

The Value of Peers Providing Employment Services to Other Peers:

Our Core Beliefs

We believe that people who have lived experience of dealing with mental health challenges (peers) can be the most effective deliverers of information, services, and supports to aid other peers in achieving their employment and career goals. We believe this because peers, with their unique status of sharing similar experiences with those whom they are mentoring, know best both the challenges and the strategies to surmount those challenges as it relates to achieving employment. We know this because they have made this journey for themselves, in their own lives.

We maintain the following beliefs in our approach to peer provided employment services and supports:

- Meaningful employment can be a significant boost to aid in an individual's recovery journey, and to increase that individual's sense of self-fulfillment and belief in him or herself.
- Peers can and should be encouraged to choose from the same job and career opportunities as anyone else.
- Peers should be supported to choose from the same paths available to others that they may take to achieve their job or career goals including seeking a job, getting additional education and training, and self-employment. They should also be encouraged to take more than path at the same time, such as working to pay their bills, while getting additional training or education in order to get a better job in the future.
- Peers should be supported to identify the types of services and resources which they feel will most effectively help them to achieve their employment goals and they should be supported to direct these services and supports.
- Peers can be the most effective sources of information and support to other people with similar experiences in achieving their employment goals.
- Peers should have the opportunity to receive training and technical assistance so that they can provide a high level of quality employment supports to other peers with mental health challenges.