verification of payment of examination fee, applicants will be sent a link by the PSSCC to schedule the IC&RC written examination. The results of the written examinations will be sent by the testing authority in writing to the applicant.
- G** Upon receipt of test score, applicant will upload a copy of test score to their APSC Certemy account and pay the Upgrade fee (Appendix V).
- H** The APSC PSSCC upon review of the applicant’s file and payment of all fees, will approve their certification as a Peer Recovery Specialist. At this time, an applicant is authorized to use the CPRS credential.

CPS Process

- A** The applicant must review Addiction Professionals of South Carolina (APSC) Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS), Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS) and Certified Peer Supervisor (CPS) Manual, available online. <https://www.addictionprofessionalsofsouthcarolina.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Peer-Support-Specialist-Manual-feb-edit.pdf> Applications must be made online using forms contained in Appendix IV of this Manual. It is the responsibility of the applicant to make sure that they are using the most recent version of the application.
- B** Email certification@scaadac.org and request that the CPS Credential be added to their Certemy account.
- C** Applicant will upload the application packet into Certemy and pay the certification fee (Appendix V).
- D** Required documentation:
- Supervisors Statement confirming the applicant meets one of the three educational /certification options for certification and that the applicant has been providing Peer Supervision while under their direct supervision and has received 30 hours of individual Supervision.
 - Certificate of completion for “Supervising Peers” 12-hour Training.
- E** The APSC PSSCC upon review of the applicant’s file will approve their certification as a Peer Support Specialist. At this time, an applicant is authorized to use the CPSS credential. This is an IC&RC Credential and is designated as “PR”.

WRITTEN EXAM

FOR CPRS

The written exam is administered by a third- party company designated by the IC&RC. The written examination serves as an objective measure of applicants’ knowledge of a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist.

Written exam dates are scheduled by the candidate after approval by the PSSCC. You will receive an automatically generated email with instructions on how to choose your own date, time, and location for your examination.

The PSSCC uses the IC&RC written examination. No other examination is accepted.

Renewal of certification shall be required every two years. The following procedure governs the recertification process:

Recertification Application

As a courtesy, applicants will be emailed a reminder that their recertification is due approximately 60 days prior to their date of recertification. Applications may be completed online at www.addictionprofessionalsofsouthcarolina.org. It is always the responsibility of the applicant to maintain certification, which includes personal and professional address changes and/or name changes.

Applicant must complete the recertification application with recertification fee online and upload copies of certificates validating completion of training hours as noted below. Applicants should complete the recertification process no less than 30 days prior to expiration of their certification.

Late Fee

the Recertification Application is received within 1-90 days after the “Valid Through” date The applicant will need to pay a Late Fee in addition to the Recertification Fee (Appendix V).

Extensions

Extensions may be granted only prior to the date of certification lapsing. Extensions are only granted one time and are only granted for a period of six months. The PSSCC handles extensions on a case-by-case basis. In these cases, the CPSS, CPRS or CPS must identify the reason for making the extension request.

Recertification Requirements

For recertification, a minimum of 40 hours biannually must be earned. 24 hours must be as an attendee (in person or interactive webinar) and a maximum of 16 hours may be earned in Online self-paced courses.

12 hours related to ethics (NOTE: Courses that increase a CPSS/CPRS cultural competency or knowledge related to various recovery pathways may be approved for ethics, however, “Ethics” or “Ethical Considerations” need to be included in the title. Or if ethics were included as part of the training the number of “ethics specific” hours need to be listed as such on the certificate.

As part of their biannual recertification, CPS must have 6 hours of Peer Supervision specific training.

A maximum of 20 hours biannually of the 40 hours required for recertification may be earned through events where the applicant is the in-person trainer. Verification of this must be provided (Training Flyer listing applicant as the Trainer or a letter from applicants supervisor attesting that the applicant was the trainer, topic of training and number of CEU provided). Trainings provided must be related to one of the four core competencies.

RECERTIFICATION PROCESS

Applicants for recertification are required to go online to the APSC Certemy system and enter the certificates of all continuing education courses completed and pay the recertification fee (Appendix V)). APSC will review certificates entered in the system to ensure appropriateness and then approve the recertification application.

- A** Certification may be refused or revoked for the following reasons, including but not limited to:
- Failure to adhere to the APSC Professional Ethical Standards as signed and agreed to by the applicant.
 - Fraud or deception in reporting employment circumstances, training, or supervision when applying for certification or in taking the examinations provided in this process.
 - Use of illicit drugs or non-prescribed medications drugs, or any substance, which may interfere with competent and attentive performance of duties.
 - Providing services for which one is not licensed or certified to perform.
 - Negligence or wrongful actions in the performance of one's duties.
 - Misrepresentation of credentials.
 - Non-Adherence to continuing education/training requirement for recertification.
- B** Written ethical complaints concerning a CPSS, CPRS or CPS must be submitted to the APSC Board President using the APSC Ethics Complaint Form on the APSC Website (See https://www.addictionprofessionalsofsouthcarolina.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/UPDATED_Ethics.pdf.) Any person may make a complaint. All complaints will be reviewed and investigated.
- C** A final decision on all ethics hearings will be submitted in writing to the APSC Board. The accused and the individual initiating the complaint shall be notified of any decisions in writing after the next regularly scheduled meeting of the APSC Board.

Continued Education Guidelines

Contact hours are defined as actual number of academic, classroom, or workshop hours spent in the activity, exclusive of breaks. For recertification, a minimum of 40 hours biannually must be earned. 24 hours must be as an attendee (in person or interactive webinar) and a maximum of 16 hours may be earned in Online self-paced courses.

A minimum of 12 hours of ethics training or continued education is required every two years for recertification. Courses that increase a CPSS/CPRS cultural competency or knowledge related to various recovery pathways can be considered "ethics" hours but "Ethics" or "Ethical Considerations" need to be included in the title. Or if ethics were included as part of the training the number of "ethics specific" hours need to be listed as such on the certificate. Individuals holding a CPS Certification are required to have 6 hours of Peer Supervision specific continuing education every two years.

Continuing education must be provided or certified by a state or national organization, institution or entity recognized as knowledgeable in the field of peer recovery services, substance use or mental health disorders, (e.g. NAADAC, NBCC, DMH, APSC approved Training Center) and must be related to one of the four domains (Advocacy, Mentoring/Education, Recovery Support, and Ethical Responsibility).

Approved PSS Certification Training Centers

To be considered for approval as a PSS Certification Training Center, an agency / organization must:

- Be located in South Carolina and be members of the Alliance for Recovery Centered Organizations <https://facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/arco/> (ARCO).
- Submitted
 - Approved Training Center Agreement form (Appendix VI Form A);
 - Approved Trainer Applications for all PSS Certification Trainings Trainers (Appendix IV Form B) and Copies of Certificates of Completion for PSSCC PSS Certification Training Curriculum Training of Trainers.
- Paid the APSC current APSC Training Center Application Fee (Appendix V).
- Trainers are approved to work with a specific Training Center and do not function independently of that Training Center.

Current Approved PSS Certification Training Centers	
Training Center	Location
ACCESS FAVOR	Conway
CARPS SC	Dillon
Courage Center	Lexington
FAVOR Lowcountry	Charleston
FAVOR Piedmont	Rock Hill
FAVOR Upstate	Greenville

APPENDIX I

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ),
Code of Ethics and Recovery Bill of Rights

1 What is NAADAC?

NAADAC, or more appropriately NAADAC, the Association of Addiction Professionals, represents the professional interests of more than 100,000 addiction counselors, educators and other addiction-focused health care professionals in the United States, Canada and abroad. NAADAC's members are addiction counselors, educators and other addiction-focused healthcare professionals who specialize in addiction prevention, treatment, recovery support and education. An important part of the healthcare continuum, NAADAC members and its 53 state and international affiliates work to create healthier individuals, families and communities through prevention, intervention, quality treatment and recovery support. <https://www.naadac.org/> NAADAC a professional association.

2 What is IC&RC?

The International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC) is a nonprofit organization that promotes public protection by developing internationally recognized credentials and examinations for prevention, substance use disorder and recovery professionals. <https://internationalcredentialing.org/> IC&RC is a certification organization.

3 What is APSC?

APSC or the Addiction Professionals of South Carolina is the South Carolina affiliate of NAADAC, The Association of Addiction Professionals and as such it represents the professional interests of addiction counselors and peer support specialists in South Carolina. It is comprised of addition professionals who, believe in the dignity and worth of human beings. In the practice of their profession, they assert that the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence and justice must guide their professional conduct. As professionals they are dedicated to the treatment of and recovery from substance use disorders as it manifests for individuals and families. APSC members dedicate themselves to promote the best interests of their society, their clients, their profession and their colleagues. APSC as the certifying body for Addiction Counselors and Addiction Peer Support Specialist in South Carolina and is the South-Carolina Addiction Treatment and Recovery affiliate of IC&RC <https://www.addictionprofessionalsofsouthcarolina.org/> APSC is a professional association and a certification organization.

4 What is the Peer Support Specialist Certification Commission (PSSCC)?

The Peer Support Specialists Certification Commission (PSSCC) is the policy-making body for peer support specialists' activities conducted by the APSC for persons engaged in the profession of peer support. The PSSCC is a committee of APSC and is composed of nine (9) members. The Chair and two (2) commissioners from each of the four (4) geographical regions delineated by the South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS). All members of the Commission are either CPSS or CPRS and work in the region they represent.

5 Do I have to join NAADAC or APSC to be a CPSS?

No, you aren't required to be a member of either NAADAC or APSC to be a CPS, CPSS or CPRS in South Carolina. It might be a good idea though. As previously mentioned, NAADAC at a national level and APSC at the state level are the professional organizations that represent addiction professionals. We, as CPS, CPSS and CPRS are Addiction Professionals, so they are both OUR organizations. Additionally, by being a member your certification fees are reduced and the cost of registration for trainings / conferences are reduced. You also, as a member have access to free online self-paced trainings and monthly interactive trainings that are free to members.

6 What if I want to become a member of APSC, but not NAADAC, can I do that?

No. APSC is the state affiliate of NAADAC, APSC is part of NAADAC. Instead of when you join APSC, you automatically become a member of NAADAC, it is the other way around. You become a member of NAADAC, and you automatically become a member of APSC.

7 **How do I become a member of NAADAC?**

Just go on-line to complete an application and pay the membership fee (As of 11/1/2024 - \$99.00 for Peer Support Members) <https://www.naadac.org/join-orrenew>

8 **Where does the money for the Membership Fee and the Certification Fee go?**

The Annual Membership fee is split between NAADAC and APSC. Of the \$99 Membership fee, NAADAC receives \$66.50 and APSC receives \$32.50. The entire amount of the Certification Fee for CPSS and CPS goes to APSC. While the initial Certification fee for CPRS goes to APSC, APSC is responsible for paying an annual amount to IC&RC for each CPRS in the state.

9 **What is Certemy?**

Certemy is the name of the Credential Management software system that APSC uses to monitor all of the different addiction treatment and recovery certifications offered by APSC. You will need to create an account after you complete your certification Training.

10 **What is “Self-identified as having continuous, sustained one (1) year of lived experience in recovery from SUD”?**

This refers to a one-year period in which the applicant has engaged in a recovery plan that has effectively addressed their own substance use disorder and provided an improvement in their overall health/wellness. This does not mean “abstinence only” but does include multiple pathways as defined by each individuals’ experience.

Principles and Ethical Code of Behavior

The following principles will guide CPSS and CPRS in their role as a Certified Peer Support Specialist or Certified Peer Recovery Specialist as well as their relationships and the levels of responsibility in which they function.

- 1 The primary obligation and responsibility of a CPSS or CPRS is their personal recovery. A self-report to supervisor/mentor will be made immediately if alcohol, drug use, or anything else interferes with recovery.
- 2 Recovery is guided by self-determination. CPSS or CPRS assists others in achieving their needs and goals. This includes advocating for the decisions of the peers regarding professional and other services.
- 3 CPSS or CPRS supports the Faces and Voices of Recovery Bill of Rights for each peer served.
- 4 CPSS or CPRS advocates for the integration of peers into self-selected recovery communities and will promote the individual's inherent value to those communities.
- 5 CPSS or CPRS acts in accordance with the law.
- 6 CPSS or CPRS affirms the dignity of each person they serve.
- 7 Recovery services are provided regardless of someone's age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, political belief, language, socioeconomic status, or mental or physical condition. If differences that impact the motivation for recovery occur, a CPSS or CPRS will seek consultation from a supervisor/mentor and, if necessary, make a referral to another appropriate recovery support service provider.
- 8 The use of physical force, verbal abuse, or any efforts to emotionally abuse; intimidate; threaten; harass, or make unwarranted promises of benefits are strictly forbidden.
- 9 CPSS or CPRS shares their lived experience to help others identify resources and support services that promote recovery.
- 10 The privacy of those served will be respected, and CPSS or CPRS will abide by confidentiality guidelines as required by law.
- 11 Engagement in sexual or intimate relations with peers served is strictly forbidden.
- 12 Accepting gifts of significant value from peers served is strictly forbidden.
- 13 CPSS or CPRS will not lend, give, sell, buy, barter, or borrow from the peers served.
- 14 I will abide by the Ethical Code of Conduct of any agency that I either work at or volunteer for.
- 15 CPSS or CPRS will continue to improve their recovery service knowledge and skills through ongoing education, training, and supervision.

Faces And Voices Of Recovery - Recovery Bill of Rights

- 1 We have the right to be viewed as capable of changing, growing** and becoming positively connected to our community, no matter what we did in the past because of our addiction.
- 2 We have the right – as do our families and friends – to know about the many pathways to recovery, the nature of addiction** and the barriers to long-term recovery, all conveyed in ways that we can understand.
- 3 We have the right, whether seeking recovery in the community, a physician’s office, treatment center, or while incarcerated, to set our own recovery goals**, working with a personalized recovery plan that we have designed based on accurate and understandable information about our health status, including a comprehensive, holistic assessment.
- 4 We have the right to select services that build on our strengths**, armed with full information about the experience, and credentials of the people providing services and the effectiveness of the services and programs from which we are seeking help.
- 5 We have the right to be served by organizations or health care and social service providers that view recovery positively**, meet the highest public health and safety standards, provide rapid access to services, treat us respectfully, understand that our motivation is related to successfully accessing our strengths and will work with us and our families to find a pathway to recovery.
- 6 We have the right to be considered as more than a statistic**, stereotype, risk score, diagnosis, label or pathology unit – free from the social stigma that characterizes us as weak or morally flawed. If we relapse and begin treatment again, we should be treated with dignity and respect that welcomes our continued efforts to achieve long-term recovery.
- 7 We have the right to a health care and social services system that recognizes the strengths and needs of people with addiction** and coordinates its efforts to provide recovery-based care that honors and respects our cultural beliefs.
- 8 We have the right to be represented by informed policymakers** who remove barriers to educational, housing and employment opportunities once we are no longer misusing alcohol or other drugs and are on the road to recovery.
- 9 We have the right to respectful, nondiscriminatory care from doctors** and other health care providers and to receive services on the same basis as people do for any other chronic illness, with the same provisions, copayments, lifetime benefits and catastrophic coverage in insurance, self-funded/self-insured health plans, Medicare and HMO plans. The criteria of “proper” care should be exclusively between our health care providers and ourselves; it should reflect the severity, complexity and duration of our illness and provide a reasonable opportunity for recovery maintenance.
- 10 We have the right to treatment and recovery support in the criminal justice system** and to regain our place and rights in society once we have served our sentence.
- 11 We have the right to speak out publicly about our recovery** to let others know that long-term recovery from addiction is a reality.

APPENDIX II

Application to Attend PSS Certification Training

PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST (PSS) CERTIFICATION COURSE APPLICATION FORM

A. General Statement of Eligibility and Priority: People in recovery who are interested in becoming a Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) must apply through for initial screening

B. Qualifications: The minimum qualifications to be certified as a CPSS are:

- 1. High School diploma or GED
- 2. Strong reading comprehension and written communication skills as indicated by responses during the application process.
- 3. In recovery from alcohol or other drug addiction, with one year of continuous recovery.
- 4. Willingness to self-identify as a person in recovery for the benefit of others.
- 5. Demonstrated participation in advocacy and/or a strong personal interest in helping others.
- 6. Agree to respect and observe the Addiction Professionals of South Carolina (APSC) Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) Code of Ethics (*Please sign and return with application*).

C. Personal Information:

Date of Application: _____ **Years in Recovery:** _____

Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Address: _____
(Street) (City, State) (Zip)

Contact Information: _____
(Home Phone) (Cell Phone) (Email)

Employer: _____

Is employer a provider of Medicaid-billable services? _____

Supervisor Name: _____

Is employer supportive of RTA participation? _____

Explain: _____

D. Writing Sample:

Each applicant must submit a writing sample explaining *why he/she should be selected o participate in the PSS Certification Training. Please include your value system, the leadership skills that you possess, your ability to demonstrate and promote recovery, any advocacy work done in the community, and what the APSC CPSS Code of Ethics means to you. This essay should be no more than one (1) page, single spaced, in a 12pt. font, and must be completed by the candidate and submitted with the application.*

E. Education:

	Name and Location of School or Program	Graduate? Degree?	Subject(s) of Study
High School			
College or University			
Specialized Training, Trade School, Etc.			
Other Education			

F. References:

Applicants must verify that they have at least one (1) year of sustained recovery. Each applicant must submit two (2) reference letters that will attest to the candidate’s appropriateness for certification by APSC as a CPSS. The letters should also comment on the applicant’s years of recovery by addressing the length of recovery and any activities such as volunteer work, sponsorship, etc., that the applicant pursues surrounding recovery. This verification letter can come from a sponsor, counselor, accountability partner, faith leader, friend, or co-worker (Note: spouse or family members are not appropriate references). One reference should identify as being a person in long-term recovery. At least one must specifically address the candidate’s understanding and belief in recovery and the ability to convey such to others.

	Name of Reference	Relationship to You	Years Known	Contact Information
1.				
2.				

Additional Information:

- Applicants must adhere to any personnel rules or guidelines as determined by their employers.
- Throughout the training, applicants will also be evaluated by the trainers in areas of participation, understanding, belief in and respect for the many pathways to recovery, and demonstrated skills to convey such to others. At the conclusion of the Training, applicants will be tested on content knowledge with a comprehensive written 100 question examination. Applicants must achieve an overall minimum score of 70% to pass. In addition to passing the certification exam, applicants must receive an overall satisfactory rating from the trainers to apply for certification.

**Addiction Professionals of South Carolina
Certified Peer Support Specialist Ethical Behavior Code Affirmation**

1. My primary obligation and responsibility is my recovery. I will immediately contact my supervisor if alcohol, drug use, or anything else gets in the way of my recovery.
2. Recovery is guided by self-determination. I assist others in achieving their needs and goals. This includes advocating for the decisions of the peers regarding professional and other services.
3. I will support the Faces and Voices of Recovery Bill of Rights for each person that I serve.
4. I advocate for the integration of peers into self-selected recovery communities and will promote the individual's inherent value to those communities.
5. I will act in accordance with the law.
6. I affirm the dignity of each person that I serve.
7. I provide recovery services regardless of someone's age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, marital status, political belief, language, socioeconomic status, or mental or physical condition. If differences that impact the motivation for recovery occur, I seek consultation and, if necessary, make a referral to another recovery support.
8. I never use physical force, verbal abuse, or emotional abuse; intimidate; threaten; harass; or make unwarranted promises of benefits.
9. I share my lived experience to help others identify resources and support that promote recovery.
10. I respect the privacy of those I serve, and I will abide by confidentiality guidelines as required by law.
11. I never engage in sexual or intimate relations with peers that I serve.
12. I do not accept gifts of significant value from peers that I serve.
13. I do not lend or borrow from the peers that I serve.
14. I will abide by the Ethical Code of Conduct of any agency that I either work at or volunteer for.
15. I improve my recovery service knowledge and skills through ongoing education, training, and supervision as determined by my employer.

The above principles will guide me in my role as a Certified Peer Support Specialist/Recovery Coach as well as my relationships and the levels of responsibility in which I function.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

APPENDIX III

Additional Forms for Peer Recovery Specialist Certification

500 hours of Volunteer or Paid Work Experience Certification

(This form is to be filled out by a supervisor/mentor of the applicant for certification)

500 hours of **Volunteer** or **Paid** work experience specific to the four domains of peer recovery service (*Advocacy, Mentoring/Education, Recovery Support, and Ethical Responsibility*).

In the following spaces, please indicate the periods of time of **Volunteer** and **Paid** work experience you affirm that the applicant has engaged in specific to the four domains of peer recovery service (*Advocacy, Mentoring/Education, Recovery Support, and Ethical Responsibility*).

Please provide your signature, indicating that you personally affirm the time periods indicated.

Date(s) of Experience	Time (Days/Months/Years)	Peer Recovery Domains Experienced	Supervisor/Mentor Signature

Confirmation of Total Hours Documented:

SUPERVISOR/MENTOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

*I affirm that the performance demonstrated by this applicant is consistent with the standards of certification for Peer Specialist by the Peer Support Specialist Certification Commission.

Supervisor/Mentor Signature _____ Date _____

Peer Recovery Services - Confidential Evaluation Page 1 of 2

(This form is to be filled out by a supervisor/mentor of the applicant for certification)

Applicant's Name:

The information that I am giving is my best judgement of this applicant's capabilities to be certified as a Peer Recovery Specialist

I have observed this applicant's work from: _____ to:

I believe this applicant's performance has been consistent with APSC's Ethical Standards for Peer Support Specialist. Yes No If no, please explain: (use additional pages if needed)

What are significant strengths and challenges experienced by this applicant?

Notable **Strengths:** _____

Notable **Challenges:** _____

I hereby certify that I have been in a position to observe and have first-hand knowledge of the above-named applicant's work related to the 4 Domains of Peer Support Services (*Mentoring/Education, Recovery Support, Advocacy, and Ethical Responsibility*):

Name: _____ Title/Certification: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Agency/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Peer Recovery Services - Confidential Evaluation Page 2 of 2

Please rate the applicant on the scale below based on the average of employees/volunteers doing similar work by checking the appropriate box.

Evaluator must be knowledgeable in the 4 Domains of Peer Recovery Services (*Mentoring/Education, Recovery Support, Advocacy, and Ethical Responsibility*).

S U N Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory / Not Observed or Not Applicable

Check as each applies and provide a brief explanation for your evaluation for each domain.

1. Education: S U N

2. Recovery Support: S U N

3. Advocacy: S U N

4. Ethical Responsibility: S U N

Email this form to: certification@scaadac.org

Or mail to: APSC Peer Support Specialist Certification Commission
1215 Anthony Ave.
Columbia, SC 29201

APPENDIX IV

Application for Approval as a PSS Certification Training Center



Approved Training Center Agreement South Carolina Peer Support Specialists Certification Commission

As an Approved Training Center for the South Carolina Peer Support Specialists Certification Commission (PSSCC), we agree to the following requirements:

- The approved training of the PSSCC is copyrighted and may not be altered. We understand that we may add additional training material but will not omit any of the existing material in the curriculum.
- Our trainers will always adhere to the Ethics Guidelines of the APSC, PSSCC, IC&RC, and NAADAC.
- Each training will have at least one (1) Approved Trainer certified with the PSSCC.
- To maintain status as an Approved Training Center for the PSSCC, we will maintain an active membership with the Alliance for Recovery Centered Organizations (ARCO).
- We will annually recertify as an Approved Training Center and pay the current Recertification Fee prescribed by the PSSCC.
- We will maintain copies of the PSSCC Approved Trainer Certification for all of our Approved Trainers and will ensure that they maintain their certification as either CPSS or CPRS with APSC in Certemy.

Training Center: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Training Center Executive Director

Addiction Professionals of South Carolina PSS Certification Training Trainer Application

Part 1: Applicant Information

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Primary Phone: _____ Secondary Phone: _____

Email Address (required): _____

Which Training Center(s) will you be training with: _____

Part 2: Certification or Licensure

Please attach copies of all current certifications and licenses

Are you currently certified as a Peer Support Specialist or Peer Recovery Specialist? Yes No

Do you hold any other current certification or licensure? Yes No

If yes, please identify any additional credential(s) or licenses. (Attach additional sheets if necessary).

Credential / Issued by: _____

Credential / Issued by: _____

Have you completed any other type of Peer Support or CPSS Certification training? (i.e. ARISE, Harm Reduction Specialist) Yes No

If yes, please list which training (Attach Certificate):

To become a PSS Certification Curriculum Trainer, you must first have attended the CPSS Training Curriculum Training of Trainers provided by the APSC PSSCC.

Date of Training of Trainers (Month/Year): _____
(Certificate must accompany this application)

Part 3: Experience

Are you currently employed? Yes No

If yes, where: _____

Position/Title: _____

How many years of experience do you have working in the field of Mental Health/Addiction? _____

How many years of experience do you have working in the healthcare field? _____

How many years of experience do you have working as a CPSS or RC? _____

How many years of experience do you have providing formal training? _____

Please list training experience by topic:

*I attest that I have given true, accurate, and complete information on this form to the best of my knowledge, and understand that any false information or omissions may affect my eligibility for certification. I agree to reference and/or criminal background checks as a part of the application review (criminal background will **not** necessarily exclude candidates from participating in training).*

Signature

Date

APPENDIX V

Peer Support Specialist Related Fees

**Addiction Professionals of South Carolina
Peer Support Specialist Related Fees (As of 1/1/2025)**

	NON MEMBER	NAADA / APSC MEMBER
Certification (CPSS)	\$150	\$100
Upgrade (CPSS to CPRS)	\$75	\$50
Recertification (CPSS/CPRS)	\$100	\$75
Certification (CPS)	\$150	\$100
Recertification (CPS)	\$100	\$75
CPRS (IC&RC) Written Exam	\$100	\$100
Late Fee	\$50	\$50
Extension Fee	\$25	\$25
Medicaid Webinar	\$25	\$25
Training Center Application	\$400	
Training Center Annual Recertification	\$100	