

WILDA L. WHITE justice through  
words and ideas

# Certified Peer Support Provider Code of Ethics

Phase 2: Mental Health Peer Certification Stakeholder Process

Tuesday, July 25, 2023

Via Zoom

Wilda L. White, Facilitator

# Zoom Protocol



Questions	Raise hand, actual or virtual; write question in Chat; or shout it out
Comments	Zoom Chat
Slides	Link to PowerPoint slides is in Zoom Chat
Recording	All meetings are being recorded

# Background

Certified Peer Support Provider Code of Ethics

# What are the meetings about?

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) is partnering with the Peer Workforce Development Initiative (PWDI) to identify a model and develop an implementation plan for peer specialist credentialing in Vermont.

PWDI is facilitating a series of stakeholder meetings solicit feedback about the development of a statewide peer support provider certification program in the State of Vermont. Wilda White will be overseeing these stakeholder meetings. DMH will participate in these meetings along with representatives from other Vermont stakeholders including service users and their families; peer support specialists; staff from community mental health programs, hospitals, and peer-run service organizations; family networks and organizations; the recovery community and mental health advocates; private insurers; and staff from other State agencies.

Recommendations from these meetings will be compiled by Wilda White for use in developing a peer support provider credentialing process in Vermont.

# What is the PWDI

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Department of Mental Health (DMH) developed the Peer Workforce Development Initiative (PWDI) grant to help the state build and maintain an infrastructure for a statewide mental health peer workforce.

Initiative goals include creating a steering committee, evaluating statewide peer workforce needs, and ensuring the availability of peer support worker training.

DMH awarded PWDI grant to Pathways Vermont.



# PWDI Steering Committee

<b>Hilary Melton</b> Pathways Vermont	<b>Tara Miller</b> Lamoille County Mental Health Services
<b>Walt Wade</b> Vermont Psychiatric Survivors	<b>Malaika Puffer</b> HCRS
<b>Dan Towle</b> Parker Advisors	<b>Gloria van den Berg</b> Alyssum
<b>Amey Dettmer</b> Copeland Center	<b>Ken Russell</b> Another Way Community Center
<b>Will Eberle</b> Vermont Association for Mental Health and Addiction Recovery (VAMHAR)	<b>Leslie Nelson</b> Howard Center

# About the Facilitator



**Wilda L. White**

**Education:**

JD, MBA

**Occupation:**

Management Consultant

**Passion:**

Justice for all

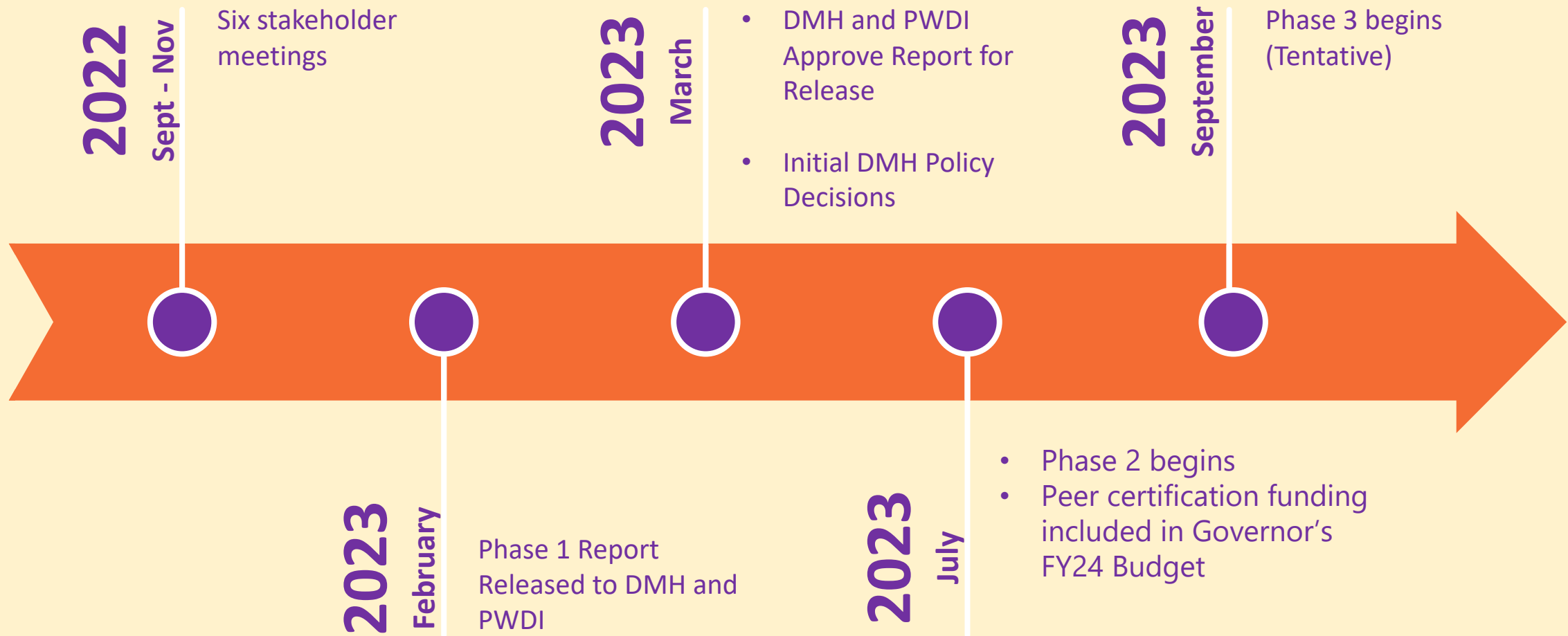
## Experience

- Principal, Wilda L. White Consulting
- Founder, MadFreedom, Inc.
- Executive Director, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors
- Executive Director, Center for Social Justice, UC Berkeley School of Law
- Partner, Walker, Hamilton & White (San Francisco, CA)
- General Management Consultant, McKinsey & Company (San Francisco, CA)
- Assistant City Editor, *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL)

## Relevant Publication

“Peer Specialist Certification: An Analysis of U.S. and Canadian Efforts to Promote and Expand Mental Health Peer Specialist Workforce Capacity,”  
February 2021

# Peer Support Certification Timeline

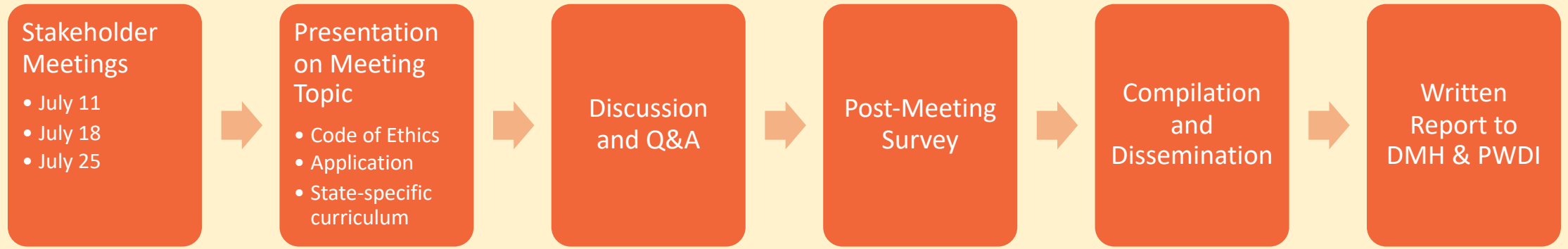




# Overview of Phase 2

Certified Peer Support Provider Code of Ethics

# Phase 2 Meeting Process



# Introduction to Codes of Ethics

Certified Peer Support Provider Code of Ethics

# What is/are Ethics?

- A system of moral principles, e.g., *the ethics of a culture*
- The rules of conduct recognized in respect to a particular class of human actions or a particular group, culture, e.g., *medical ethics*
- Moral principles, of an individual, e.g., *her ethics forbade betrayal of a confidence*
- Branch of philosophy dealing with values relating to human conduct, with respect to rightness and wrongness of certain actions and to the goodness and badness of the motives and ends of such actions

# What is a Code of Ethics

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- A set of guidelines that provides a framework for ethical behavior, defining the standards and expectations for individuals or professionals within a specific organization, field or profession
- It helps establish a standard of behavior that enhances trust, promotes responsible actions, and upholds the welfare, rights, and dignity of individuals or stakeholders affected by the actions of those in the profession or organization.
- Typically includes values, principles, and rules and outlines expectations for honesty, integrity, respect, fairness, professionalism, and other ethical principles relevant to the specific context

# Certified Peer Support Provider Codes of Ethics: Overview



- Every State and the District of Columbia have adopted a Code of Ethics
- Some Codes of Ethics are unique to the State
- Some Codes of Ethics are borrowed from National organizations or other States
- Codes of Ethics tend to align with a State's core competencies
- Many States require a formal attestation, some just a signature

# SAMHSA'S National Model Standard on Ethics



SAMHSA's National Model Standard on Ethics recommends that Codes of Ethics include, but not necessarily limited to, ethical standards that require agreement/attestation to:

- The defined role, scope, and responsibilities of the peer
- Maintaining personal and professional boundaries
- Preventing conflicts of interest
- Confidentiality
- Mandated reporting

# Framework for Draft Code of Ethics



- Align with core competencies
- Include
  - role, scope, and responsibilities
  - boundaries
  - conflicts of interest
  - confidentiality
- Reader-friendly (10-points, two-pages, with headings)
- Highlight what to do, rather than what not to do (e.g., be truthful vs. don't lie)



# Draft Code of Ethics Structure

## Role, Scope, and Responsibilities

- Respect and uphold peer support values (1)
- Authenticity and Lived Experience (2)
- Self and Other Awareness (3)
- Scope of Practice (7)
- Non-Discrimination and Inclusivity ((8)
- Continuous Learning and Professional Development (9)

## Boundaries

- Establish and Respect Boundaries (4)
- Ethical Responsibility (10)

## Conflicts of Interest

- Conflicts of Interest (5)
- Ethical Responsibility (10)

## Confidentiality

- Confidentiality and Consent (6)
- Ethical Responsibility (10)

# Preamble

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The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to establish clear principles, guidelines, and expectations for ethical conduct and professional behavior. It serves as a compass, guiding Certified Peer Support Providers in Vermont in their pursuit of ethical practice, integrity, and accountability. In agreeing to abide by the Code of Ethics, you are committing to uphold the values and standards that promote the welfare, dignity and rights of all individuals supported, fostering a culture of trust, respect and professionalism.

# 1-Respect and Uphold Peer Support Values

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Certified peer support providers understand and embrace the values of the peer support movement, including respect for individuals' autonomy, non-judgment, and the importance of self-determination. They acknowledge the history of peer support and the relevance of human rights and social justice issues in their practice.

## 2-Authenticity and Lived Experience

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Certified peer support providers share personal stories thoughtfully and selectively, ensuring that it is useful and relevant to the relationship. They bring their lived experience into the conversation, along with the skills and tools they have acquired, fostering meaningful connections. They aspire to inspire and support others through mutual understanding.

# 3-Self and Other Awareness

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Certified peer support providers continually cultivate self-awareness through introspection and self-reflection. They communicate their own discomfort and needs openly while remaining attuned to the discomfort and needs of others. They maintain a multi-dimensional awareness that includes themselves, others, and the evolving relationship dynamics.

## 4-Establish and Respect Boundaries

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Certified peer support providers encourage open discussions about personal needs and boundaries. They recognize and clarify their own limits and encourage others to explore their boundaries. They understand that boundaries can be physical, emotional, sexual, verbal, or energetic. Boundaries are negotiated respectfully and in alignment with the values and needs of all parties involved.

# 5-Conflicts of Interest

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Certified peer support providers are aware that their position can influence the individuals with whom they provide peer support. Certified peer support providers avoid exploiting the trust and/or dependency of such individuals. Certified peer support providers make every effort to avoid dual relationships or commitments that could impair professional judgment, increase the risk of exploitation or create conflict with the interests of individuals with whom they provide peer support. Certified peer support providers refrain from sexual/intimate/romantic activities within a formal peer support role.

# 6-Confidentiality and Consent

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Certified peer support providers treat all information shared by individuals with the utmost confidentiality, unless legally required to disclose. They explicitly seek consent before sharing any personal information or experiences of the individual they support, ensuring privacy and autonomy.



# 7-Scope of Practice

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Certified peer support providers perform peer support only within their area of lived experience, training, expertise, competence and scope of practice. Certified peer support providers meet and comply with all the terms, conditions or limitations of their certification.

## 8-Non-Discrimination and Inclusivity

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Certified peer support providers embrace diversity and inclusivity, valuing individuals from all backgrounds and with varying identities. They are committed to promoting anti-oppressive practices, combating discrimination, and creating a safe and inclusive space for all individuals seeking support.

# 9-Continuous Learning and Professional Development

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Certified peer support providers commit to ongoing learning, staying updated with best practices, and enhancing their knowledge and skills in the field of peer support. They actively engage in self-education, attend relevant training, and stay informed about emerging research and developments.

# 10-Ethical Responsibility

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Certified peer support providers recognize and uphold their ethical responsibilities towards the individuals they support, the profession of peer support, and the wider community. Certified peer support providers are truthful in their dealings with others and abide by the law. They maintain professional boundaries, engage in regular supervision or consultation, and seek guidance when facing ethical dilemmas.



# Attestation

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I affirm that I have read, understand, and will abide by the Code of Ethics for Certified Peer Support Providers in the State of Vermont.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Discussion and Q&A

Certified Peer Support Provider Code of Ethics

# Key Questions for Feedback

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1. Does the draft code of ethics accurately reflect the role and responsibilities of Vermont certified peer support providers?
2. Is the purpose of the code clear and aligned with promoting ethical practice, protecting the rights of individuals, and maintaining professional standards?
3. Are the values and principles outlined in the code inclusive and respectful of diversity, cultural differences, and individual experiences?

## Key Questions for Feedback (cont'd)

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4. Do the values and principles prioritize the well-being and autonomy of individuals receiving peer support?
5. Are the guidelines around confidentiality and privacy clear and appropriately address the unique challenges of peer support?
6. Do the guidelines address the sharing of personal experiences within appropriate boundaries and respect the rights and privacy of individuals?



## Key Questions for Feedback (cont'd)

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7. Are there clear guidelines outlining appropriate boundaries for relationships between certified peer support providers and individuals receiving support?
8. Does the code address potential conflicts of interest and dual relationships that may arise within the peer support context?
9. Does the code outline expectations for ongoing training, knowledge, and skill development for certified peer support providers?

## Key Questions for Feedback (cont'd)

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10. Are the guidelines inclusive of the diverse range of experiences and expertise that certified peer support providers may bring?
11. Is the attestation sufficient and/or appropriate?
12. Does the code reflect the perspectives of different communities and stakeholders?
13. Is there anything missing that should be included?

# Additional Resources

Certified Peer Support Provider Code of Ethics

# State and National Codes of Ethics

<a href="#"><u>AK</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>AR</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>CA</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>CO</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>CT</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>DC</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>GA</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>HA</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>IA</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>ID</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>IL</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>IN</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>KS</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>KY</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>LA</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>MA</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>MD</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>ME</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>MI</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>MN</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>MO</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>MS</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>MT</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>NC</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>ND</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>NE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>NH</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>NJ</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>NM</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>NV</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>NY</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>OH</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>OK</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>OR</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>PA</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>SC</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>TN</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>TX</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>UT</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>VA</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>WA</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>WI</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>WV</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>WY</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>NAADAC</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>NATIONAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>SAMHSA NAT'L MODEL STANDARDS</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>MODEL CODE OF ETHICS</u></a>		

# Useful Links

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[Peer Specialist Certification: An Analysis of U.S. And Canadian Efforts to Promote and Expand Mental Health Peer Specialist Workforce Capacity, Final, February 24, 2021](#)

[Vermont Mental Health Peer Support Provider Stakeholder Meeting Series, September – November 2022](#)

[Letter to House Health Care Committee, February 25, 2023](#)

[Mental Health Peer Support Certification Stakeholder Meetings: Report and Recommendations, March 2023](#)

[Vermont Peer Support Provider Core Competencies, March 2023](#)

# Questions, Comments, Concerns

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