

P ROVIDERS LICENSED IN VIRGINIA

Mental Health professionals in Virginia are regulated by:

- the Board of Counseling;
- the Board of Psychology;
- the Board of Medicine;
- the Board of Social Work; or
- the Board of Nursing.

Professionals regulated by the Board of Counseling

Certified Substance Abuse Counselors (C.S.A.C.)

Professionals who are certified to perform the substance abuse treatment functions, which generally include screening, intake, orientation, assessment, recovery, and relapse prevention planning, substance abuse treatment, and case management. However, these activities must be conducted under the supervision of a degree-licensed substance abuse treatment practitioner. C.S.A.C.s may also be responsible for supervising certified substance abuse counseling assistants.

Degree held: B.A., along with additional coursework and supervised experience in substance abuse treatment.

Where found: Inpatient substance abuse treatment centers, community services boards, private outpatient mental health, and substance abuse clinics.

Certified Substance Abuse Counseling Assistants

Professionals who are certified to perform the substance abuse treatment functions of orientation, implementation of substance abuse treatment plans, case management, substance abuse or dependence crisis intervention, record keeping, and consultation with other professionals. Certified substance abuse counseling assistants may participate in recovery group discussions, but cannot engage in counseling with either individuals or groups or engage in independent or autonomous practice. They act under the supervision of a licensed substance abuse treatment practitioner or a C.S.A.C.

Degree held: High school diploma or equivalent, along with additional coursework and supervised experience in substance abuse treatment.

Where found: Inpatient substance abuse treatment centers, community services boards, private outpatient mental health, and substance abuse clinics.

Licensed Professional Counselors (L.P.C.)

This is a specific legal license that a psychotherapist, usually at the Master's level of training, can get. Educational and experiential standards to achieve the L.P.C. license are lower than the requirements for Psychologist or Psychiatrist licensure. Not all counselors are L.P.C.s.

Degree held: M.A. or M.S., along with coursework and a supervised residency in counseling and psychotherapy.

Where found: Residential treatment centers, community services boards, private outpatient mental health, and substance abuse clinics.

Licensed Substance Abuse Treatment Practitioners

Professionals who are licensed to provide advanced substance abuse treatment and independent, direct and unsupervised treatment to such individuals or groups of individuals, and to plan, evaluate, supervise, and direct substance abuse treatment provided by others.

Degree held: M.A. or M.S., along with additional coursework and a supervised residency in substance abuse treatment.

Where found: Inpatient substance abuse treatment centers, community services boards, private outpatient mental health, and substance abuse clinics.

Marriage and Family Therapists

Persons trained in the assessment and treatment of cognitive, affective, or behavioral, mental and emotional disorders within the context of marriage and family systems through the application of therapeutic and family systems theories and techniques.

Degree held: M.A. or M.S., additional coursework and a supervised residency in marriage and family counseling.

Where found: Community services boards, private outpatient mental health and substance abuse clinics, private practice.

Professionals regulated by the Board of Psychology

Certified Sex Offender Treatment Providers

These are psychologists who specialize in providing sex offender treatment services.

Degree held: M.A., Ph.D., Psy.D., M.D., with additional coursework and supervision in sex offender treatment.

Where found: Residential treatment centers, therapeutic group homes, community services boards, private outpatient mental health clinics.

Clinical Psychologists

These are psychologists who specialize in the practice of psychotherapy in individual, family, marital, and group settings.

Degree held: Ph.D., Psy.D.

Where found: Psychiatric hospitals, residential treatment centers, community services boards, private outpatient mental health and substance abuse clinics, private practice.

School Psychologists

These are psychologists who are specifically licensed to practice in a school setting.

Degree held: M.A. with an endorsement in psychology.

Where found: Public and private schools, special education residential schools, special education day schools, therapeutic day treatment centers.

Professionals regulated by the Board of Medicine

Psychiatrists

These are medical doctors or physicians. Psychiatrists are experts in the use of medications to treat mental disorders and also experts in the diagnosis and treatment of mental health disorders.

Degree held: M.D., as well as completion of a multi-year residency in psychiatry (treatment of mental illness), usually in a hospital setting and under supervision of senior psychiatrists.

Where found: Hospitals (regular and psychiatric), community services boards, private outpatient mental health clinics, private practice.

Professionals regulated by the Board of Social Work

Licensed Clinical Social Worker (L.C.S.W.)

These are social workers who, by education and experience, are professionally qualified at the autonomous practice level to provide direct diagnostic, preventive, and treatment services that may include psychotherapy and counseling for mental disorders, substance abuse, marriage and family dysfunction, and problems caused by social and psychological stress or health impairment.

Degree held: M.S.W. or D.S.W., along with supervised experience in a treatment setting.

Where found: Local social service agencies, hospitals (both regular and psychiatric), residential treatment centers, group homes, community services boards, private outpatient mental health and substance abuse clinics.

Licensed Social Workers

These are persons who are trained to provide diagnostic, preventive, and treatment services, but on a supervised rather than independent basis.

Degree held: B.A. or M.S.W., along with supervised experience in a treatment setting.

Where found: Local social service agencies, hospitals (both regular and psychiatric), residential treatment centers, group homes, community services boards, private outpatient mental health, and substance abuse clinics.

Professionals Regulated by the Board of Nursing

Psychiatric Clinical Nurse Specialist

A registered nurse with a Master's Degree in psychiatric mental health nursing who is licensed by the state to provide care, counseling, and therapy to persons with psychological, emotional and behavioral needs. An accreditation as an Advanced Practicing Registered Nurse (A.P.R.N.) by an appropriate credentialing body is necessary for this provider to receive third party reimbursement.

Degree held: R.N. and Master's Degree in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing

Where found: Psychiatric hospitals, community services boards, private outpatient mental health clinics, and private practice.

Professionals Regulated by the Board of Nursing and the Board of Medicine

Nurse Practitioner

Nurse practitioners engage in the practice of medicine in collaboration and under the medical direction and supervision of a licensed physician. "Medical direction" means the collaborative development of a written protocol between the nurse practitioners and the physician. Nurse practitioners with prescriptive authority may prescribe within the scope of a written practice agreement in Virginia is regulated by the Board of Nursing and the Board of Medicine under a Committee of the Joint Boards. Nurse practitioners hold national certification in an area of specialty (family practice, psychiatry, pediatrics, etc.).

Degree held: R.N. and Master's Degree in Nursing with Nurse Practitioner Concentration and certification from a national board.

Where found: Psychiatric hospitals, community services boards, private outpatient mental health clinics, and private practice.