



HB1486 Implementation (Jan. 1, 2019) Frequently Asked Questions

How is the certification for HB1486 different from the certification I received from Via Hope?

Technically, the HB1486 certification is only for the purpose of being eligible to bill Medicaid. However, it will be the only peer specialist certification available in Texas. Via Hope will continue providing the training necessary for the HB1486 certification, but will no longer certify the individuals that take Via Hope's training. The certification will be handled by another organization.

How will this change affect my current certification?

Your Via Hope certification will not be revoked. However, when your current certification period expires, there will not be a reapplication process through Via Hope. Your Via Hope certification does not make you eligible to bill Medicaid, but it does allow you to apply to the new certification body to be "grandfathered" into the new process.

What does it mean to be grandfathered?

Being grandfathered means that you have a three month (January 1 - March 31, 2019) window of opportunity to submit paperwork to the new certifying body to be recognized by the state of Texas as certified without taking training again.

What paperwork will be needed to grandfather.

- 1. Complete a grandfather application, obtained from the certifying body.*
- 2. Submit proof of 250 work hours as a peer specialist.*
- 3. Submit proof that a background check has been completed as directed by the certifying body.*

Is there a cost to grandfather?

Yes, the certifying body will determine the cost of grandfathering. (Estimated to be around \$60)

How long will I have to apply for Grandfathering?

Three months, from January 1, 2019 - March 31, 2019

What happens if I don't apply by the end of the grandfathering period?

You will have to apply and be accepted for Mental Health Peer Specialist training and pass a knowledge assessment again. This includes a new "core" training on the principles of peer support followed by specialized training on mental health peer support (the current certification curriculum)

Why do I need to grandfather?

In order to be certified as a mental health peer specialist who can bill Medicaid without having to attend training again. If you do not currently work for an organization that is a Medicaid provider you do not have to be certified. However, if you go to work for a Medicaid provider in the future and you did not apply to be grandfathered, you would have to take the training again.

Will Via Hope still approve my CEUs?

No, the new certifying body will approve continuing education units (CEUs) as part of the recertification process.

Will the number of CEUs increase?

No, the number of required CEUs for the 24month certification period will remain 20 CEUs.

What's this I hear about background checks?

A background check will be required in order to become a Mental Health Peer Specialist. The information on where and how to complete the background process will be provided on the application to grandfather from the certifying body.

Will there be a cost for the background check?

Yes, that cost will be paid directly to the fingerprinting entity and information on the process will be provided by the certifying body.

What happens if my organization doesn't do Medicaid billing?

Technically you do not need to be certified through the new HB1486 process. However, if you miss the window to apply for grandfathering and later want to bill Medicaid, you will have to attend training again.

What happens if my status is Inactive at the end of the year?

If your status is inactive on December 31, 2018 you will not be eligible to grandfather.

How do I show (prove?) my hours for being grandfathered in?

The certifying body has a form that will need to be completed and signed by a current or former supervisor. The form is a part of the grandfathering application.

If Via Hope will not be the certifying body who will be?

The certifying body has not been named, but will likely be TCBAP. HHSC (Health and Human Services Commission) is handling that process.

Will I still be considered a peer specialist by my job after December 31st?

You do not have to be certified to be a peer specialist and provide peer support. It will be up to your employer whether they require you to become certified as a Mental Health Peer Specialist through the HB1486 process. Again, that certification is necessary only to provide Medicaid billable services.

What happens if I don't pass the background check?

There will be an appeals process for anyone that does not pass a background check. The process is designed to give every opportunity for peers to continue to provide support services.