



How do I decide which credential to apply for?

You must review the licensing requirements, scope of practice and laws relating to the counseling professions to determine which credential is the best fit for the services you provide. We can answer questions about the application process or credentialing requirements but cannot tell you which credential to apply for. You can find the counseling professions and licensing requirements on the Professions in Mental Health Web site.

We have listed the basic requirements and typical counseling settings for each of the eight new counseling credentials below.

Agency Affiliated Counselor – Applicants must be employed by or have an offer of employment from an agency or facility identified by rule, ([WAC 246-810-016](#)) OR an agency or facility recognized by the secretary as meeting the requirements to employ agency affiliated counselors as defined in rule ([WAC 246-810-017](#)). We have a list of approved agencies at: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/hsqa/AgencyAffl/AgencyList.htm>. Agency Affiliated Counselors may only practice in an approved or recognized agency.

Certified Counselor – Have a bachelor's degree in a counseling related field.

- Pass an exam in risk assessment, ethics, appropriate screening and referral and Washington State law.
- Complete four hours of AIDS education.
- Have a supervisory agreement with another license holder that meets the requirements of [WAC 246-810-026](#).
- Typical practice setting – Private practice or agencies/facilities not recognized to employ agency affiliated counselors

Certified Adviser – Have an associate's degree in a counseling related field.

- Pass an exam in risk assessment, ethics, appropriate screening and referral and Washington State law
- Complete four hours of AIDS education.
- Have a supervisory agreement with another license holder that meets the requirements of [WAC 246-810-026](#).
- Typical practice setting – Private practice or agencies/facilities not recognized to employ agency affiliated counselors.

Chemical Dependency Professional Trainee (CDPT) – Written documentation to meet the eligibility criteria.

- Declaration he/she is enrolled in an approved school and gaining the experience required to receive a chemical dependency professional certification.
- Complete four hours of AIDS education.
- Declaration with their annual renewal they are enrolled in an approved education program and gaining the experience requirements for a chemical dependency professional certification.
- A CDPT can only renew four times.
- Typical practice setting – Alcohol and substance abuse agencies.

Licensed Mental Health Counselor Associate (LMHCA) – Master’s or doctoral degree in mental health counseling or a behavioral science master’s or doctoral degree in a field relating to mental health counseling from an approved school.

- Declaration they are working toward full licensure.
- Complete four hours of AIDS education.
- A LMHCA can only renew four times.
- Typical practice setting – Facilities, agencies or private practice under the supervision of an approved supervisor.

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Associate (LMFTA) – Master’s or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy or a behavioral science master’s or doctoral degree with equivalent course work from approved school.

- Declaration they are working toward full licensure.
- Complete four hours of AIDS education.
- A LMFTA can only renew four times.
- Typical practice setting – Facilities, agencies or private practice under the supervision of an approved supervisor.

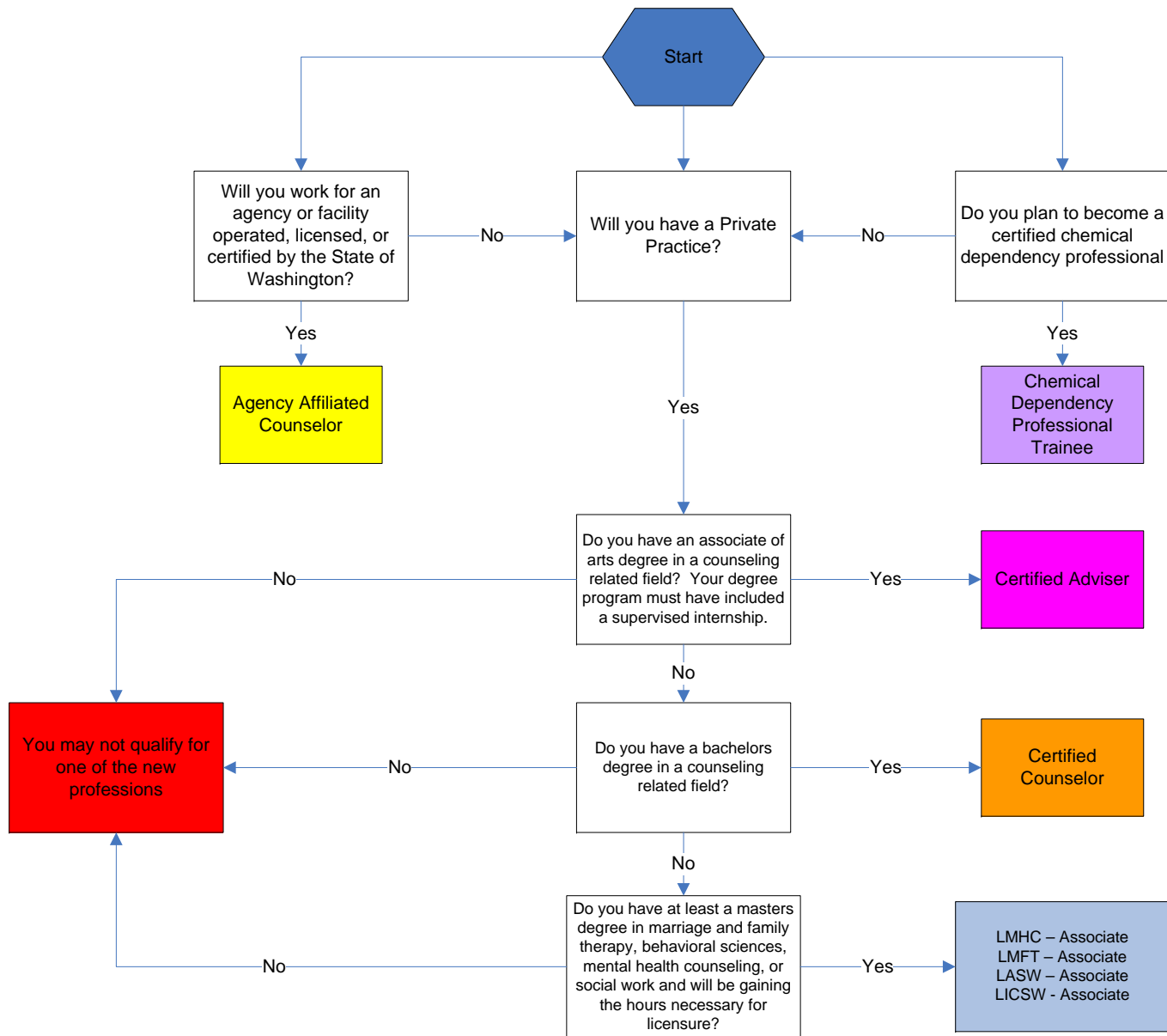
Licensed Social Work Associate Advanced (LSWAA) – Graduation from a master’s or doctoral social work educational program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and approved by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards.

- Declaration they are working toward full licensure.
- Complete four hours of AIDS education.
- A LSWAA can only renew four times.
- Typical practice setting – Facilities, agencies or private practice under the supervision of an approved supervisor.

Licensed Social Work Associate Independent Clinical (LSWAIC) – Graduation from a master’s or doctorate level social work educational program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education and approved by the secretary based upon nationally recognized standards.

- Declaration they are working toward full licensure.
- Four hours of AIDS education.
- A LSWAIC can only renew four times.
- Typical practice setting – Facilities, agencies or private practice under the supervision of an approved supervisor.

What credential do I qualify for?



LMHC – Licensed Mental Health Counselor
 LMFT – Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
 LASW – Licensed Advanced Social Worker
 LICSW – Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker