



# Licensed Substance Abuse Counselor

To work as a *licensed substance abuse counselor* there are a few different education options, such as a master's degree in substance abuse counseling, a two year associate's degree in applied science or the four to five year bachelor's program. Some states will only require the counselor to have gone through a certificate program, but this is rare. The program for the master's degree can be completed in two to three years and will also include an internship. Here we will find out how you can become a registered substance abuse counselor, what the substance abuse counselor salary is like and where you can work in this career field.

## Education Requirements for the Substance Abuse Counselor

Before enrolling in a master's degree program the student will be required to earn an undergraduate degree. In the undergraduate degree program, a student can choose to obtain a degree in psychology, which once completed will allow the student to enroll in the substance abuse counselor master's program. In order to complete an undergraduate program sooner there are currently substance abuse undergraduate certificate programs available that can be completed



in a year.

Some of the courses in the undergraduate certificate program will include education on addiction, individual counseling, psychology, addiction studies, counseling procedures, counseling methods, psychopharmacology, dependency evaluation and research regarding drugs and alcohol.

The certificate program for the substance abuse counselor will require the student to have one year of experience in treating substance abuse patients, 120 hours of training and education and a high school diploma or equivalent. An applicant for the certificate program will need to also read their state code of ethics or the book by the NAADAC Association for Addiction Professionals.

For the level 1 certified addiction counselor, also referred to as the NCAC 1 the student will be required to have earned 270 hours of contact training, 6 hours in HIV/AIDS education, 6 hours in ethics training, 5,000 to 6,000 hours of supervised field experience and a state license in substance abuse counseling.

The level 2 national certified addiction counselor is the basic level of certification for the substance abuse counselor and requires a bachelor's degree. The applicant must also have



certification or state licensing, 6 hours of HIV/AIDS training, 6 hours of ethics training, 450 training hours that are related to substance abuse and 10,000 hours or five years of substance abuse counseling experience.

In order to qualify for the master's degree program the applicant will be required to have obtained 500 hours of training with a master's in family therapy or social work. They will also be required to have obtained three years of supervised training and have a state license for their current profession, HIV/AIDS education and ethics training.



Working as an intern you will spend 600 hours working your required clinical hours with patient's that suffer from substance abuse in order to further develop a student's counseling skills while also providing the student with a realistic look at the career field in several different work environments that will allow the student to choose the work environment that's right for them. Before beginning your clinical hours you will first need to complete 50 to 60 hours of counseling courses which will include three classes that are clinical related.

### **Substance Abuse Counselor: Nature of the Work**

As a [licensed substance abuse counselor](#) you will work by helping people who have addiction problems that are related to drugs or alcohol. The counselor will work with former addicts as well as current addicts and may also counsel the addict's family and friends. The addiction counselor can assist their patient's with finding employment and can also provide the client with information on available resources for clothing, housing and food assistance.

The counselor can work in a treatment center, halfway house or out- patient treatment center, hospital and human service agencies. In these types of environments the counselor can work with a patient on a one on one basis or they can hold group counseling sessions.

You can find supervisory positions with this type of career such as house director for a halfway house or lead counselor in a treatment center. In this position the licensed substance abuse counselor will work forty to fifty hours a week or can work as a live-in counselor at a halfway house where they will be on-call 24 hours a day.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics the job growth for this position is expected by 18% by the year 2014, which is faster than the average job growth.



## The Substance Abuse Counselor Salary

The average annual salary for this field will range from 32,000\$ to 49,000\$ with the lower ten percent in this field earning 21,000\$. The counselor who has obtained a bachelor's and master's degree will earn 6,000\$ to 8,000\$ more annually.

Read More <http://licensedsubstanceabusecounselorhq.com/>

## Substance Abuse Certification Online

Substance abuse certification online programs are for students that are seeking to obtain their licensure as a substance abuse counselor. Most states will have different types of licensing requirements, which means the student will need to find out if a program meets their state requirements before enrolling in a program in order to determine if the program can provide accredited material that will be recognized by the state they reside in. Here we will find out how an online substance abuse counselor program will work and the requirements needed in order to qualify for enrollment.

## Substance Abuse Education Courses Online

A student in a substance abuse counselor program will be required to obtain clinical hours in the field in addition to coursework for this type of program. In order to do this the student will need to find a local school that offers online programs for this career field and provides the student with an internship in order to work their needed clinical hours. It may be possible to find programs from online universities that have affiliations with local drug treatment hospitals, but



this can prove difficult to find.

There are also blended programs available for the substance abuse counselor program that will allow the student more flexibility in their schedule by featuring half of the program as online courses and the other half as in-class courses. This gives the student the benefit of interacting more closely with their program instructor and fellow classmates while also having some freedom to complete coursework based on their availability.



Substance abuse certification online programs that are exclusively online will enable the student to maintain their daily routine while obtaining their degree at their own pace. Once you have earned your degree you will need to take the state written and oral licensing exam.

## **The Substance Abuse Counselor Career Field**

Working as a substance abuse counselor you can choose to work in homeless shelters, hospitals, jails, prisons, schools, private practices, in-patient treatment centers, out-patient treatment centers or private rehabs.

A private rehab will offer the highest paying salary in this field; however, this type of position is highly competitive and will typically require the substance abuse counselor to have three to five years of experience in the field.

Places of employment such as hospitals can offer longer hours and the opportunity to work on an on-call schedule which will offer the counselor two to three more dollars an hour when working an on-call shift. Working in a hospital can also be a high risk environment as the counselor will be working with some patients that have been arrested but have been sent to the hospital first in order to safely detox off of alcohol or drugs. Hospitals will often offer entry level positions for those substance abuse counselors that have just obtained their degrees in this field.

Read More <http://licensedsubstanceabusecounselorhq.com/substance-abuse-certification-online/>

# **Substance Abuse Counselor Programs**

**Substance abuse counselor programs** will consist of 120 credits with 600 hours devoted to obtaining training under the supervision of a licensed substance abuse counselor, in a number of different environments, such as a homeless shelter, hospital, half-way house or out-patient treatment center. Here we will find out about the substance abuse program requirements, the substance abuse counselor program outline and how you can find employment in this field.

## **Substance Abuse Counselor Training**

In substance abuse counselor programs, you will learn about how to counsel individuals that are struggling with addiction, the options available to treat them and also how you can work with a patient's family in terms of getting the patient the help they need. The addiction programs will provide training that will prepare a student for the end of the program state written and oral



exam, which will be required in order to obtain licensure in this field.



A student can expect to take some of the following core courses in a substance abuse counselor program: drugs of abuse, case management, counseling alcoholics, mental illness and addiction, professional practices, life skills training, counseling foundations, sexual issues in addictions and recovery dynamics.

During these programs the student will be expected to obtain 600 hours working in a facility that treats patients that are suffering from addiction. The amount of required areas will vary with each different type of degree as well as which state you reside in. this type of internship will not only provide the student with the much needed hands on experience in the field but can also help the student to determine which type of facility they will want to work in once they have obtained their degree.

### **Substance Abuse Counselor Salary**

The salary for the substance abuse counselor will depend on how many years they have been working in the field and which type of environment they work in. Places of employment such as homeless shelters, clinics and low-income treatment centers will provide the lower annual salary and will require more work. The salary for these types of counselor positions will range from 28,000\$ to 32,000\$

Places of employment for the substance abuse counselor such as private rehabs, hospitals or private practices will provide the counselor with the higher annual salary. The salary for these types of substance abuse counselor jobs will range from 38,000\$ to 44,000\$

During the counselor's career they will need to obtain continuing education credits in order to maintain their licensure. Options for continuing education credits can be found on the [NAADAC's](http://naadac.org) website where you will find webinars and online study programs as well as listings of local seminars you can attend. The counselor will need to earn twenty credits each year in order to renew their license every three years.

Read More <http://licensedsubstanceabusecounselorhq.com/substance-abuse-counselor-programs/>



# Requirements for Substance Abuse Careers

*Substance abuse careers* will require a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in order to work in this type of field. As a substance abuse counselor you can work in several different types of environments such as a homeless shelter, hospital, out-patient treatment center, half-way house or in-patient rehab. Here we will find out how you can become a licensed substance abuse counselor as well as learn about the job description for the substance abuse counselor.

## Drug Addiction Careers Education Requirements

Working as a substance abuse counselor will not only require the bachelor's and master's degree but also 600 hours of supervised clinicals in order to make a passing grade for the course. After you have obtained the correct amount of clinical hours you will need to take a state licensing written and oral exam in order to obtain your licensure in this field.



Once you begin working as a licensed substance abuse counselor you will be required to earn twenty continuing education hours each year in order to renew your license every three years. You can earn these hours by attending lectures, [webinars](#), complete a home study course, online study course or take online exams. Should you fail to obtain the correct amount of hours you can have your license suspended or revoked.

## Substance Abuse Employment: the Working Environment

As a substance abuse counselor you can work in a half-way house, which may require you to live in the same facility as the patients. This type of work environment is high stress as the counselor will be required to work long hours and will be on-call 24 hours a day. You will work with each patient individually in order to counsel them and determine what the best type of treatment plan is for them based on their needs. The counselor can also provide information for the patients regarding job openings and resources for food, housing and clothing. The counselor will also be leading group therapy sessions and need to take careful documentation on each patient in order to determine if they are making progress. The drug counselor that works in this type of environment will also need to perform random and routine drug testing on all of the occupants in the house.



The drug counselor careers that are found in hospitals will also require long hours as these types of facilities will be open 24 hours a day and will deal with patients that are experiencing withdrawal from drugs or alcohol. In this type of treatment facility you may also be dealing with patients that have been convicted of a crime but will first need to go through the withdrawal process before they are deemed healthy enough to be sent to jail or prison. This type of work environment can have a salary range or 32,000\$ to 36,000\$ depending on the counselor's years of experience.

Read More <http://licensedsubstanceabusecounselorhq.com/substance-abuse-careers/>

## Substance Abuse Counselor License

In order to obtain your *substance abuse counselor license* you will need to earn your bachelor's degree and master's degree. There is currently a one year substance abuse counselor certificate program available that can be taken in place of the master's degree but will require the applicant to have already obtained their bachelor's. Here we will find out how to obtain and maintain your license as a substance abuse counselor, what type of substance abuse salary you can expect and how you can find employment in this career field.

### The Substance Abuse Therapist License Continuing Education Requirements

Once you have earned your bachelor's and master's degree you will need to take the state licensing written and oral exam. The state licensing exam for the substance abuse counselor will



vary from state to state as will the cost of the exam.

Once you have obtained your substance abuse counselor license you will be required to earn twenty hours of continuing education credits a year, for a total of 60 hours in a three year period. You will need to renew your substance abuse counselor certifications every three years by providing proof of the required amount of continuing education credits. Failure to provide the correct amount can result in the loss or suspension of your license.

### The Substance Abuse Counselor Work Environment



As a substance abuse counselor you can work in several different types of environments such as a homeless shelter, hospital, in-patient or out -patient treatment center, rehab, halfway house or a private practice.

The type of salary you can earn as a counselor will depend on your level of education, years of experience in the field and the type of environment you work in.

Places such as half way houses can offer the counselor free room and board in addition to monthly compensation, but will require the counselor to work long hours and be on-call 24 hours a day.

Positions for the in-patient counselor can provide a higher salary for those counselors that are willing to work on an on-call basis and will require them to work long hours dealing with patients that are going through withdrawals from drugs or alcohol.

The drug and alcohol counselor will work closely with clients who are former drug addicts and alcoholics or are currently struggling with drug and alcohol addiction. You will counsel clients on a one on one basis, assist them in finding resources for housing, food and clothing and you can also work by leading group therapy sessions. You can also find employment as a drug and alcohol counselor that travels from school to school, counseling students and giving lectures in order to educate students on drug and alcohol abuse.

Read More <http://licensedsubstanceabusecounselorhq.com/substance-abuse-counselor-license/>

## Substance Abuse Counselor Employment

The substance abuse counselor employment options can be found in schools, universities, homeless shelters, social service departments, treatment centers, rehab centers and hospitals. The substance abuse counselor, also referred to as a behavioral disorder counselor can also find supervisory positions in this career field once they have worked in the field for more than three years. Here we will take a closer look at the different work environments for the substance counselor, the substance abuse drug counselor job description and which positions can offer a higher substance abuse counselor salary.

### Substance Abuse Counselor Jobs

You can find work as a counselor in a homeless shelter where there are also supervisory positions available, such as manager or shelter director. The director position will require the substance abuse counselor to work with case managers, oversee staff, manage the shelters finances and help the case managers to assess the needs of clients. In this position you will also need to work with the volunteer coordinator in order to help recruit volunteers and plan the



shelters volunteer schedule. The salary for this type of supervisory position will range from



36,000\$ to 38,000\$.

Working in a halfway house the counselor will work counseling patients that are recovering from drug or alcohol abuse. The counselor will help the patients to develop a plan for sobriety and also monitor their progress and help to build the patients interview skills in order to prepare them for employment. The salary for this type of position will bring an annual pay of 29,000\$ to 30,000\$.

### **Working in a Hospital Setting as a Drug and Alcohol Counselor**

Working at an in-patient treatment center the substance abuse counselor will work with patients that are going through withdrawals from drugs or alcohol and will counsel them on an individual basis or they will lead therapy groups. Out-patient treatment centers will involve the counselor working with patients during the weekends or evenings, in order to allow them to maintain their full time employment. The counselor will be available to work with these patients on a one on one basis, monitor their progress and also lead group therapy sessions. The annual salary for the in-patient counselor will range from 30,000\$ to 34,000\$ while the out-patient counselor salary will range from 30,000\$ to 35,000\$. Both types of salaries will depend on the counselors work experience and level of education.

The substance abuse counselor employment can also be found in a hospital, in the drug dependency unit where they will work with patients that are suffering from withdrawals from drug or alcohol abuse. This type of position may require the counselor to work long hours or have a rotating schedule, as these facilities will receive patients that are recovering from overdoses or other types of severe cases that can involve the patient entering the facility at any hour of the day or night. The salary for this type of position will range from 32,000\$ to 34,000\$.

Read More <http://licensedsubstanceabusecounselorhq.com/substance-abuse-counselor-employment/>

## **Substance Abuse Counselor Salary**

As a substance abuse counselor you'll work with patients and their families regarding substance abuse issues such as drug or alcohol abuse. The counselor will provide counseling and also help to develop programs for treatment for the patient based on each patient's problems. This type of



profession will require state certification as well as a master's degree and undergraduate degree. Here we will find out what the **substance abuse counselor salary** will be, where the substance abuse counselor can work and how the registered substance abuse counselor can increase their salary.

## Substance Abuse Counselor Jobs

The substance abuse counselor can work in half-way houses, jails, prisons, social welfare agencies, drug and alcohol treatment centers, hospitals, homeless shelters and state and community departments. The highest percentage of growth in drug and alcohol abuse is found in teenagers, requiring a need for substance counselors in schools and universities. A counselor can also work by teaching substance abuse awareness lectures and programs, traveling from school



to school.

An abuse counselor will be required to obtain a bachelor's degree and a Master's degree. There are also certificate programs available in place of a master's degree program that is one year in length. After you have earned your degrees you will need to take a state licensing exam, which will also require the substance abuse counselor to earn continuing education credits in order to renew their licensure. The amount of continuing education hours for the counselor will vary from state to state but are typically 50 to 60 hours every three years at the time of the license renewal. A counselor can attend lectures, webinars, online study courses and at home study courses on the [NAADAC](#) website. Failure to provide proof of the required amount of continuing education hours can result in the loss or suspension of the registered substance abuse counselor's license.

## Salary Potential for the Substance Abuse Counselor

The salary for the substance abuse counselor will depend on their level of education, years of experience and their work environment. The substance abuse counselor salary will range from 32,000\$ to 49,000\$ a year, with the starting salary ranging from 28,000\$ to 30,000\$. For a higher paying salary potential a counselor can apply for a supervisory position once they have worked more than three years in the field which can increase their salary by 6,000\$ to 8,000\$. Available positions such as live-in counselor or director of a halfway house can also offer a higher salary while working in a treatment center or homeless shelter will provide the lower registered substance counselor salary. Working in a hospital or at an in-patient rehab can also provide a higher annual salary with supervisory positions available with field experience.



**Licensed Substance Abuse Counselor HQ**

Read More <http://licensedsubstanceabusecounselorhq.com/substance-abuse-counselor-salary/>