Summary:

- Community and technical colleges governed by SBCTC are approved agencies/institutions that can employ agency affiliated counselors.
- Individuals who provide any form of counseling such as “assisting or attempting to assist an individual or individuals in the amelioration or adjustment of mental, emotional, or behavioral problems, and includes therapeutic techniques to achieve sensitivity and awareness of self and others and the development of human potential” are required to have a counseling credential.
- An application must be received by the DOH within 30 days of employment for the applicant to be able to work while it is being processed.
- If an applicant applies for this credential within 30 days of employment, he/she/they may provide counseling while their application is being processed. Applicants must provide required documentation within reasonable time limits, and if they do not, then they must stop working.
- The applicant may not provide unsupervised counseling until the completion of a criminal background check by either their employer or the DOH.
- There are no continuing education requirements.

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- Applicants must be employed by or have an offer of employment from an agency or facility identified by rule (WAC 246-810-016):
  - Agencies, facilities, federally recognized Indian tribes located within the state, or counties that can employ agency affiliated counselors.
  - (2) Federally recognized Indian tribes located within the state.
  - (3) Counties as listed in chapter 36.04 RCW.
  - (4) Community and technical colleges governed by the Washington state board for community and technical colleges.
  - (5) Colleges and universities governed by the Washington state higher education coordinating board.
  - (6) Hospitals licensed under chapter 70.41 RCW.
  - (7) Home health care agencies, home care agencies, and hospice care agencies licensed under chapter 70.127 RCW.
  - (8) Agencies and facilities licensed or certified under chapters 71.05 or 71.24 RCW.
  - (9) Psychiatric hospitals, residential treatment facilities, hospitals, and alcohol and chemical dependency entities licensed under chapter 71.12 RCW.
  - (10) Other agencies or facilities recognized by the secretary as provided in WAC 246-810-017.

- OR an agency or facility recognized by the secretary as meeting the requirements to employ agency affiliated counselors as defined in rule (WAC 246-810-017):
  - Process to become a recognized agency or facility.
• (1) To become a recognized agency or facility, an agency or facility must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the secretary that it is operated, licensed, or certified by the state of Washington to provide specific counseling services.

• (2) When reviewing requests for recognition, the secretary may:
  • (a) Require forms and documentation;
  • (b) Consult with other state agencies and entities.

• (3) In determining whether or not to recognize the agency or facility, the secretary may consider multiple criteria, including, but not limited to:
  • (a) Counseling quality assurance standards and requirements that are applicable to the agency or facility;
  • (b) Protections for ensuring patient safety in the delivery of supervised counseling services by counselors employed by the agency or facility; and
  • (c) Mechanisms for receiving and reporting complaints regarding counselors, investigating counselor conduct and practices, and taking corrective and disciplinary actions against counselors.

• (4) The department will maintain a list of recognized agencies and facilities that may employ agency affiliated counselors to perform a specific counseling service or services under this section.

• (5) Recognized agencies or facilities that cease to be operated, licensed, or certified by the state of Washington will no longer be recognized and will be removed from the list of recognized agencies.

• List of approved agencies: here
  • Agency affiliated counselors may only practice in an approved or recognized agency.