



PEER HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM

The need for Peer Housing Support was initially identified by the Social Inclusion Advisory Committee (SIAC), a group comprised of People with Lived Experience (PWLE) of homelessness, with the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness.

THE TOOLKIT CAN BE USED IN TWO WAYS:

1. As an orientation and training document that encompasses a foundational understanding of the Peer Housing Support program and required skills.
2. A modular toolkit that can be used for ongoing training that addresses or refreshes necessary skills in small topics for existing participants and programs as needed.

For the full Peer Housing Support Toolkit, visit <https://victoriahomelessness.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Peer-Housing-Support-Program-Toolkit-05.22.2019.pdf>

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Peer Housing Support program is a Lived Experience community-driven initiative, dedicated to providing support with, and a sense of community and belonging for, people transitioning from homelessness to safe and stable housing; whether that be supportive or independent. The Peer Housing Support program is a partnership between peers, peer supporters, the Coalition, and participating housing organizations. The effectiveness of peer support in recovery-informed practice is evidence-based as an integral support within health and social services. The Peer Housing Support program addresses the need for greater strengths-based housing support. It is modeled after peer-led initiatives in Mental Health and Addictions services, and Veterans support. The program has been adapted to the specific needs of people who are currently experiencing, or are transitioning through their recovery journey with experiences with homelessness.

ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

- PEERS
- PEER SUPPORTERS
- COMMUNITY OUTREACH MANAGER
- PARTNER AGENCY



GUIDING VALUES

- Hope and recovery
- Self-determination
- Empathetic and equal relationships
- Dignity, respect and social inclusion
- Integrity, authenticity and trust
- Health and wellness
- Cultural awareness and understanding
- Lifelong learning and personal growth

GOALS

1. To create a trusting, safe and engaging relationship between the peer and the peer supporter in which peers can share openly and receive appropriate supports.
2. To improve quality of life for peers by following a Housing First approach.
3. To support peers with a person-centered approach that embraces the philosophy of empowerment and individuality with their personal recovery from homelessness to being safely and stably housed.



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FOUR CORE FUNCTIONS

Peer supporters utilize their skills and share their own experiences with recovery with homelessness to support peers in creating homes for themselves that are a reflection of their own personal needs regarding quality of life, safety and stability.

Peer supporters identify key community resources with peers that can assist with holistic housing needs including, but not limited to, physical shelter:

- Assistance in Daily Management
- Social and Emotional Support
- Links to Professional Support and Community Resources
- Ongoing Support, Extended Over time

Four Core Functions



DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Peer Supporter will:

- Form positive and meaningful relationships
- Provide active listening and supports that: encourage hope; responsibility; increased self-efficacy; personal empowerment and growth; and mutual understanding
- Provide in-home support for peers when needed, and within personal capability.
- Support peers to access social and recreational programs
- Accompany peers to appointments when requested as a silent witness
- Support peers in accessing and developing appropriate person-centered social networks
- Assist peers in accessing and navigating community resources

BEST PRACTICES

- INCLUSIONARY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES
- EQUITABLE COMPENSATION & PROGRAM FUNDING
- TRAINING, COMMUNICATIONS, AND RESOURCING
- COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

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