



Credentialing for Michigan Counselors

The practice of counseling in the state of Michigan is regulated by two separate governmental agencies. The Department of Education regulates the practice of school counseling and determines applicant eligibility for the three different school counselor credentials in Michigan: (1) the preliminary employment authorization; (2) the School Counselor Endorsement on a teaching certificate; and (3) the School Counselor License for those without a teaching certificate. The Department of Consumer and Industry Services currently regulates the practice of counseling outside the K-12 school setting and determines applicant eligibility for the two professional counselor credentials: (1) the Limited Licensed Professional Counselor credential; and (2) the Licensed Professional Counselor credential.

Scopes of Practice

A scope of practice serves to determine who can legally practice a given profession. Both school counseling and professional counseling have protected scopes of practice.

In order to serve in the role of a school counselor in the state of Michigan, an individual must have a valid teaching certificate with a school counseling endorsement (NT), a school counseling license (SCL), or a preliminary employment authorization (PESC) from the Michigan Department of Education. No other credential allows an individual to serve in the role of a school counselor in Michigan. This means that a district cannot legally hire someone who does not have one of these credentials as a school counselor. Regardless of the person's job title, it is illegal to have a person without one of these credentials serve in the role of a school counselor.

Similarly, in order to practice counseling in Michigan anywhere except a K-12 school setting, an individual must legally have a credential as either a Limited License Professional Counselor (LLPC) or a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). Counselors working in a church, college, community, mental health, hospital, or private practice setting – anywhere except a school – must have one of these credentials!

Examinations

Both the school counseling and the professional counseling credentials require passage of a competency examination.

School Counselors must pass the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) - Test # 51: Guidance Counselor . This test is administered by the Michigan Department of Education. Passage of this test is necessary to obtain any one of the three school counseling credentials.

Professional Counselors must pass the National Counselor Examination (NCE). This test is administered by the National Board for Certified Counselors. Passage of this test is necessary to become an LPC but is not necessary to obtain the LLPC credential. In addition to rendering an individual eligible for the LPC credential in Michigan, passage of the NCE may also allow an individual to become eligible for the National Certified Counselor (NCC) credential in the United States. This is a voluntary certification that is administered by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBC).

Acronyms:

- NT - Endorsement for teacher-certified school counselors
- SCL - School Counselor License for non-teachers
- PESC - Preliminary Employment Authorization for School Counselors
- LLPC - Limited Licensed Professional Counselor
- LPC - Licensed Professional Counselor