

Enhanced Peer Support Continuing Education Program

The Trueblood v. DSHS lawsuit challenged unconstitutional delays in competency evaluation and restoration services for people detained in city and county jails. The Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement establishes a plan for providing services to those involved in the criminal court system and for providing treatment to people when needed so they are less likely to become involved in the criminal court system.

The Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement includes a plan for phasing in programs and services:

- Phase 1 [2019-2021]: Pierce, Southwest, and Spokane regions including Pierce, Clark, Skamania, Klickitat, Spokane, Ferry, Stevens, Adams, Lincoln, and Pend Oreille counties.
- Phase 2 [2021-2023]: King region/county
- Phase 3 [2023-2025]: Thurston, Mason, and Salish regions including Thurston, Mason, Clallam, Kitsap, and Jefferson counties.

Peer support involves partnering certified peer counselors (people who are in recovery) with people who are experiencing behavioral health conditions. Certified peer counselors use their lived experiences to share a message of hope that recovery is possible and happens every day. Certified peer counselors support people in setting recovery goals, connecting to community resources, and building relationships.

Enhanced peer support and the Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement

As part of the Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement, the state developed continuing education training for certified peer counselors. Through this training, certified peer counselors receive specialized education in the forensic mental health system as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Certified peer counselors are integrated into several elements of the Settlement Agreement, including Forensic Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness, the Outpatient Competency Restoration Program, the Forensic Housing and Recovery Through Peer Services program and technical assistance to jails.

To implement the enhanced peer support continuing education program, the Health Care Authority has:

Revised: 9/23

- Developed a curriculum titled, “The Intersection of Behavioral Health and the Law.” This curriculum is designed to prepare certified peer counselors to work with people diagnosed with behavioral health conditions and involved with the criminal court system.
- Developed a diversity, equity, and inclusion training titled, “Enhancing Your Cultural Intelligence.”
- Created interactive online training opportunities for the “Intersection of Behavioral Health and the Law” curriculum and “Enhancing Your Cultural Intelligence.”
- Offer a monthly Trueblood certified peer counselor learning community meeting series that brings certified peer counselors working on Trueblood program teams and court-funded diversion program teams together to share knowledge, network and operationalize peer support in forensic environments.
- Works with stakeholders to determine how best to integrate certified peer counselors into forensic environments.

For more information

- For more information, contact Kate Ireland at kate.ireland@hca.wa.gov | (360) 790-4790
- For more information about Trueblood, or to be added to the Listserv, email truebloodtaskforce@dshs.wa.gov

