

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?

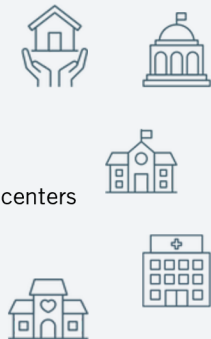
Peer Workers are people with lived experience of mental health or substance use challenges who provides support to others facing similar situations. They are a growing and in-demand workforce, and they serve in roles from entry-level support to leadership and licensed counseling.

YOU MIGHT ENJOY THIS JOB 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 supporting 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



THEY ARE ALSO 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**. Many employers pay more for bilingual and multi-lingual peer workers.



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.

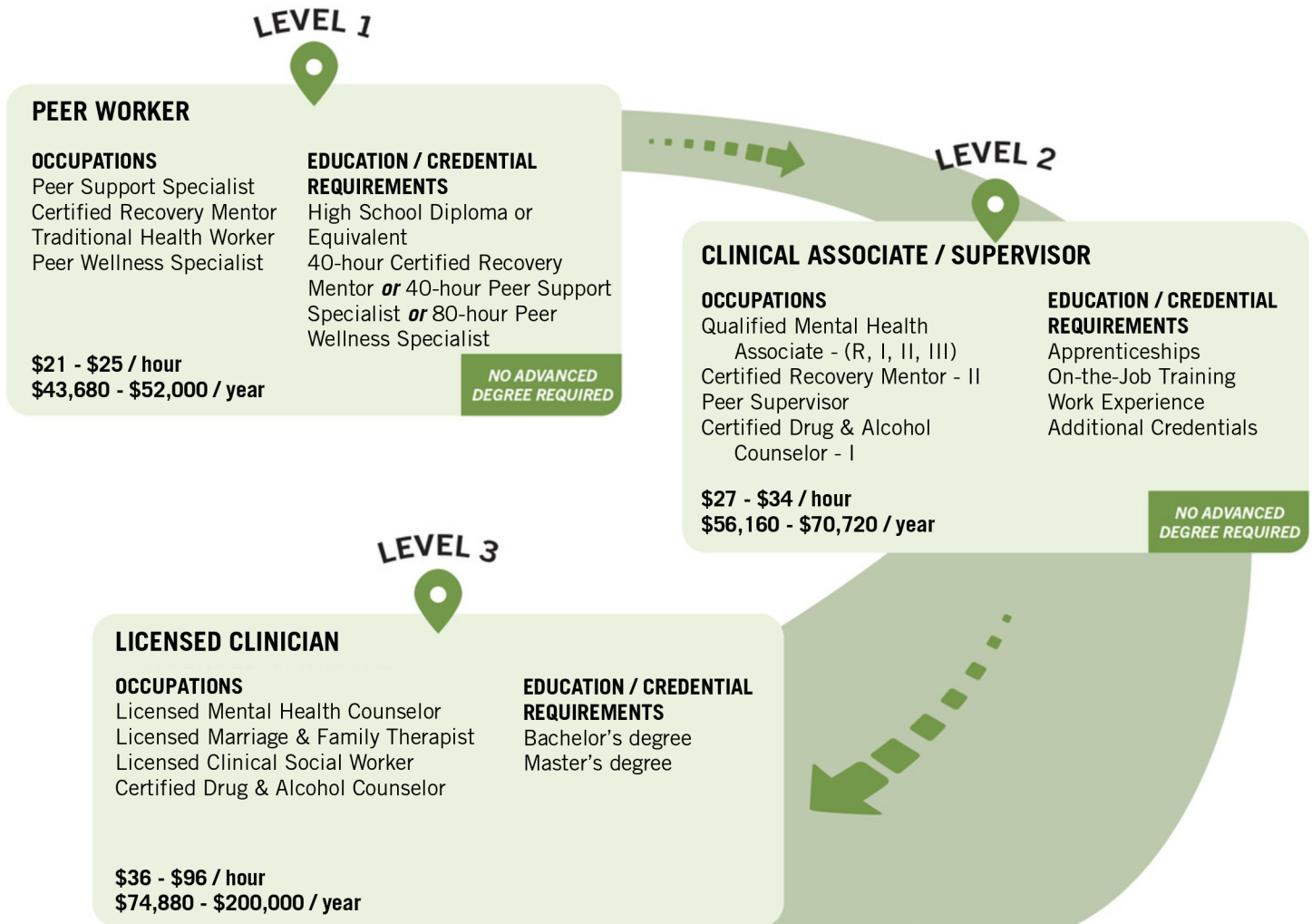


Predictable Schedule: **Full- and part-time schedules** are available during day and night shifts, with options for overtime. Schedules vary between employers and the type of role.



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:

- 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 all of these criteria might have pathways through specific employers and/or Oregon Health Authority.

INSIDER TIPS:

- Your lived experience is a huge asset in this field.
- 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.

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 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.

