

SENATE No. 1144

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Cindy F. Friedman

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to mental health peer specialists certification.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Cindy F. Friedman</i>	<i>Fourth Middlesex</i>	
<i>Sean Garballey</i>	<i>23rd Middlesex</i>	<i>1/28/2019</i>

SENATE No. 1144

By Ms. Friedman, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1144) of Cindy F. Friedman and Sean Garballey for legislation relative to mental health peer specialists certification. Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act relative to mental health peer specialists certification.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. There shall be a special commission to investigate, study, and evaluate the
2 scope of mental health peer support programs in all regions of the commonwealth to determine
3 the scope of peer programs, classification and types of peer specialists and appropriate training
4 and certification requirements for such programs. The commission shall consist of: the secretary
5 of health and human services or a designee, who shall serve as chair; the commissioner of mental
6 health or a designee; the commissioner of public health or a designee; the director of Medicaid or
7 a designee; a representative from the Association for Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.; and 5 persons
8 who shall be appointed by the secretary, 1 of whom shall have expertise in training peer
9 specialists, 1 of whom shall be a family member to an individual with a mental illness, 1 of
10 whom shall have lived experience with a mental illness, 1 of whom shall represent payers and 1
11 of whom shall currently be employed as a peer specialist.

12 The commission study shall include, but not be limited to, an examination and
13 identification of best practices related to training and credential requirements for peer specialist
14 programs, including: (1) types and categories of services provided by peer programs, including
15 support, rehabilitation and clinical programs; (2) types and categories of services that require
16 certification; (3) supervision required for categories of services that require certification; (4)
17 hours of formal work or volunteer experience related to mental health and substance use
18 disorders conducted through such programs; (5) types of peer-support specialist exams required
19 for such programs; (6) codes of ethics used by such programs; (7) required or recommended skill
20 sets for such programs; (8) requirements for continuing education; (9) any other criteria
21 necessary to develop peer specialist certification requirements; and (10) best practices from other
22 states.

23 The commission shall submit its findings and recommendations, together with drafts of
24 legislation necessary to carry those recommendations into effect by filing the same with the
25 clerks of the house of representatives and senate, to the department of mental health and the joint
26 committee on mental health, substance use and recovery not later than 1 year after the enactment
27 of this act.