



Human Services

A Passion for Helping People

COLLEGE OF DUPAGE HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAM RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST CERTIFICATE APPLICATION PACKET

Is the CRSS Certificate Program Right for You?

Here are a few questions you might ask yourself to determine if being a CRSS is a good fit for you:

1. Am I comfortable with my present and/or past challenges with mental health or co-occurring mental health and substance use challenges being known by my colleagues and the people I serve?
2. Am I able to share information about how I am/was able to overcome these challenges? Am I willing to do so?
3. Do I feel that my experiences related to dealing with mental health or co-occurring mental health and substance use challenges have value for others going through similar challenges?
4. Am I willing to learn how to share my experiences in a way that promotes hope and supports another person in their journey toward recovery?

If you feel you can confidently answer yes to 3 out of 4 of the above, you may want to pursue the CRSS. If more than 1 of the above gives you pause, then it may not be the credential for you.

SUMMARY OF APPLICATION PROCESS

To be considered for admission to the Human Services CRSS certificate program as a certificate seeking student, the applicant must fulfill the following criteria:

1. Email the CRSS Student Success Coach to get started!
Nancy Ortiz-Romero, MSW, LSW
ortiz-romeron@cod.edu
2. Be admitted to College of DuPage.
3. Complete the CRSS Success Grant application, including the required essay and signature documents*, [online](#) via the College of DuPage Scholarship Portal.
4. Schedule a meeting with the CRSS Student Success Coach.

*Essay & Signature Documents

Please note that the CRSS Success Grant application requires a brief essay addressing each of the following:

1. Your understanding of the CRSS profession
2. Why you think the CRSS is an appropriate profession for you
3. Your educational and professional goals
4. Include the qualities you possess that would help you accomplish your educational goals.

The application also requires you to read the enclosed Applicant Information materials thoroughly and submit signed documents as indicated.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The College will not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion or creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, arrest record, military status or unfavorable discharge from military service, citizenship status, use of lawful products while not at work, physical or mental handicap or disability.

IMPORTANT APPLICANT INFORMATION & SIGNATURE DOCUMENTS

1. Students admitted to the CRSS certificate program must consult with the CRSS Student Success Coach on a semester basis.
2. Students applying for admission into the CRSS certificate program must read the enclosed *Code of Ethics for Certified Recovery Support Specialist*. Students must sign the **Personal Statement** affirming that they have read these guidelines and agree to adhere to them. Students must also sign the **Statement of Self-Disclosure**.
3. Students are expected to behave in a professional manner both in class and at off-campus learning sites such as Human Services agencies, service learning, and internship sites. Students who have had serious problems due to tardiness, excessive absences, other evidence of poor time-management skills, or poor interpersonal skills, will be required to remediate their behaviors and provide documentation that they have rectified these behaviors. Failure to remediate can result in dismissal from the Human Services Program.
4. Serious non-professional behaviors in a classroom situation will be documented by all Human Services faculty and be placed in the student's file. Students have the right to view their file at any time under the guidance of a full-time faculty member. Non-professional behaviors can include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Disruptive behavior in class and/or on campus that requires intervention
 - b. Inappropriate or unprofessional behavior during class or at other locations where the student is representing the College
 - c. Verbal or physical abuse to instructors, peers, or any other individual on campus
 - d. Illegal activities such as drug use, gambling, etc. while in the program.
5. Students are expected to resolve grievances professionally as follows:
 - a. The student should contact the Instructor first.
 - b. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, the student may then contact the CRSS Project Coordinator to request a meeting in an attempt to achieve resolution.Students must then abide by the decision of the CRSS Project Coordinator.
6. To successfully complete the program, students must develop writing skills required of an entry level human service professional. Students must be able to complete any required documentation in written or computerized format. Proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation must be used in all written assignments, including discussion boards.
7. Graduates of the CRSS certificate program must be able to communicate effectively in a variety of settings with supervisors and with clients representative of multi-cultural backgrounds. We expect our graduates to exemplify the qualities and standards stipulated by the Illinois Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Professional Certification Association (<https://iaodapca.org>).
8. Students must achieve a grade of C or higher in every required course in order to progress through the program.

Field Placement / Internship

The internship is the last step in the program after all CRSS certificate program required coursework has been completed.

- A. Students should meet with the Student Success Coach and begin to secure an internship site **the semester prior** to the anticipated start date.
- B. The CRSS Project Coordinator maintains a list of approved CRSS internship sites which students can choose from. Students must finalize fieldwork internship placements in consultation with the CRSS Project Coordinator.
- C. A permit is required to register for the Fieldwork class, the following documentation must be presented to the Fieldwork Instructor to obtain the permit:
 - Degree audit showing all CRSS certificate program required coursework has been completed (This can be prepared in a meeting with the CRSS Student Success Coach.)
 - Acceptance into an internship by an approved agency
 - Completion of any internship site requirements (i.e. background screening, physical, TB test).
- D. Students will complete one 300-hour internship.
- E. Students must attend a Fieldwork class once a week while doing their field placement.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR CERTIFIED RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST

A code of ethics is a set of guidelines which are designed to set out acceptable behaviors for members of a particular group, association, or profession. The CRSS code of ethics serves to:

1. Protect consumers of recovery support services
2. Set a professional standard
3. Increase confidence in the profession
4. Identify core values which underlie the work performed
5. Create accountability among CRSS professionals
6. Establish occupational identity and maturity

ETHIC	IMPORTANCE
CRSS professionals will, when appropriate, openly share their stories of hope and recovery and will likewise be able to identify and describe the supports that promote their recovery and resilience.	Science has shown that having hope is integral to an individual's ability to recover. Hearing stories of recovery helps people develop hope, particularly when those stories are relevant to others' lives and helps them to identify supports for their own recovery.
CRSS professionals will practice safe and healthy disclosure about their own experience through general sharing focused on providing hope and direction toward recovery.	The experience of recovery and what is helpful is different for each person. Sharing one's recovery story can promote hope, but must not be prescriptive.
CRSS professionals will maintain high standards of personal conduct and will also conduct self-care in a manner that fosters their own recovery.	As a role model, a CRSS professional's integrity and health choices influence the practices of persons served.
CRSS professionals will fairly and accurately represent themselves and their capabilities to individuals they serve and to the community.	The goal is to get a person to the right source of support for their current need. Damage occurs when a professional misrepresents what services they are qualified to provide.
CRSS professionals will keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to recovery and openly share their knowledge.	Persons served deserve to make choices based on the best information possible. Information and understanding regarding mental health recovery is ever evolving and expanding.
CRSS professionals will not abuse substances under any circumstances.	As a role model, a CRSS professional's integrity and health choices influence the practices of persons served.

<p>CRSS professionals will provide services to meet the identified needs of the individuals they serve as indicated within their service plan. They will avoid providing services that are unnecessary or not capable of producing the desired effect.</p>	<p>Persons served deserve individualized services with demonstrated effectiveness.</p>
<p>CRSS professionals shall only provide service and support within work hours and locations approved by the agency.</p>	<p>Persons must be afforded protection from abuse, misconduct and conflicts of interest which are more likely to occur outside the scope of professionally sanctioned hours and settings.</p>
<p>CRSS professionals will be guided by the principle of consumer self-determination while also considering the needs of others and society. The primary responsibility of CRSS Professionals is to help individuals they serve achieve their goals, based upon their needs and wants.</p>	<p>While personal responsibility and individual choice are cornerstones of recovery, these are balanced by the need for support and safety not only of the individual, but of others and the greater society.</p>
<p>CRSS professionals will advocate for the full involvement of individuals they serve in communities of their choice with services in safe and least restrictive environments possible.</p>	<p>Recovery is the process by which persons with mental illnesses live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities. All individuals have the right to live in a safe and least restrictive environment.</p>
<p>CRSS professionals must not discriminate against individuals based on race, religion, age, sex, disability, ethnicity, national ancestry, sexual orientation or economic condition.</p>	<p>Individuals have the right to be treated with equality and esteem.</p>
<p>CRSS professionals will never intimidate, threaten, harass, financially exploit, use undue influence, physical force or verbal abuse, or make unwarranted promises of benefits to the individuals they serve.</p>	<p>Even when providing peer support services, the CRSS professional is at least implicitly in a position of power as a staff person and must be careful how that influence or perceived authority might place pressure upon individuals.</p>
<p>CRSS professionals will avoid relationships or commitments that conflict with the interests of individuals they serve, impair professional judgment, imply a conflict of interest, or create risk of harm to individuals they serve. When dual relationships are unavoidable, it is the responsibility of the professional to seek supervisory consultation to conduct him/herself</p>	<p>Even when providing peer support services, the CRSS professional is at least implicitly in a position of power as a staff person and must be careful how that influence or perceived authority might place pressure upon individuals.</p>

<p>in a way that does not jeopardize the integrity of the helping relationship.</p>	
<p>CRSS professionals will never engage in romantic or sexual/intimate activities with the individuals they serve. They will not provide services to individuals with whom they have had a prior romantic or sexual relationship.</p>	<p>The real and perceived power between a human service professional and the persons they serve creates an imbalance of power that is advantageous to the professional and disenfranchising to the person served. This removes the possibility for a genuine consensual relationship. Relationships of this type also cloud the professional's needed objective judgment, which reduces the quality of services the person deserves.</p>
<p>CRSS professionals will not accept gifts of significant value from individuals they serve. They do not loan, give, or receive money or payment for any services to, or from, individuals they serve.</p>	<p>Even when providing peer support services, the CRSS professional is at least implicitly in a position of power as a staff person and must be careful how that influence or perceived authority might place pressure upon individuals to give. A gift of significant value from a consumer is essentially payment for a service that is already being paid for by other means. Receiving a gift from an individual may also unintentionally impact the treatment of that individual and other persons served in an unfair manner.</p>
<p>CRSS professionals will, at all times, respect the rights, dignity, privacy and confidentiality of those they support. CRSS Professionals will respect confidential information shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and interactions.</p>	<p>Individuals have rights, including the right to privacy, and CRSS professionals should not only honor, but advocate for the necessity and enforcement of such rights.</p>
<p>CRSS professionals have a duty to inform appropriate persons when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to an individual they are serving or other identifiable person. CRSS Professionals working in the human services field are mandated reporters of abuse, neglect and exploitation.</p>	<p>The professional has a duty not only to protect persons served, but also other individuals and society at large.</p>

<p>CRSS professionals will avoid negative criticism of colleagues in communicating with individuals they serve and other professionals.</p>	<p>CRSS professionals must use their influence for constructive purposes and not engage in activities that detract from the recovery support of persons with mental health challenges. Persons served benefit from a thoughtful, team based approach where their welfare is the primary concern.</p>
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Adapted from the Peer Specialist Code of Ethics and Professional Standards by Colorado's Northeast Behavioral Health Partnership (2011)

PERSONAL STATEMENT

As a Certified Recovery and Support Specialist, I shall strive at all times to maintain the highest standards in all services I provide, valuing competency and integrity over expediency or ability, providing services only in those areas where my training and experience meet established standards. I shall always recognize that I have assumed a heavy social and vocational responsibility due to the intimate nature of my work, which touches the lives of other human beings.

My signature below indicates my agreement with and willingness to abide by this Code of Ethics.

Signature

Date

STATEMENT OF SELF-DISCLOSURE

A Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS) is a mental health consumer who has been trained and certified to help other consumers identify and achieve specific life goals. The CRSS cultivates the consumer's ability to make informed, independent choices, and assists consumers in gaining information and support from the community to make their goals a reality.

As a CRSS, an individual accepts and agrees that his or her experience as a mental health consumer will be known by their colleagues, consumers and others with whom s/he may share that s/he has achieved this certification. Additionally, a CRSS will follow the "Model Code of Ethics" outlined in the Illinois Certified Recovery Support Specialist Model.

"I understand the terms stated above, and I accept and agree to these terms. I understand that, upon successful completion of the application and examination, I will be issued a certificate as a Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS) under the terms stated above."

Signature

Date

HUMAN SERVICES CRSS CERTIFICATE PROGRAM APPLICATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT

NAME:

DATE OF APPLICATION:

PHONE:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

- I acknowledge that I have read all of the information in this packet and will adhere to the ethics and guidelines of the program as stated in this packet.
- I further understand that failure to comply with the requirements of the CRSS certificate program may result in cancellation of my application and dismissal from the program.

Signature: _____