

Merge

Peer Support Team Leader

Position Description

He Whakapapa: Background

Merge Café is a Lifewise initiative that brings people together through kai, connection, and community, creating a welcoming space grounded in dignity, choice, and respect, where people can access wraparound supports such as housing, health, and social services. At the heart of this model is peer support, where Peer Support Workers use their lived experience of homelessness, mental distress, addiction, and hardship to build trust, walk alongside others, and support pathways toward wellbeing and stability.

Te Kaupapa: Purpose

As the Peer Support Team Leader, you will provide leadership, guidance, and support to the Merge Peer Support Team, ensuring lived experience practice is upheld and strengthened across the service. You will foster a safe, values-driven team culture, support reflective practice, and ensure peer support remains authentic, relational, and grounded in mutuality, while working closely with the Merge Service Manager and wider Lifewise teams to support whānau in ways that uphold mana, autonomy, and hope.

THREE TRUST VALUES

Compassion *Arohanui*

Courage *Maia*

Respect *Whakaute*

Integrity *Ngakau Pono*

WHO YOU REPORT TO

Merge, Service Manager

WHO REPORTS TO YOU

Peer Support Workers

KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Internal

- ★ Merge, Service Manager
- ★ Peer Support Connectors and Outreach staff
- ★ Head Chef and Café staff
- ★ Lifewise Housing First and Community Teams

External

- ★ Government Agencies
- ★ Community Service and Housing Providers
- ★ Housing First Collective
- ★ External agencies as appropriate

General: Full time permanent position.

Date Prepared: June 2026

WHAT YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR

LEADERSHIP OF PEER SUPPORT PRACTICE

- ★ Lead and support a team of Peer Support Workers in their day-to-day mahi
- ★ Uphold the integrity of lived experience practice, ensuring it remains authentic and non-clinical
- ★ Model peer values including mutuality, empathy, and strengths-based approaches
- ★ Support the safe and intentional use of lived experience in practice
- ★ Ensure peer roles are well understood and respected across the service

STAFF SUPPORT, SUPERVISION AND DEVELOPMENT

- ★ Provide day-to-day guidance, coaching, and mentoring to PSWs
- ★ Support reflective practice, including participation in peer supervision and debriefing
- ★ Promote wellbeing and psychological safety within the team
- ★ Identify training and development opportunities, including pathways toward Level 4 Peer Support qualification
- ★ Support staff to maintain healthy boundaries and sustainable practice

WHĀNAU SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT

- ★ Support PSWs to walk alongside whānau in ways that are person-centred and strengths-based
- ★ Ensure practice reflects key peer principles, including connection, hope, and empowerment
- ★ Assist with complex situations, risk navigation, and escalation where required
- ★ Promote access to services including housing, health, and social supports

COLLABORATION AND INTEGRATION

- ★ Work closely with the Merge Manager and wider Lifewise teams to integrate peer support across services
- ★ Build and maintain relationships with external partners
- ★ Participate in multidisciplinary or multi-agency hui where required
- ★ Advocate for lived experience perspectives in service design and delivery

OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

- ★ Support rostering and coordination of peer support coverage
- ★ Ensure documentation and case notes align with organisational expectations while upholding peer practice

- ★ Oversee accurate and timely Recordbase entries, supporting consistent and high-quality documentation
- ★ Contribute to auditing, reporting, evaluation, and continuous improvement processes
- ★ Participate in team hui and contribute to service planning

EMBEDDING LIVED EXPERIENCE FRAMEWORK

- ★ Champion Lifewise's lived experience workforce framework across Merge
- ★ Ensure alignment with CPSLE values, competencies, and Tiriti-centric principles
- ★ Support inclusion, representation, and leadership of lived experience voices
- ★ Contribute to strengthening peer workforce development and sustainability

WHAT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE YOU NEED

- ★ Lived experience relevant to the people we support, and the ability to use this intentionally in practice
- ★ Experience in outreach, peer support, mental health, addictions, homelessness, or community services.
- ★ Demonstrated experience supporting or leading a team.
- ★ Strong relational skills, with the ability to build trust and hold safe space.
- ★ Understanding of peer support principles including mutuality, strength-based practice, and self-determination and an appropriate peer focused qualification at a minimum of L5.
- ★ Commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and culturally responsive practice.
- ★ Ability to navigate complexity, boundaries, and risk in a supportive and non-punitive way.
- ★ Strong communication and collaboration skills
- ★ Sound computer and database skills.
- ★ A full NZ driver's license.

DESIRABLE

- ★ Knowledge of CPSLE framework and peer principles.
- ★ Experience in reflective practice or supervision environments
- ★ Knowledge of Lifewise services and outreach practices at Lifewise or other organisations

CHANGE TO JOB DESCRIPTIONS

This Job Description is intended to describe the main functions and responsibilities and behaviours required of the role. It is not to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities or duties that may reasonably be required of the incumbent in this role.

Employees will be expected to perform any duties reasonably requested by the employer.
From time to time, it may be necessary to consider changes in the job description in response to the changing nature of our work environment – including technological requirements or statutory changes.

This is to acknowledge that I have read and understood the requirements of the position description as defined above.

_____	_____	_____
Employee Name	Employee Signature	Date