



A FIELD GUIDE FOR PROGRAM AND ORGANIZATION LEADERS

Paying for the Work Between Claims

How to plan, fund, and protect the peer work that never becomes a claim

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The work between claims

A quick message after a hard day. A second try at reaching someone who hasn't answered. Supervision. The note that keeps the next person informed. Much of what makes youth peer support work doesn't turn into a billable claim.

When a budget only counts billable hours, that work either gets squeezed out or gets done anyway, off the clock and off the record. This guide is about planning for it on purpose.

Budget for the whole role, not just the billable part.



What counts

Work between claims is the part of the peer role that often doesn't produce a claim on its own.

Messaging and quick check-ins	Short contacts that keep a young person connected between meetings. Text and other written contact often isn't billable.
Outreach and engagement	Reaching young people before they're enrolled, and re-engaging those who've gone quiet.
Supervision and team time	Regular supervision, team meetings, and case conversations.
Documentation and coordination	Notes, plans, and connecting with schools, providers, and families.
Travel and waiting	Getting to where young people are, and waiting when they're late or don't show.
Training and community	Continuing education, credential upkeep, and community presence.

What's billable depends on your state, your plans, and your funders. Some of this work is billable in some places. Check the rules that apply to you.

When budgets ignore it

The work doesn't disappear. It moves somewhere it's harder to see.

Peers drift toward billable work	Outreach and check-ins get cut, and the relationship that made peer support work thins out.
Contact moves to personal phones	Quick messages happen anyway, on a peer's own phone, with no record and no supervision.
Peers work off the clock	The work gets done in evenings and on weekends, which leads to burnout and turnover.
Programs can't show their work	Unrecorded work can't be reported, so it can't be funded next year.

A 2026 national review notes that coverage of peer services has trended toward direct service delivery “rather than other core peer services such as outreach, engagement and community-based activities.”¹

A peer's week

Here's what a full-time peer's week might look like. Only part of it produces a claim.

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Meeting young people in person or by video	16
Messaging and quick check-ins	5
Outreach and re-engagement	4
Supervision and team meetings	3
Documentation and coordination	5
Travel and waiting	4
Training and community	3
Total	40

MADE-UP EXAMPLE, NOT A BENCHMARK

These hours are invented to show the idea. They aren't data or a target. Which of these hours can be billed depends on your state, your plans, and your funders. Use your own program's logged contacts to see your real split.

What a good budget looks like

A budget that works for peer support plans for the whole job, not just the part that produces a claim.

It covers the whole role	Outreach, messaging, supervision, and documentation are expected parts of the job, and the budget pays for them.
Every part has a source	Billable contact is matched to claims, and the rest is matched to flexible funds. No part of the role is left to chance.
It's checked against the real week	The plan is compared with how peers actually spend their time, and adjusted each year.

A budget that assumes every hour is billable will push peers toward billable-only work.

If you're a CCBHC

Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics are paid differently, which can help with work between claims.

Paid for a set of services	CCBHCs are paid through a prospective payment system (PPS) for nine required services, including peer supports and family and caregiver supports. ¹
Two federal approaches	Under federal guidance for the demonstration, a state can pay a daily rate for each day a person receives CCBHC services, or a monthly rate for each month they receive at least one. The rate is built from the clinic's allowable costs. ²
Why it matters	Because PPS payments aren't tied to individual fee schedules, CCBHCs have more flexibility to sustain work like outreach, engagement, and care coordination. ³

How much that helps depends on how your state set the rate and what costs went into it. Ask what peer activity your rate assumes, and make sure all of your peer work is documented so it's reflected next time.

¹ SAMHSA, CCBHC Certification Criteria, updated March 2023. samhsa.gov

² Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Section 223 CCBHC Demonstration Prospective Payment System (PPS) Guidance, updated February 2024. medicaid.gov See also Medicaid.gov, “Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Demonstration” (accessed September 25, 2026).

³ As reported in the National Council for Mental Wellbeing’s Workforce Integration Needs Assessment, April 2026, citing the Peer Recovery Center of Excellence (2024).

Other flexible money

Most programs that aren't CCBHCs combine several sources to cover the whole role.

Federal block grants	SAMHSA's mental health and substance use block grants go to states, which decide how to use them. ¹ Ask whether peer work is eligible.
Opioid response funds	SAMHSA's State Opioid Response grants address opioid misuse, opioid use disorder, and overdose. ² States set what's eligible.
Child welfare prevention	The federal Family First prevention clearinghouse rates some programs that involve peers, such as the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP). ³ Whether they're funded depends on your state's plan.
Local and private funds	County levies, local government, and foundations are often the most flexible money a program has.

Each source has its own rules and reporting. Read the award or contract before assuming it covers a given activity.

¹ SAMHSA, Block Grants: MHBG and SUBG program pages (accessed September 25, 2026). [samhsa.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov)
² SAMHSA, State Opioid Response Grants, TI-24-008 (published May 1, 2024; modified January 28, 2026). [samhsa.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov)
³ Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse, program pages for Family-Based Recovery and Wellness Recovery Action Plan (reviewed August 2026). preventionservices.acf.hhs.gov

Keeping non-billable contact safe

A contact that isn't billable still has to be safe, supervised, and on the record.

EXAMPLE (HYPOTHETICAL)

A peer's budget covers in-person meetings only. Between meetings, a young person texts the peer's personal phone late at night about a hard situation. No one else knows, nothing is recorded, and the peer carries it alone.

A secure channel	All contact, billable or not, runs through a secure channel the organization provides, not a peer's personal phone.
Supervisors can see	Supervisors can see caseloads, check-ins, and flagged concerns without reading private conversations.
Records that stay	Contact history stays with the program when a peer leaves.
Set hours	Peers aren't expected to answer outside set hours, and young people know where to get help after hours.

Making the work visible

Work that isn't recorded can't be funded. Record the work between claims the same way you record everything else.

Record it	Log messages, outreach attempts, and coordination, not only billable meetings.
Keep it brief	A short note is enough. Recording shouldn't eat into the work.
Keep it in one place	In a system the organization owns, so it's there for supervision and reporting.
Report it	Produce reports you can save and share with CCBHC leadership, grant funders, and your board, showing the whole role, not just claims.

When you can show how much of the work happens between claims, it's easier to make the case for funding it.

Questions to ask

Three questions to take to your CCBHC leadership and your funders.

- ☐ If we're a CCBHC, what peer activity does our rate assume?
- ☐ Which grants or local funds can cover supervision, outreach, and messaging?
- ☐ Can we show funders the work that doesn't produce a claim?



Ready to map funding for the whole role? Blueprints, step-by-step toolkits for program leaders, are at shareandsolve.app/#blueprints.

Checklist

Use this when you build or review a peer program budget.

- ☐ We know how peers actually spend their week
- ☐ The budget doesn't assume every hour is billable
- ☐ Outreach, messaging, and supervision are written into the job
- ☐ Each part of the role has a funding source
- ☐ All contact runs through a secure channel the organization provides
- ☐ Supervisors can see caseloads, check-ins, and flagged concerns
- ☐ Records stay with the program when a peer leaves
- ☐ Work between claims is recorded, not only billable contact
- ☐ We can produce reports we can save and share that show the whole role
- ☐ We review the plan against the real week every year

ABOUT

Share+Solve and Peer Bridge

Share+Solve and Peer Bridge help organizations run their own youth peer support programs. They don't replace your peer supporters, your training, or your program. They give the work you already do a safe, supervised home.

Share+Solve

Where peers and young people connect: messaging, check-ins, goals, and meet-ups, with a one-tap 988 call button on the home screen.

Peer Bridge

Where supervisors see the whole program: caseloads, check-ins, escalations, and program-level reporting.

Private conversations between peers and young people stay between them. Your organization controls its program data, and deletion requests are handled through the platform.

Built by John Dellick, MBA, a nationally recognized peer support professional with nearly a decade in youth peer support and behavioral health.



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