

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1721 Session of 2025

INTRODUCED BY KHAN, FLICK, GIRAL, BOYD, SMITH-WADE-EL, SANCHEZ, PROBST, HILL-EVANS, BOROWSKI, FLEMING, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, HOHENSTEIN, WAXMAN AND GREEN, JULY 11, 2025

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, JULY 14, 2025

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), entitled "An  
2 act to consolidate, editorially revise, and codify the public  
3 welfare laws of the Commonwealth," in public assistance,  
4 providing for medical assistance coverage for peer recovery  
5 support services.

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. The act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), known  
9 as the Human Services Code, is amended by adding a section to  
10 read:

11 Section 443.16. Medical Assistance Coverage for Peer  
12 Recovery Support Services.--(a) Peer recovery support services  
13 are compensable under the medical assistance program in  
14 accordance with the Commonwealth's approved State plan for  
15 individuals with a mental health disorder or substance use  
16 disorder through a licensed provider or through a certified peer  
17 recovery support services provider. Peer recovery support  
18 services are reimbursable as a primary service for individuals  
19 with a mild, moderate or severe mental health disorder or

1 substance use disorder and as a primary service for family  
2 members of a covered medical assistance beneficiary and require  
3 no other diagnosis, condition or preauthorization.

4 (b) Peer recovery support services delivered by a provider  
5 shall be deemed eligible for reimbursement under subsection (a)  
6 if supervised by a licensed mental health practitioner, which  
7 shall include an appropriately trained and credentialed peer  
8 support specialist supervisor.

9 (c) The department and the Department of Drug and Alcohol  
10 Programs shall promulgate regulations as necessary to implement  
11 this section. The department and the Department of Drug and  
12 Alcohol Programs shall ensure that the regulations promulgated  
13 under this subsection comply with all of the following criteria:

14 (1) The regulations may not interrupt the provision of care  
15 to recipients enrolled in the medical assistance program.

16 (2) The regulations shall provide a reasonable amount of  
17 time for an existing provider participating in the medical  
18 assistance program on the effective date of this paragraph to  
19 comply with the provisions of this section while continuing to  
20 participate in the medical assistance program.

21 (3) The regulations may not require a peer recovery support  
22 services provider to seek certification as a certified peer  
23 recovery support services provider if the provider does not seek  
24 reimbursement through the medical assistance program.

25 (4) The regulations shall provide a reasonable mechanism for  
26 the establishment of medical necessity for a recipient of peer  
27 recovery support services by a certified peer recovery support  
28 services provider that authorizes the provider to contract  
29 directly with an external licensed mental health practitioner  
30 for a proposed recipient assessment and referral.

1     (5) The regulations shall provide for the certification of a  
2 peer recovery support services provider by the department or the  
3 Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs that provides peer  
4 recovery support services to individuals, family members and  
5 loved ones for mental health, substance use or both mental  
6 health and substance use. The regulations shall include all the  
7 following requirements for a peer recovery support services  
8 provider applying for certification by the department or the  
9 Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs:

10     (i) The applicant shall be a nonclinical provider that  
11 employs peer recovery support specialists to provide peer  
12 recovery support services.

13     (ii) The applicant shall employ peer support specialist  
14 supervisors and provide at least weekly peer support specialist  
15 supervision to each employed peer recovery support specialist.

16     (iii) The applicant shall annually attest under penalty of  
17 perjury that the applicant is governed by a nonprofit board of  
18 directors comprised of at least 51% membership from individuals,  
19 family members or loved ones with a lived or living experience  
20 involving a mental health or substance use disorder.

21     (iv) The applicant shall have policies and procedures to  
22 ensure compliance in providing support for all pathways and  
23 programs of individual recovery, including harm reduction,  
24 abstinence and medication use.

25     (6) The department shall supervise and facilitate the  
26 certification of a peer recovery support services provider for  
27 mental health.

28     (7) The Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs shall  
29 supervise and facilitate the certification of a peer recovery  
30 support services provider for substance use.

1     (8) The department and the Department of Drug and Alcohol  
2 Programs shall supervise and facilitate the certification of a  
3 peer recovery support services provider for both mental health  
4 and substance use through a joint certification by the  
5 department and the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.

6     (d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to impede,  
7 disallow or modify the conditions of an existing clinically or  
8 medically licensed provider on the effective date of this  
9 subsection that is authorized to provide peer recovery support  
10 services to recipients in the medical assistance program.

11     (e) The following words and phrases when used in this  
12 section shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection  
13 unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

14     "Certified peer recovery support services provider." An  
15 independent, nonclinical, nonprofit organization as specified  
16 under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3) (relating to exemption from tax on  
17 corporations, certain trusts, etc.) that meets all of the  
18 following criteria:

19     (1) Is appropriately credentialed by the department or the  
20 Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.

21     (2) Is led and governed by individuals in mental health and  
22 substance use recovery.

23     (3) Employs peer recovery support specialists and peer  
24 support specialist supervisors.

25     (4) Provides peer recovery support services.

26     "Mental health disorder." A concern characterized by a  
27 significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotional  
28 regulation or behavior that reflects a dysfunction in the  
29 psychological, biological or development processes underlying  
30 mental functioning.

1 "Peer recovery support services." A form of nonprofessional,  
2 nonclinical assistance provided by a peer recovery support  
3 specialist that is delivered in-person, via video or telephone  
4 or virtually, to an individual, family member or loved one as a  
5 means to support the recovery from a mental health or substance  
6 use disorder, including a direct one-on-one engagement or direct  
7 group engagement with a maximum of ten individuals per peer  
8 recovery support specialist.

9 "Peer recovery support specialist." An individual who has a  
10 personal lived or living experience involving a mental health or  
11 substance use disorder, including with a family member or loved  
12 one, and who has been trained and certified in this Commonwealth  
13 by an approved training and certifying body.

14 "Peer support specialist supervisor." An individual who has  
15 a personal lived or living experience involving a mental health  
16 or substance use disorder, including with a family member or  
17 loved one, and who has been trained and certified in this  
18 Commonwealth by an approved training and certifying body with a  
19 valid peer support specialist supervisor credential of any type.  
20 The term does not include an individual with an active clinical  
21 or medical license.

22 "Substance use disorder." A pattern of use of alcohol or  
23 other drugs leading to clinical or functional impairment.

24 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 90 days.