



Peer Support Mission Statement

Providing a Peer Support program for Alberta lawyers to address personal and professional issues in a safe and confidential environment. Peer Support can be complimentary to professional counselling services, or can be used as a standalone service. Peer support is an opportunity for a lawyer in distress to talk to another lawyer about his or her challenges. Peer support provides opportunities for volunteer lawyers to offer their knowledge, experience, practical, emotional and social help to another lawyer or law student. The Peer Support program is a continuum of services and aligns with Assist's objective of prevention.

Peer Support Guiding Principles

The Program

- i. The safety and security of all parties involved with and affected by the program is of paramount importance.
- ii. We (including our volunteers) adhere to principles of strict confidentiality, within legal & ethical boundaries, in all situations.
- iii. All interactions are discreet, confidential, and respectful.
- iv. We screen, train, and support all Peer Support volunteers.
- v. Our volunteers do not provide legal, medical, or financial advice to participants. Assist volunteers do not provide direct support to a participant that is beyond the volunteer's competency. We provide referrals in these situations, where appropriate.
- vi. Peer Support does not take the place of professional help or 12-step support.
- vii. Within the boundaries of confidentiality, we measure the progress and success of the program.

The Peer-to-Peer Relationship

- i. Peer volunteers listen and share their experiences, strengths & hope.
- ii. Peer volunteers will provide referrals to appropriate resources.
- iii. Individuality is respected, while commonality of experience is recognized as a critical guide to a successful peer match.
- iv. Peer volunteers and participants are welcome, at all times, to discuss with each other or the Peer Support Program Coordinator, free of judgment, whether the relationship is compatible. Upon request from either party, the Peer Support Program Coordinator will facilitate a change.
- v. Setting personal boundaries: Our goal is to help lawyers to alleviate stress, regain health, and/or achieve recovery in part by talking with another lawyer who is willing to listen & discuss. Assist is concerned about the well being of the Peer Support volunteers and participants, and recommends that the volunteers keep their role clear with the participants. The volunteers and the participants have the right to say "no" to requests that make them feel uncomfortable.
- vi. Peer volunteers and participants recognize that mutual trust is critical to a beneficial relationship and work jointly to foster that trust.