



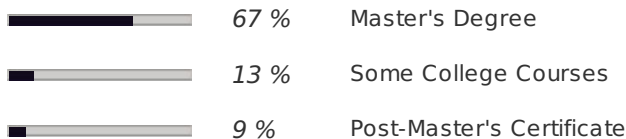
## Mental Health Counselors

### Description

Counsel with emphasis on prevention. Work with individuals and groups to promote optimum mental health. May help individuals deal with addictions and substance abuse; family, parenting, and marital problems; suicide; stress management; problems with self-esteem; and issues associated with aging and mental and emotional health.

### Education

The following is a breakdown of the top three degrees that people in this job possess (each educational level is described in the legend at the end of this document):

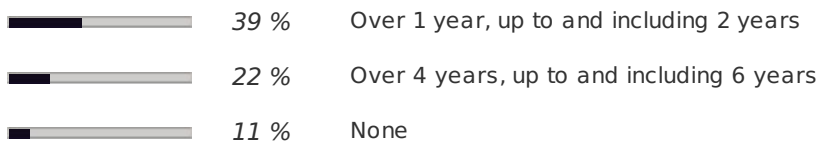


In order to pursue this career, you will need to be educated in one of the following areas:

- Substance Abuse/Addiction Counseling (CIP = 51.1501)
- Clinical/Medical Social Work (CIP = 51.1503)
- Mental Health Counseling/Counselor (CIP = 51.1508)
- Mental & Social Health Services & Allied Professions, Other (CIP = 51.1599)

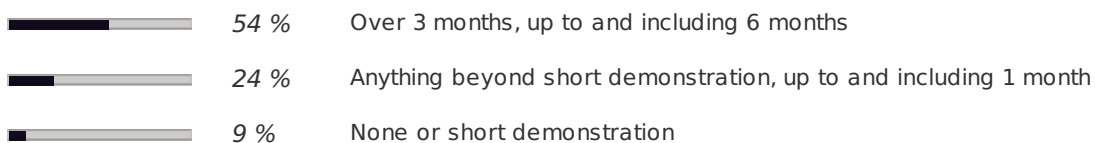
### Experience

The following is a breakdown of the level of related work experience that people in this job possess:



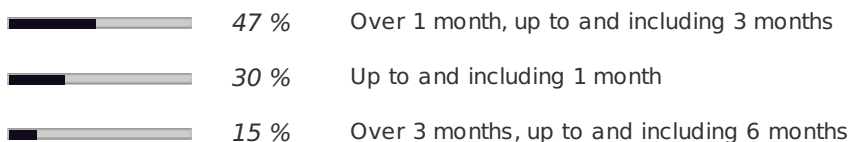
### On-site Training

The following is a breakdown of the length of on-site training that people in this job typically receive:



### On-the-job Training

The following is a breakdown of the level of on-the-job training that people in this job received:





## Interests

The following is a list of the top three career interests (also known as Holland Codes) that people with this occupation possess, along with their level of importance to this career.

- Social (Very high)
- Investigative (High)
- Artistic (High)

## Tasks

Here are the most common tasks and duties for which you would be responsible in this job:

- Maintain confidentiality of records relating to clients' treatment.
- Assess patients for risk of suicide attempts.
- Encourage clients to express their feelings and discuss what is happening in their lives, and help them to develop insight into themselves and their relationships.
- Collect information about clients through interviews, observation, and tests.
- Counsel clients and patients, individually and in group sessions, to assist in overcoming dependencies, adjusting to life, and making changes.
- Guide clients in the development of skills and strategies for dealing with their problems.
- Develop and implement treatment plans based on clinical experience and knowledge.
- Fill out and maintain client-related paperwork, including federal- and state-mandated forms, client diagnostic records, and progress notes.
- Prepare and maintain all required treatment records and reports.
- Evaluate clients' physical or mental condition based on review of client information.
- Collaborate with other staff members to perform clinical assessments and develop treatment plans.
- Refer patients, clients, or family members to community resources or to specialists as necessary.
- Act as client advocates to coordinate required services or to resolve emergency problems in crisis situations.
- Modify treatment activities and approaches as needed to comply with changes in clients' status.
- Counsel family members to assist them in understanding, dealing with, and supporting clients or patients.
- Discuss with individual patients their plans for life after leaving therapy.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of counseling programs and clients' progress in resolving identified problems and moving towards defined objectives.
- Meet with families, probation officers, police, and other interested parties to exchange necessary information during the treatment process.
- Plan, organize and lead structured programs of counseling, work, study, recreation and social activities for clients.
- Plan and conduct programs to prevent substance abuse or improve community health and counseling services.

## Abilities

To pursue this career, you will need to display the following capacities:

- Oral Expression
- Oral Comprehension
- Problem Sensitivity
- Speech Recognition
- Speech Clarity
- Inductive Reasoning
- Written Expression
- Written Comprehension
- Deductive Reasoning
- Fluency of Ideas
- Selective Attention
- Category Flexibility
- Originality
- Information Ordering
- Near Vision
- Flexibility of Closure
- Speed of Closure
- Perceptual Speed
- Memorization
- Far Vision



## **Knowledge**

To pursue this career, it would be helpful to be well-versed in the following subject areas:

- Psychology
- Therapy and Counseling
- Sociology and Anthropology
- Customer and Personal Service
- English Language
- Education and Training
- Philosophy and Theology
- Clerical
- Medicine and Dentistry
- Administration and Management
- Personnel and Human Resources
- Law and Government
- Computers and Electronics
- Public Safety and Security
- Communications and Media
- Transportation
- Biology
- Mathematics
- Sales and Marketing
- Geography

## **Skills**

The following skills are considered essential to this job:

- Active Listening
- Social Perceptiveness
- Speaking
- Service Orientation
- Monitoring
- Reading Comprehension
- Critical Thinking
- Judgment and Decision Making
- Persuasion
- Writing
- Complex Problem Solving
- Learning Strategies
- Active Learning
- Science
- Operations Analysis
- Negotiation
- Coordination
- Systems Analysis
- Instructing
- Systems Evaluation



## Activities

In this job, you will likely spend most of your time engaged in the following activities:

- Assisting and Caring for Others
- Getting Information
- Establishing and Maintaining Interpersonal Relationships
- Documenting/Recording Information
- Communicating with Supervisors, Peers, or Subordinates
- Making Decisions and Solving Problems
- Judging the Qualities of Things, Services, or People
- Identifying Objects, Actions, and Events
- Interpreting the Meaning of Information for Others
- Resolving Conflicts and Negotiating with Others
- Developing Objectives and Strategies
- Monitor Processes, Materials, or Surroundings
- Organizing, Planning, and Prioritizing Work
- Updating and Using Relevant Knowledge
- Developing and Building Teams
- Coaching and Developing Others
- Analyzing Data or Information
- Thinking Creatively
- Evaluating Information to Determine Compliance with Standards
- Training and Teaching Others

## Job Zone

All occupations are categorized into job zones, based on the level of preparation (experience, education, and training) that is required. There are five job zone categories, with job zone one indicating that little to no preparation is required, to job zone five, where extensive preparation is needed.

**This occupation is categorized as Job Zone Five: Extensive Preparation Needed**

Occupations in this job zone tend to require the following:

### Experience

Extensive skill, knowledge, and experience are needed for these occupations. Many require more than five years of experience. For example, surgeons must complete four years of college and an additional five to seven years of specialized medical training to be able to do their job.

### Education

Most of these occupations require graduate school. For example, they may require a master's degree, and some require a Ph.D., M.D., or J.D. (law degree).

### Training

Employees may need some on-the-job training, but most of these occupations assume that the person will already have the required skills, knowledge, work-related experience, and/or training.

### Example

These occupations often involve coordinating, training, supervising, or managing the activities of others to accomplish goals. Very advanced communication and organizational skills are required. Examples include librarians, lawyers, aerospace engineers, wildlife biologists, school psychologists, surgeons, treasurers, and controllers.



## Legend:

### Educational Levels

1. **Less than High School:** No schooling or just grade school or some high school courses.
2. **High School Diploma:** Or GED or High School Equivalence Certificate.
3. **Post-Secondary Certificate:** Awarded for training completed after high school (for example, in Personnel Services, Engineering-related Technologies, Vocational Home Economics, Construction Trades, Mechanics and Repairers, Precision Production Trades).
4. **Some College Courses:** Can consist of college preparatory courses or regular courses taken while attending college, but credits attained are not sufficient to get a degree.
5. **Associate's Degree:** An undergraduate degree awarded by a junior, community technical or bachelor's degree-granting college/university. Requires a completion of a two-year course of study.
6. **Bachelor's Degree:** An academic degree awarded for an undergraduate major or course. Requires a completion of a four-year course of study.
7. **Post-Baccalaureate Certificate:** Awarded for completion of an organized program of study; designed for people who have completed a Baccalaureate degree, but do not meet the requirements of academic degrees carrying the title of Master.
8. **Master's Degree:** An academic degree awarded to people who, in addition to achieving a bachelor's, have taken additional courses or completed a research study in a specific field or subject area. Requires an additional one to three years of study.
9. **Post-Master's Certificate:** Awarded for completion of an organized program of study; designed for people who have completed a Master's degree, but do not meet the requirements of academic degrees at the doctoral level.
10. **First Professional Degree:** Awarded for completion of a program that: requires at least 2 years of college work before entrance into the program, includes a total of at least 6 academic years of work to complete, and provides all remaining academic requirements to begin practice in a profession.
11. **Doctoral Degree:** An academic or professional degree awarded for the completion of advanced graduate study beyond a Master's degree. Requires an additional two to four years of study.
12. **Postdoctoral Training:** Consists of advanced academic research completed after doctoral studies. Generally done within five years of the completion of a Doctoral Degree in order to deepen a person's knowledge of a particular subject, hone skills, and publish academic papers.