

Mental Health Professionals: Terminology

Licensed vs. Unlicensed

- Licensed
 - Description:
 - Diagnose and treat mental health conditions
 - Have completed all state-mandated education, clinical hours, and exams
 - Adhere to required continuing education hours and renew their license
 - Examples:
 - Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)
 - Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)
 - Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
 - Certified Substance Abuse Counselor (CSAC)
- Unlicensed Providers
 - Description:
 - Cannot diagnose and treat mental health conditions
 - Can provide support in addressing mental health symptoms
 - May work under the supervision of a licensed mental health provider
 - Examples:
 - Certified Life Coach, Mentor, Mindset Coach, or Wellness Coach
 - Certified Peer Counselors/Peer Support Specialist
 - Licensed Professional Counselor In-Training (LPC-IT)
 - Masters Level Social Worker or Psychologist (note: obtaining a Masters degree does not mean that an individual has completed their licensing exam or adheres to continuing education hours)
 - Pastoral Counselor

Psychologists vs. Psychiatrists

- Psychologist
 - Completed doctoral-level education in psychology
 - Cannot prescribe medication
- Psychiatrist
 - A doctor who specializes in treating mental health conditions
 - Can prescribe medication