

Ethics Committee

The ethics committee's responsibilities may include the following:

- Discuss recent incidents in which ethical violations may have occurred and make recommendations, if necessary.
- Regularly review the code of ethics to keep it current with changes in peer recovery coaching practices and social trends.
- Assist in the ongoing training on these ethical standards.
- Conduct periodic surveys with peer recovery coaches to evaluate their use of the code of ethics.

A final step in designing a strong code of ethics for peer recovery support services in an ATR program is the development of an ethics committee. The function of this committee differs from that of the work group that wrote the code of ethics.

Part 4: Helping Peer Recovery Coaches to Manage Ethical Situations

Preparing peer recovery coaches to manage ethical situations begins in orientation, when peer recovery coaches are trained on ethical standards and their importance. Further preparation comes from supervisors communicating clearly the importance of peer recovery coaches bringing ethical situations to the supervisor's attention as soon as possible. The emphasis needs to be placed on viewing these situations as opportunities to learn, not as punishment for bad behavior. Without such a perspective, many peer recovery coaches may try to hide these situations from their supervisors. Typically, ethical situations become much worse when possible solutions are delayed.

The following personal checklist is a tool that peer recovery coaches can refer to regularly as a guide and with a supervisor as part of supervisory meetings.

Ethics in Peer Service Settings: Personal Checklist

Name: _____

SELF	
	I am aware of my own needs, preferences, and boundaries and the impact they have on my role as a peer leader. I act responsibly and do not seek to fulfill them in inappropriate circumstances.
	I am mindful of my responsibility to role-model recovery and leadership.
	I recognize my physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs, limits, and boundaries.
	I seek out appropriate support — mutual aid meetings, supervision, professional (when needed) — to process my feelings and concerns.
	I manage my time to honor my need for replenishment and renewal, so that my needs do not interrupt or undermine my work as a peer leader.
	I actively pursue my own development, enrichment, and growth as a person.
	I actively seek feedback from others and am able to receive and use constructive criticism from others.
INTERPERSONAL	
	I act in ways that affirm the worth and dignity of individuals with whom I come in contact as a peer leader.
	I recognize that as a peer leader in whom trust and power have been placed, I am acting in a relationship of faith. I refrain from practices that allow me to meet my own needs in ways that potentially take advantage of others.
	I honor my authority as peer leader by refusing to manipulate others or use information to satisfy my personal needs.

	I refrain from engaging in any exploitative relationship that abuses the power and undermines the trust that the organization or community has placed in me.
	I am eager to engage conflict in healthy ways, using communication that is open, direct, honest, compassionate, and constructive.
	I understand my responsibility, as a peer leader, to set clear and consistent boundaries with others, especially with peers who have not developed healthy boundary systems. I fully understand the need to set strong boundaries in regards to sex and intimacy when working with peers.
	In my relationships with others, I have examined and clearly communicated my commitment, motives, and intentions. I am clear with others and myself about the various, and sometime conflicting, roles that I carry out as a peer leader.
	In my helping role as peer leader, I do not do for others that which they can do for themselves.
GROUP/ORGANIZATION	
	In respect to the organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion, I eagerly serve all members of the community, of whatever age, race/ethnicity/culture, gender/gender expression, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability, socioeconomic status, theology/faith expression, national origin, or primary language.
	I seek to understand the dynamics of oppression on personal and institutional levels and their impact on my leadership role.
	I understand that my values, beliefs, and behaviors are culturally informed. I am willing to understand and accept cultural values, beliefs, and behaviors that I do not share.
	I recognize that my peer leadership is by consent of the organization and that my actions and decisions as a peer leader are a reflection of the organization.
	I respect the diversity of spiritualities and paths to recovery in the community, and I am careful that I do not make my personal form of expression or experience the norm.
	I use the resources and finances of the organization responsibly and prudently. I understand that my organization is funded with public money and is therefore accountable for stewarding those funds to serve people in the recovery community.
	I prepare for my roles and responsibilities as a peer leader, including seeking and pursuing training and education.
	I am careful not to criticize any other peer or organizational leaders in public.
	I am mindful that I respect and follow organizational protocols, including ones that require documentation and paperwork on my part.
	I am respectful that, as a peer leader, I may have access to information that must be kept in confidence. I acknowledge the power this gives me and use discretion in sharing such information so as to avoid harm to individuals, the organization, or the community. I understand that my peer leadership role requires careful discernment, and I need to seek help if I am concerned about the safety of an individual or the group/organization.
	I build positive, respectful relationships with my predecessors and successors to help build a legacy of strong, supportive peer leadership.
	I accept my responsibility as a representative of my organization and participate in actions that support its vision and mission.
	I understand that the peer project of my organization is funded with public money and is responsible for stewarding those funds.

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