

DISCOVERING QUALITY JOBS

PEER WORKERS

WHAT ARE QUALITY JOBS?

Quality Jobs offer competitive wages and benefits, predictable hours, and opportunities for advancement without requiring a college degree. They exist in high-growth industries that value skills gained through alternative routes such as training programs, military service, lived experience, and more.

WHAT ARE PEER WORKERS?

Peer Workers are a growing and in-demand workforce, bringing lived experience in mental health and addiction recovery. They serve in roles from entry-level support to leadership and licensed counseling.

YOU MIGHT ENJOY BEING A PEER WORKER IF YOU ARE:

- ✓ Empathetic to what others are going through.
- ✓ Comfortable discussing difficult topics.
- ✓ Good at listening and offering resources and guidance.
- ✓ Understanding and adaptable to the needs of others.
- ✓ Interested in building relationships with people in recovery.

PEER WORKERS WORK AT:

Community-based organizations
Day centers
Higher education institutions
Hospitals
Housing or residential treatment centers
Government institutions
Non-profits
Treatment centers



PEER WORKERS ARE KNOWN AS:

Barracks Support Specialists	Peer Mentors
Certified Recovery Mentors	Peer Support Specialists
Culturally Specific Recovery Support Mentors	Recovery / Peer Navigators
Engagement Specialists	Residential Aides / Counselors
Outreach Workers	Workforce / Peer Navigators

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A QUALITY JOB:



Living Wages: Starting pay for peer workers is **\$21–25 per hour**. Employers have recently raised wages and eased hiring criteria for workers without certification.



Accessible Hiring Practices: **No degrees or prior work experience required.** Some companies will invest in training post-hire to help Peer Workers build a career in Behavioral Health.



Comprehensive Benefits: Many employers offer a full benefit package, including medical, dental, vision, paid time off, and retirement savings, which can **increase your total compensation by up to 30%**.



Training and Advancement Opportunities: Wages may increase by **25% with experience** and **50–100% with added credentials and education** through degree and non-degree pathways.

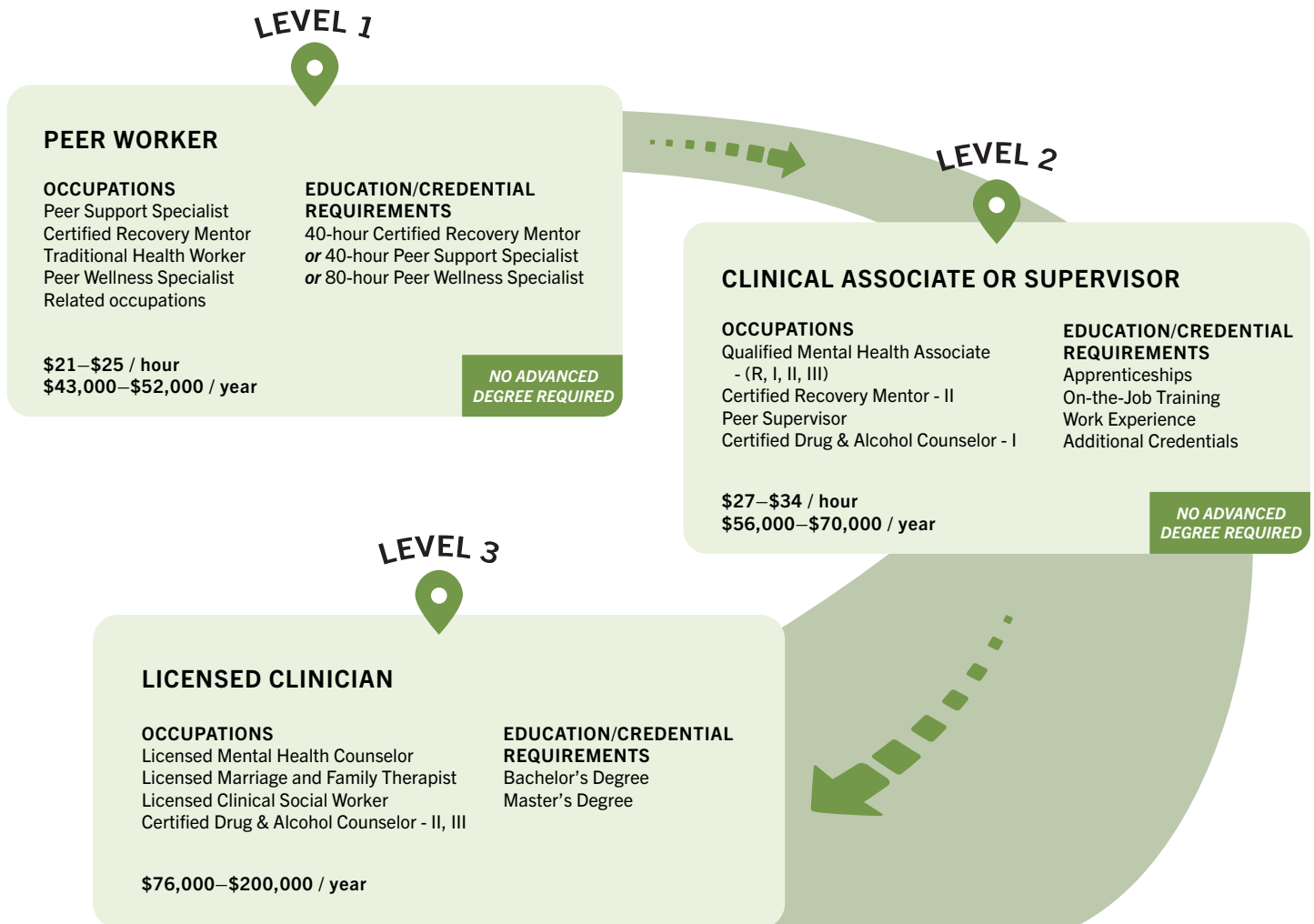


Predictable Schedule: **Full- and part-time schedules** are available during day and night shifts, with options for overtime.



Worker Safety and Engagement: Peer Workers can **combat burnout and prioritize self-care** by joining local support groups like PeerZone and Peer Support for Peer Support Specialists.

CAREER PATHWAYS FOR PEER WORKERS



COMMON QUALIFICATIONS TO BECOME A PEER WORKER:

- ✓ 18 years or older
- ✓ High School Diploma or GED equivalent*
- ✓ Lived experience with mental health or addiction treatment
- ✓ Additional qualifications based on employer or job

** Individuals who don't meet these criteria might have pathways through specific employers and/or Oregon Health Authority.*

INSIDER TIPS:

- ✓ Bring your full self when applying and interviewing for a Peer Worker position. Your lived experience is a huge asset in this field.
- ✓ Highlight what makes you unique. Culturally specific and multilingual peer workers are in high demand.
- ✓ Check job ads carefully to ensure the organization and setting is right for you.



GET STARTED

CONNECT WITH A WORKSOURCE REP

Talk to your career coach or get in touch with a WorkSource representative today at [worksourceportlandmetro.org](https://www.worksourceportlandmetro.org).

GET A HEAD START

WorkSource offers scholarships for training and certification. Learn more about applying by attending a free virtual info session.

Visit [worksourceportlandmetro.org/events](https://www.worksourceportlandmetro.org/events) to register.

WorkSource is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. To place a free relay call in Oregon, dial 711. This program financed in whole or in part with funds provided by the U.S. Department of Labor through Worksystems — the Portland Metro Workforce Development Board.

