



Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development



**Peer Personnel Training and Placement
RFA # 15-8274
Questions and Answers**

Question 1: Section B. “to support, train and place individuals who are currently or seeking to be employed and/or volunteer as peer personal...” This sentence suggests that one of the target groups is persons who are currently employed as peer providers but who may benefit from training, career counseling and support. How does this priority relate to the requirement that 35 percent of the project budget be allocated to placement where you are also required to “place” 80 percent in order to receive full payment? There is a problem with the placement achievement incentive. Requiring a minimum of 35 percent of the project proposal to support placement penalizes small counties/CBOs that have already hired peer providers, and who seek the training, support and career counseling as part of a larger strategy to develop career pathways for peer providers. Is the 35 percent figure non-negotiable?

Answer 1: Placement activities are a priority focus in this Peer Personnel training and placement program. The purpose and intent of the program is to prepare individuals for employment in the Public Mental Health System (PMHS) as Peer Personnel, place them in Peer Personnel positions, and support participants after placement. For the purposes of this Request for Application (RFA), “placement” means assignment in a Peer Personnel position as an employee or volunteer that can be paid or un-paid in the PMHS. Placement activities may include, but not be limited to, newly hired paid employees and volunteer staff; and existing volunteer staff that are placed in paid positions. The number of individuals that the contractor will recruit, train, and place will be identified in the application submitted for this RFA. The minimum qualifications (MQs) in the RFA state the applicant must demonstrate experience in training and supporting individuals with lived experience. The 35 percent budgetary requirement to support placement is non-negotiable.

Question 2: The second problem with this requirement is that you need to be able to train a sufficiently large pool of potential employees so that employers have choices. Expecting a 20% non-employable rate is unreasonable. Especially since these are entry level position and many potential employees may not be job ready.

Answer 2: The MQs in the RFA state the applicant must demonstrate experience in training and supporting individuals with lived experience. The expectations are that Grantees will put a process in place to select and train viable candidates for this program so that they can become job ready and to assist them with career placement. In addition, as this is a performance-based contract, the 80 percent placement rate ensures that the contractor will be reimbursed based on completion of services for this budget line item to



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receive full funding. However, the contractor may receive a pro-rated payment amount for placement rates up to 80 percent of placement.

Question 3: Civil service systems may have a slow hiring process so placement would almost have to be started from the beginning and is this your expectation? Do you believe that there are open positions available and the issue is just recruitment and training?

Answer 3: Program participants may be placed in a Peer Personnel position as an employee or volunteer that can be paid or un-paid in the PMHS. Placement in Community Based Organizations (CBOs) contracted by the county would also meet this requirement. The expectation is that there should be collaboration between the training entity and the county or CBO proposed in your application that will be the eventual employers of the Peer Personnel. Page 5, bullet point 2 in the RFA states that grantees must “Ensure there is continued engagement and coordination with other County, CBO (Community Based Organizations), and education institutions/entities partners included in the application.” The County/CBO Participant Verification form on Page 20 will identify the number of open Peer Personnel Positions available and their training needs.

Question 4: Page 4, item 3 Training: The issues listed for the training are not consistent with the core competencies identified for peer support specialists except for recovery planning and the ‘other related peer training and support functions.’ Crisis management, suicide prevention, targeted case management and ‘triage services’ go far beyond what peer support specialists do. Where did this list come from?

Answer 4: The issues listed for training are stated in the California Budget Act of 2013, item #4140-001-3085, provision #2, which funds the Peer Personnel training and placement program. The RFA outlines the main training elements that are included in the training section on page 4. The fifth bullet identifies “Other related peer training and support functions necessary to facilitate the deployment of Peer Personnel as an effective and necessary service to clients and family members, and as triage and targeted case management personnel.” Therefore, there is flexibility on the different types of training, but specifically there should be a focus on crisis management, suicide prevention, recovery planning, and targeted case management assistance as identified in the training component description.

Question 5: “Training program shall be no longer than one academic year or nine consecutive months. “ What is the length of an academic year? We believe it may be 12 months (4 quarters for example).

Answer 5: The Peer Personnel training program shall be no longer than one academic year or nine consecutive months in length. This could include four quarters within a 12 month period.



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Question 6: Our organization is in a grant agreement for a Peer Professional Training and Placement program through OSHPD. Start date was June 1, 2015, and expires June 30, 2017. Are we eligible to apply for RFA 15-8274?

Answer 6: Yes, as this is a separate RFA and being awarded funds from other RFAs will not have any bearing during the evaluation process. However, funds cannot be co-mingled from past awards with this RFA.

Question 7: I am a small Consultant, composed of just myself and the volunteers who sometimes help in all the work I do as a trainer and peer provider. May I apply for this RFA?

Answer 7: Yes, as long as you can meet the MQ requirement of the RFA. Additionally, applicants and/or their sub-contractors must have demonstrated experience in training and supporting individuals with lived experience as consumers, family members, and parents/caregivers. The goal of this RFA is to enter into a contract or contracts with Proposers who can furnish all the services described in the Scope of Work. Proposals that are submitted will be evaluated on their ability to meet the Scope of Work.