

# Mental Health Counselor Associate License Requirements

[Chapter 18-225 RCW](#)

[Chapter 246-809 WAC](#)

## **Credentialing Requirements:**

A master's or doctoral degree in mental health counseling or master's in behavioral science, or doctoral degree in a field relating to mental health counseling.

Behavioral science in a field relating to mental health counseling includes a core of study relating to counseling theory and counseling philosophy.

Either a counseling practicum, or a counseling internship, or both, must be included in the core of study. Exclusive use of the internship or practicum used for qualifications must have incorporated supervised direct client contact.

This core of study must include 7 content areas from the entire list in subsections (1) through (17) of this section, 5 of which must be from content areas in subsections (1) through (8) of this subsection:

- Assessment/diagnosis
- Ethics/law
- Counseling individuals
- Counseling groups
- Counseling couples and families
- Developmental psychology (may be child adolescent, adult or life span).
- Psychopathology/abnormal psychology
- Research and evaluation
- Career development counseling
- Multicultural concerns
- Substance/chemical abuse
- Physiological psychology
- Organizational psychology
- Mental health consultation
- Developmentally disabled persons
- Abusive relationships
- Chronically mentally ill

## **State license verification:**

Applicant lists all states where credentials are or were held, including where applicant has applied but a credential was not granted.

### **Personal Data Statement:**

- physical and mental health status
- lack of impairment due to chemical dependency/substance abuse
- history of loss of license, certification or registration
- felony convictions
- loss or limitations of privileges
- disciplinary actions
- professional liability claims history.

### **Additional Information/Documents Required**

- HIV/AIDS training – 4 hours
- Note: An associate is a pre-licensure candidate who has a graduate degree in a mental health field under [RCW 18.225.090](#) and is gaining the supervision and supervised experience necessary to become a licensed independent clinical social worker, a licensed advanced social worker, a licensed mental health counselor or a licensed marriage and family therapist. Associates may not independently provide social work, mental health counseling or marriage and family therapy for a fee, monetary or otherwise. Associates must work under the supervision of an approved supervisor. Independent social work, mental health counseling or marriage and family therapy is the practice of these disciplines without being under the supervision of an approved supervisor.

### **Process for Approving/Denying Applications**

Credentialing staff review the application and supporting documents to make an initial determination on eligibility. The recommendation is based upon the requirements outlined in [RCW 18.225](#) and [WAC 246-809](#). Credentialing supervisors approve applications that don't have positive answers to personal data questions, have questionable verifying documents or are otherwise "red flag" applications. "Red flag" applications are forwarded to the exception application process for determination by the appropriate disciplining authority. An applicant will be formally notified of a denial and has the opportunity for a hearing to appeal the decision.

### **Renewal and Continuing Education Requirements**

Mental health counselor associates must review their license every year on the date of issuance. The associate credential can only be renewed four times.