



# NEVADA

Behavioral Health Association

*The Nevada Behavioral Health Association is committed to bringing informed attention to difficulties with Nevada's behavioral health system and improve upon the quality and quantity of services statewide.*

NBHA Certification Board  
900 West 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 200  
Reno, NV 89503

April 11, 2017

The Honorable Irene Bustamante Adams  
Nevada Assembly  
401 South Carson Street Carson City, Nevada 89701

Re: Assembly Bill 194.

Dear Chair Bustamante Adams;

While the Nevada Behavioral Health Association (NBHA), formerly Nevada AADAPTS, remains neutral in relation to Assembly Bill 194, I am writing on behalf of the organization to provide important background information relevant to the proposed legislation. The Nevada Behavioral Health Association is a statewide, Non-Profit 501 (c) (3) organization comprised of and representing agencies, individuals and programs involved in the treatment and prevention of substance abuse related issues. The mission of the Nevada Behavioral Health Association is to improve the quality and quantity of services statewide by informing public policy on treatment, prevention and behavioral health issues and by advancing professionalism in the field.

A system currently exists for voluntary peer certification that was developed over the course of four years, with technical assistance provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency (SAMHSA), and ratified in 2016 by the International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC). The NBHA Certification Board became an official member board of IC&RC in October 2016 for the certification of Peer Recovery and Support Specialists. This was preceded by an extensive application process and the vote of the full membership of IC&RC Peer Certification Boards. The resultant certificate program offered through NBHA allows Medicaid Type 14 and 17 treatment providers to bill Medicaid, with community based programs offering paid and voluntary peer services. As a member board of IC&RC NBHA certification is internationally recognized and holds candidates for certification to the following standards. It is important to note that the standards below mirror those set forth in AB 194.

## NBHA International Standards for Peer Recovery and Support (PR)

**Experience:** 500 hours of volunteer or paid work experience specific to the IC&RC Peer Recovery and Support domains, within the past 7 years. (Domain 1: Advocacy, Domain 2: Ethical Responsibility, Domain 3: Mentoring and Education, and Domain 4: Recovery/Wellness Support)

### Education and Training:

- High school diploma or jurisdictionally certified high school equivalency
- 46 hours specific to the Peer Recovery and Support domains with:
  - a) 10 hours in each of Domains 1, 2, and 3, completed within the past 5 years
  - b) **16 hours in the domain of Ethical Responsibility, completed within the past 2 years**

**(Non-clinical) Supervision:** 25 hours of non-clinical supervision specific to the domains. Oversight must be provided by an organization's documented and qualified management or supervisory staff per job description.

**Examination:** All applicants must pass the IC&RC PR Examination.

**Code of Ethics:** The applicant must sign the *NBHA Code of Ethical Conduct for Certified Peer Recovery and Support Specialists*, a peer recovery specific code of ethics statement, and an affirmation that the applicant has read and will abide by the code of ethics.

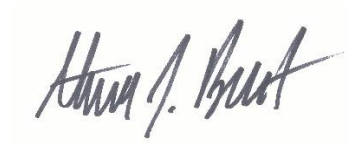
To reduce barriers to certification, the Center for the Application of Substance Abuse Technologies (CASAT) and the Foundation for Recovery (FFR) provide ongoing, evidence-based peer training. The cost of certification was also calculated so that it would not be prohibitively expensive for most peers. NBHA charges \$100 for initial certification to cover the costs of the examination and minimal administrative costs. Renewal of certification is \$50 per two-year period. On June 1, 2017, NBHA is launching a grandfathering period of six months to certify existing peers. For the grandfathering period, the examination requirement is waived and the cost is reduced to \$40 (\$39 of which is payable to IC&RC).

Furthermore, as a Member Board, NBHA provides oversight of certified peer recovery and support specialists in Nevada with has an established protocol to respond to complaints of ethical violations, should they arise. Possible sanctions for violation of *NBHA's Code of Ethical Conduct Certified Peer Recovery and Support Specialists* include but are not limited to: denial of an application for certification; written caution; public reprimand; suspension of a credential; revocation of a credential. Revocation of certification shall be construed as lasting a lifetime without the possibility of reinstatement. The NBHA Certification Board may impose educational, supervisory, training, and treatment requirements in conjunction with any of the above disciplinary actions. (For more information see: [Nevadabha.org](http://Nevadabha.org).)

The NBHA voluntary certification process established in October 2016 represents the culmination of a series of coordinated efforts to further the professionalization of peer recovery and support specialists. 2013 represents a turning point in this process as Nevada received a BRSS TACS award (Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale Technical Assistance Center Strategy) from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency (SAMHSA) to promote the wide-scale adoption of recovery-oriented supports, services, and systems for people in recovery from substance use and/or mental health conditions. To ensure sustainability of the BRSS TACS initiative in Nevada, the Nevada Peer Leadership Advisory Council (NPLAC) was created in 2013 and remains active today. NPLAC's statewide priorities include Workforce Development, Peer Support Services, Peer Leadership Development, and Medicaid eligibility.

NBHA also seeks clarification on the following matter: If AB 194 were to pass, would those peers certified by NBHA Certification Board need to pay additional fees to be certified by the State of Nevada, having obtained all qualifications for the NBHA certification. In essence, would their fees be doubled, or even tripled during renewal periods, as the bill currently reads?

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Steven J. Burt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping "S" and "B".

**Steven Burt, MA, LADC**  
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