



WHO ARE LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

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Licensed Professional Counselors provide mental health and substance abuse care to millions of Americans. The State of Idaho has two tiers of counselors—Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) and Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors (LCPC)

Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) are master's degreed mental health service providers, trained to work with individuals, families and groups in treating mental, behavioral and emotional problems and disorders. LPCs make up a large percentage of the workforce employed in community health centers, public and private schools, agencies and organizations, and are employed within and covered by managed care organizations and health plans. LPCs also work with active and reserve military and their families, as well as veterans.

Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education and career goals.

LPC QUALIFICATIONS

More than 115,000 professional counselors are licensed across the country, in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. In 2011, Idaho currently has 1477 licensed counselors throughout the state. LPC education and training standards for licensure are on par with those of the other two master's level mental health providers (clinical social workers and marriage and family therapists). State licensure requirements for professional counselors typically include:

- ◆ Possession of a master's or doctoral degree in counseling from a national or regionally-accredited institution of higher education, including an

internship and coursework on human behavior and development, effective counseling strategies, ethical practice, and other core knowledge areas;

- ◆ Completion of a minimum of 1000 hours (LCPCs have a minimum of 3,000) supervised clinical experience, and yearly completion of credits/hours after obtaining licensure (Idaho requires 20 continuing education hours per year);
- ◆ Passage of the National Counselor Examination (NCE) for LPCs and the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE); and
- ◆ Adherence to a strict Code of Ethics and recognized standards of practice, as regulated by the state's counselor licensure board.

WHAT DO LPCS DO?

The practice of professional counseling includes, but is not limited to, the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, including addictive disorders; psycho-educational techniques aimed at prevention; consultation to individuals, couples, families, groups, and organizations; guidance in life, and research into more effective therapeutic treatment modalities.

Counselors' education and training is oriented toward the adoption of a truly client-centered, and not primarily illness-centered, approach to therapy.

Licensed Professional Counselors and members of the other non-physician mental health professions of psychology, clinical social work, marriage and family therapy, and psychiatric nursing provide the large majority of mental health services in the U.S. roughly one in four Americans suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year, and about one in five Americans experience a mood disorder such as depression at some point in the course of their life.

Divisions of the Idaho Counseling Association

Idaho Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors

Idaho Career Development Association

Idaho Association of Marriage and Family Counselors

Idaho Mental Health Counselors Association

Idaho School Counselors Association

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NEED FOR SERVICES

- ◆ Over the course of their lifetime, about 46% of the U.S. population suffers from some sort of anxiety, mood, impulse-control, or substance use disorder. (National Comorbidity Survey Replication, Archives of General Psychiatry, June, 2005.)
- ◆ In any given year, about 5% to 7% of adults have a serious mental illness and between 5% and 9% of children have a serious emotional disturbance. (Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America, President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003.)
- ◆ Suicide deaths consistently outnumber homicide deaths in the U.S. by a margin of three to two. (Kochanek KD, Murphy SL, Anderson RN, Scott C. Deaths: Final data for 2002, National vital statistics reports, volume 53 number 5, National Center for Health Statistics, Hyattsville, Maryland, 2004.)
- ◆ After patients were provided counseling "there was a significant reduction in severity of symptoms" for anxiety, depression, self-esteem and quality of life. (Baker, et al., *Counseling Psychology Quarterly*, Vol.15, No. 4, pp. 359-373.)



- ◆ In studies on the effects of a small group counseling approach for failing elementary school students, 83% of participating students showed improvement in grades. (Boutwell, DA & Myrick, RD. The Go For It Club. *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling*, 1992.)
- ◆ At the end of couple's therapy, 75% of couples receiving therapy are better off than similar couples who did not receive therapy. Sixty five percent of couples report "significant" improvement based on averaged scores of marital "satisfaction." (Wills, R.M. *Effectiveness of Therapy*, 2001.)



HOW TO FIND A LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR

The Idaho Counseling Association's website has helpful information regarding Idaho counselors, the counseling profession, its specialty divisions as well as a search option to search for a Licensed Professional Counselor online. Visit the Idaho Counseling Association's website at:

www.idahocounseling.org

Three other common ways to find a licensed counselor are by word-of-mouth, by looking in the yellow pages or searching the web (typically under "counseling" or "counselors"; "marriage and family counseling"; or "mental health services.") Look for individuals who identify themselves as a "Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)" or "Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC)." While some states have a variation of this title, the key words to look for are "licensed" and "counselor."

Idaho's state counselor board website can let you know more information as well regarding licensure and law. Idaho's Licensing Board of Professional Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists has a website and can be located at www.ibol.idaho.gov. This site includes search functions which let you verify the licensure of an individual, code of ethics and general information of interest.

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