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Spokane Public Library Loses Peer Spokane Partnership Due to Lack of Funding

Spokane, WA – Since 2023, Spokane Public Library has connected the community to social services resources through a partnership with Peer Spokane at Central Library. Despite demonstrated results and community need, this program will end in February due to lack of funding.

In 2023, a Better Health Together Community Linkages grant allowed Spokane Public Library and Peer Spokane to establish a program that placed Peer Services Specialists at Spokane Public Library. The \$400,000 in funding awarded to the project allowed for two full-time Peer Service Specialists for the library for approximately two years.

In March 2025, when funding initially expired, the program was reduced from two to one Peer Services Specialist. The City of Spokane stepped up to provide stop-gap funding to maintain one Peer Support Specialist, but now that funding has run out as well, and no additional grants can be secured, bringing an end to this successful program.

At a time when library services often overlap with social services, this program addressed the social needs of our customers without creating an additional burden for front-line staff who are trained in library services not social services.

Since 2023, Peer Services at Central Library has connected 1,134 unique individuals to resources for healthcare, housing, mental health services, and more to improve health outcomes.

“Losing this funding and program will leave a tremendous hole in the services provided at Central Library. The significant service that Peers has provided to our community cannot be understated. We are grateful for support and compassion the Peer Services Specialists have offered to the community for the past three years,” said Andrew Chanse, Executive Director, Spokane Public Library.

Moving forward, the Safety Team at Central Library will do its best to fill this gap, continue to strengthen empathy-focused and trauma-informed practices and will work closely with community social service partners to continue to provide resources to our community. -informed practices and will work closely with

About Spokane Public Library

Spokane Public Library aims to inspire a thriving city through cultural and educational opportunities. An award-winning library that spans six branches and houses nearly half-a-million items, Spokane Public Library circulates nearly two million items and welcomes one million visitors annually. Customers can enjoy traditional library media and can also access digital downloads, databases, historical collections, art exhibits and interesting free programming. For general information about the library, please visit spokanelibrary.org or call 509-444-5300.



About Peer Spokane

Peer Washington cultivates powerful, healthy lives by providing peer emotional support and development services to those impacted by addiction, mental health and/or HIV/AIDS.
www.peerspokane.org

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