

So You Want to Be a LCDC?

Factsheet and FAQs

about the Addiction Counseling Profession

Career Outlook

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook, the median pay for Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors in 2019 was \$46,240 or \$22.23 per hour.

Typical entry-level education is a bachelor's degree and there is a projected workforce increase of 22% within the next 10 years, which is above average when compared to other professions. For the state of Texas, there is a projected increase of 27% in the profession within the next 6 years.

Pathways to Licensure

Becoming a LCDC-Intern

In order to apply for Licensure as a Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC) in Texas all applicants must first apply as Interns. To become an intern the applicant must: be at least 18, have a h.s. diploma or equivalent, complete 270 hours (18 semester hours) of c.d. curricula as well as 300 hours of supervised work experience practicum OR submit an official college transcript if they hold at least a baccalaureate degree in chemical dependency (substance use) counseling, sociology, psychology, or other major related to human behavior and development, and pass the criminal history standards.

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ACHIEVE MINIMUM EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Associates degree or
higher

2

APPLY AS A COUNSELOR INTERM

Complete application and
submit documents

3

APPLY FOR LICENSURE

Complete supervision
hours and pass licensure
exam

LCDC Minimum Education Requirements

An associates or
advanced degree in
human/health
services, chemical
dependency,
sociology,
psychology,
criminal justice, or
other related to
human behavior
and development.

Work Experience

A total of 4,000
hours of approved
supervised
experience is
required for
licensure. Any
applicant with an
associates degree
only must also
complete the 300
hour practicum
PRIOR to applying
for CI registration.
The 300 hours from
practicum CANNOT
be counted toward
the 4000 work
experience hours.

“What exactly can I do as a LCDC?”

As stated in TAC Title 25 Rule 140.402 : A LCDC is authorized to provide chemical dependency (substance use) counseling services involving the application of the principles, methods, and procedures of the chemical dependency profession. The scope of practice for an LCDC includes services that address substance abuse/dependence and/or its impact on the service recipient subject to the following:

- (1) the LCDC is prohibited from using techniques that exceed his or her professional competence;
- (2) the service recipient may only be the user, family member or any other individual involved in a significant relationship with a user;
- (3) the focus of an LCDC's services shall be on assisting individuals or groups to develop an understanding of chemical dependency problems, define goals, and plan action reflecting the individual's or group's interest, abilities, and needs, as affected by claimed or indicated chemical dependency problems; and
- (4) LCDCs are not qualified to treat individuals with a mental health disorder or provide family counseling to individuals whose presenting problems do not include chemical dependency.

Need and Workforce Shortage

Given the state population of well over 27 million, this equals to only 34 LCDCs per 100,000 individuals in Texas. In comparison, the current number of physicians per 100,000 individuals in Texas is nearly 245 which indicates a growing need for more clinicians to provide substance use treatment services to Texans.

BEYOND LCDC

With experience many LCDCs explore and expand into other careers and roles. Most commonly LCDCs advance into administrative and supervisory roles. Many LCDCs seek graduate degrees, typically in counseling or related field, to obtain licensure as either a LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor), LMFT (Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist), or LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker). LCDCs are eligible to obtain further specialization credentials in the profession of addiction counseling such as the Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (AADC) certification through IC&RC and the Master Addiction Counselor (MAC) certification through the NCCAP (overseen by NAADAC) among other certifications.

