

POSITION TITLE: Peer Support Specialist I
Hiring Range: \$24,960 - \$31,200

Classification: Full-Time
FLSA Status: Non-Exempt

SUPERVISED BY: Lead Case Manager

Location: Albuquerque, NM

JOB SUMMARY: The Peer Support Specialist first and foremost uses their personal experiences to develop meaningful and trusting relationships with Veterans, acting as a mentor. As someone who successfully managed their own recovery and struggles, the Peer Support Specialist provides Veterans an example of what they can strive to achieve. They work to build a community of both Veterans and staff that are supportive and conducive to growth and collaborative problem-solving. They assist in the creation and implementation of social activities and help create a positive environment for each Veteran to develop effective networks of informal support groups that can last beyond their time in the program. Peer Support Specialists connect with various community organizations and resources to provide additional support for Veterans, particularly as they transition from transitional living and into permanent housing options. This can include assisting case management teams locating healthcare, housing, job assistance, and additional treatment services, as well as support in finding or re-integrating with friends, family, and outside communities. They are highly compassionate individuals who have excellent communication and interpersonal skills, and can relate to the most difficult personalities. It is crucial to their role that they be capable of building trust and forming impactful relationships by using their first-hand experience to connect more deeply with the Veteran.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Assist Veterans or community members in establishing and sustaining self-help (mutual support) groups, as well as means of locating and joining existing groups in the community
- Serve as a mentor and role model demonstrating competency in recovery, effective coping skills and self-help strategies
- As a consumer advocate, provide consumer information and help advise on overcoming barriers to attaining effective community support
- Ability to publically acknowledge and share personal recovery experiences and provide support to other persons-in-recovery
- Conduct functional / needs-based assessments with clients in accordance with their unique situation or problems to enable positive connections to community programs and resources
- Establish and maintain professional relationships with clients, co-workers, supervisors, family members and the general public
- Make appropriate referrals to health and social service agencies and groups
- Work independently, and as a team, to achieve programmatic goals and objectives
- Evening, weekends, and shift-work may be required (with advance notice)
- Perform other related duties as assigned

*Preference given to eligible Veterans and Immediate Veteran Family Members
NMVIC is an Equal Opportunity Employer*

Minimum Qualifications	High School Diploma or GED
	Two (2) or more years of experience working with vulnerable populations
	Personal experience relevant to the services provided
	Proficiency using MS Office and Windows OS
	<i>* Experience may be substitute in lieu of educational requirements</i>
Preferred Skills	College degree or equal combination of education and experience
	Two (2) or more years' experience in community outreach with vulnerable populations
	Training or certification in behavioral health challenges including mental illness, domestic violence, & addictive behaviors
	State or national certification in Peer Support and/or Peer Recovery techniques
KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES	
Client-Focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend formal and informal, in- and out-of-state, training on mental health, crisis intervention, advocacy and other topics that enable you to perform your duties • Show empathy when addressing client problems or issues • Complete ongoing training to improve knowledge, skills and abilities that promote awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity and the needs of persons served
Judgment and Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate conversations and determine eligibility for programs, needs, and services • Use ethical, honest and logical judgment when making recommendations for enrollment of Veterans or Families into VIC programs and services
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively both orally and in writing • Convey the mission of the VIC and the need of at-risk and homeless Veterans & Families • Track and maintain written records and reports of work and outreach efforts • Represent the team and organization during community meetings and forums that can address the needs of the Veteran population
Technical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the signs and symptoms of mental illness and the ability to assist the client to address symptoms using strategies such as positive self-talk • Knowledge of community behavioral health services, agencies and support groups • Apply effective de-escalation techniques for Veterans in crisis and connect them with ongoing services to address their mental health needs
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in community meetings that use a collective approach to problem-solving • Manage individual workload and provide support to team members when needed
PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS	
Constant	Work with Veterans in crisis or extreme mental distress living in homelessness
Frequent	Drive safely and recognize hazards, including 15 passenger vehicle
Occasional	Work in difficult weather and environments
Occasional	Travel over 24 hours for work-related events and training
ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid US Driver License, Proof of Current Insurance, Use of Reliable POV • Clean Motor Vehicle Driving Record – no more than 2 moving violations or license suspension in the past 3 years
	<i>* Criminal History does not automatically exclude applicant from potential hiring</i>
WORKING CONDITIONS	Indoor: 25% - Office environment
	Outdoor: 75% - All weather conditions and variable temperatures