

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
HEALTH SYSTEMS AND PREPAREDNESS ADMINISTRATION**

BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING  
AUTHORITY FOR GUIDANCE

December 13, 2024  
DATE OF POLICY

25-01  
POLICY NO.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

**GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS SEEKING TO OBTAIN A PROFESSIONAL  
COUNSELING LICENSE ISSUED BY THE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL  
COUNSELING**

The Board of Professional Counseling (“Board”) has received applications from certified school counselors seeking to become licensed professional counselors. The Board is offering the following guidance to school counselors on the path to become a licensed professional counselor.

Chapter 66 of Title 17 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) regulates the practice of professional counseling. Chapter 91 of Title 17 of the DCMR regulates the practice of graduate professional counseling. The regulations contain the following requirements:

- An applicant for a graduate professional counselor license (LGPC) or a professional counselor license (LPC) must possess a master’s degree or higher from an accredited university. For an LGPC, a minimum of forty-eight (48) semester hours must be in counseling or subjects related to counseling. For an LPC, a minimum of sixty (60) semester hours must be in counseling or subjects related to counseling. The Board considers “Student counseling and personnel service” a subject related to counseling.
- An applicant for an LPC must complete a minimum of three thousand five hundred (3,500) hours of supervised professional counseling experience. If the applicant elects to complete this requirement in the District of Columbia, the applicant must first obtain an LGPC or its equivalent and work under the immediate and direct supervision of a qualified supervisor licensed in the District of Columbia.
- An applicant for an LGPC or an LPC must receive a passing score on the National Counselor Examination.

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) certifies School Counselors. According to guidance on OSSE’s website, a prospective school counselor must have the following:

- A master’s degree in an approved program in school counseling education or a master’s degree in counseling and graduate level school counseling coursework.

- Three hundred (300) hours of supervised experience as part of a degree program. This requirement can also be met by two years of full-time teaching experience or one year of full-time school counseling experience.
- A passing score on the DC-required school counselor content exam or, if the applicant holds an active school counselor license in another state, a passing score on a comparable exam in that other state.

Accordingly, a certified school counselor **may** meet the educational requirements to receive an LGPC. However, a certified school counselor **does not meet** the requirements to receive an LPC. A school counselor interested in becoming an LPC must first apply for and receive an LGPC and then obtain 3,500 hours of supervised experience. The supervised experience hours must be obtained while the applicant practiced under an LGPC. Hours obtained in DC without an LGPC **will not be accepted.**

Practicing professional counseling or graduate professional counseling without a license is a violation of the Health Occupations Revision Act, D.C. Official Code § 3-1201.01 *et seq.*, and could result in monetary assessments and disciplinary action.