

**CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES**  
**CHAPTER 383c**  
**PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS**

**Sec. 20-195aa. Definitions:** As used in this section and sections 20-195bb to 20-195ee, inclusive:

- (1) "Licensed professional counselor" or "professional counselor" means a person who has been licensed as a professional counselor pursuant to this chapter;
- (2) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Public Health;
- (3) "Department" means the Department of Public Health;
- (4) "Professional counseling" means the application, by persons trained in counseling, of established principles of psycho-social development and behavioral science to the evaluation, assessment, analysis, diagnosis and treatment of emotional, behavioral or interpersonal dysfunction or difficulties that interfere with mental health and human development. "Professional counseling" includes, but is not limited to, individual, group, marriage and family counseling, functional assessments for persons adjusting to a disability, appraisal, crisis intervention and consultation with individuals or groups;
- (5) "Under professional supervision" means the practice of professional counseling under the supervision of a licensed professional counselor, a physician licensed pursuant to chapter 370, who is certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, an advanced practice registered nurse licensed pursuant to chapter 378, who is certified as a psychiatric and mental health clinical nurse specialist or nurse practitioner by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, a psychologist licensed pursuant to chapter 383, a marital and family therapist licensed pursuant to chapter 383a or a licensed clinical social worker licensed pursuant to chapter 383b;
- (6) "Direct professional supervision" means face-to-face consultation between one supervisor, who is a professional described in subdivision (5) of this section, and one person receiving supervision that consists of not less than a monthly review with a written evaluation and assessment by the supervisor of such person's practice of professional counseling; and
- (7) "Related mental health field" means social work, marriage and family therapy or psychology.

**Sec. 20-195bb. Practice restricted to licensed persons. Exceptions. Title protection.** (a) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, no person may practice professional counseling unless licensed pursuant to section 20-195cc.

(b) No person may use the title "licensed professional counselor" or make use of any title, words, letters or abbreviations that may reasonably be confused with licensure as a professional counselor unless licensed pursuant to section 20-195cc.

(c) No license as a professional counselor shall be required of the following: (1) A person who furnishes uncompensated assistance in an emergency; (2) a clergyman, priest, minister, rabbi or practitioner of any religious denomination accredited by the religious body to which the person belongs and settled in the work of the ministry, provided the activities that would otherwise require a license as a professional counselor are within the scope of

ministerial duties; (3) a sexual assault counselor, as defined in section 52-146k; (4) a person participating in uncompensated group or individual counseling; (5) a person with a master's degree in a health-related or human services-related field employed by a hospital, as defined in subsection (b) of section 19a-490, performing services in accordance with section 20-195aa under the supervision of a person licensed by the state in one of the professions identified in subparagraphs (A) to (F), inclusive, of subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of section 20-195dd; (6) a person licensed or certified by any agency of this state and performing services within the scope of practice for which licensed or certified; (7) a student, intern or trainee pursuing a course of study in counseling in a regionally accredited institution of higher education, provided the activities that would otherwise require a license as a professional counselor are performed under supervision and constitute a part of supervised course of study; (8) a person employed by an institution of higher education to provide academic counseling in conjunction with the institution's programs and services; (9) a vocational rehabilitation counselor, job counselor, credit counselor, consumer counselor or any other counselor or psychoanalyst who does not purport to be a counselor whose primary service is the application of established principles of psycho-social development and behavioral science to the evaluation, assessment, analysis and treatment of emotional, behavioral or interpersonal dysfunction or difficulties that interfere with mental health and human development ; or (10) a person who earned a degree in accordance with the requirements of subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of section 20-195dd, provided (A) the activities performed and services provided by such person constitute part of the supervised experience required for licensure under subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of said section, and (B) the exemption to the licensure requirement shall cease upon notification that the person did not successfully complete the licensing examination, as required under subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of said section, or one year after completion of such supervised experience, whichever occurs first.

**Sec. 20-195cc. License application. Renewal. Fees. Continuing education.** (a) The Commissioner of Public Health shall grant a license as a professional counselor to any applicant who furnishes evidence satisfactory to the commissioner that such applicant has met the requirements of section 20-195dd. The commissioner shall develop and provide application forms. The application fee shall be three hundred fifteen dollars.

(b) Licenses issued under this section may be renewed annually pursuant to section 19a-88. The fee for such renewal shall be one hundred ninety-five dollars. Each licensed professional counselor applying for license renewal shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the commissioner of having participated in continuing education programs. The commissioner shall adopt regulations, in accordance with chapter 54, to (1) define basic requirements for continuing education programs that shall include (A) not less than one contact hour of training or education each registration period on the topic of cultural competency, (B) on and after January 1, 2016, not less than two contact hours of training or education during the first renewal period in which continuing education is required and not less than once every six years thereafter on the topic of mental health conditions common to veterans and family members of veterans, including (i) determining whether a patient is a veteran or family member of a veteran, (ii) screening for conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder, risk of suicide, depression and grief, and (iii) suicide prevention training, and (C) on and after January 1, 2018, not less than three contact hours of training or education each registration period on the topic of professional ethics, (2) delineate qualifying programs, (3) establish a system of control and reporting, and (4) provide for a waiver of the continuing education requirement for good cause.

**Sec. 20-195dd. Qualifications.** (a) (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section, an applicant for a license as a professional counselor shall, prior to January 1, 2019, submit evidence satisfactory to the commissioner of having: (A) Completed sixty graduate semester hours in or related to the discipline of counseling at a regionally accredited institution of higher education, that included coursework in each of the following areas: (i) Human growth and development, (ii) social and cultural foundations, (iii) counseling theories and techniques or helping relationships, (iv) group dynamics, (v) processing and counseling, (vi) career and lifestyle development, (vii) appraisals or tests and measurements for individuals and groups, (viii) research and evaluation, and (ix) professional orientation to counseling; (B) earned, from a regionally accredited institution of higher education a master's or doctoral degree in social work, marriage and family therapy, counseling, psychology or a related mental health field; (C) acquired three thousand hours of postgraduate-degree-supervised experience in the practice of professional counseling, performed over a period of not less than one year, that included a minimum of one hundred hours of direct supervision by (i) a physician licensed pursuant to chapter 370 who has obtained certification in psychiatry from the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, (ii) a psychologist licensed pursuant to chapter 383, (iii) an advanced practice registered nurse licensed pursuant to chapter 378 and certified as a clinical specialist in adult psychiatric and mental health nursing with the American Nurses Credentialing Center, (iv) a marital and family therapist licensed pursuant to chapter 383a, (v) a clinical social worker licensed pursuant to chapter 383b, (vi) a professional counselor licensed, or prior to October 1, 1998, eligible for licensure, pursuant to section 20-195cc, or (vii) a physician certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, psychologist, advanced practice registered nurse certified as a clinical specialist in adult psychiatric and mental health nursing with the American Nurses Credentialing Center, marital and family therapist, clinical social worker or professional counselor licensed or certified as such or as a person entitled to perform similar services, under a different designation, in another state or jurisdiction whose requirements for practicing in such capacity are substantially similar to or higher than those of this state; and (D) passed an examination prescribed by the commissioner. Any such applicant who, on or before July 1, 2017, is a matriculating student in good standing in a graduate degree program at a regionally accredited institution of higher education in one of the fields required under subparagraph (B) of this subdivision on or before July 1, 2017, but who cannot reasonably complete the requirements set forth in this subdivision prior to January 1, 2019, as determined by the commissioner, may apply for a license under this subdivision on and after January 1, 2019.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section, an applicant for a license as a professional counselor shall, on and after January 1, 2019, submit evidence satisfactory to the commissioner of having: (A) (i) Earned a graduate degree in clinical mental health counseling as part of a program of higher learning accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, or a successor organization, or (ii) (I) completed at least sixty graduate semester hours in counseling or a related mental health field at a regionally accredited institution of higher education that included coursework in each of the following areas: Human growth and development; social and cultural foundations; counseling theories; counseling techniques; group counseling; career counseling; appraisals or tests and measurements to individuals and groups; research and evaluation; professional orientation to mental health counseling; addiction and substance abuse counseling; trauma and crisis counseling; and diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, (II) earned from a regionally accredited institution of higher education a graduate degree in counseling or a related mental health field, (III) completed a one-hundred-hour practicum in counseling taught by a faculty member licensed or certified as a professional counselor or its equivalent in another state, and (IV) completed a six-hundred-hour clinical mental health counseling internship taught by a faculty member

licensed or certified as a professional counselor or its equivalent in another state; (B) acquired three thousand hours of postgraduate experience under professional supervision, including a minimum of one hundred hours of direct professional supervision, in the practice of professional counseling, performed over a period of not less than two years; and (C) passed an examination prescribed by the commissioner.

(b) An applicant for licensure by endorsement shall present evidence satisfactory to the commissioner that the applicant is licensed or certified as a professional counselor, or as a person entitled to perform similar services under a different designation, in another state or jurisdiction whose requirements for practicing in such capacity are substantially similar to or higher than those of this state and that there are no disciplinary actions or unresolved complaints pending.

(c) An applicant who is licensed or certified as a professional counselor or its equivalent in another state, territory or commonwealth of the United States may substitute three years of licensed or certified work experience in the practice of professional counseling in lieu of the requirements of subparagraph (C) of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section, or subparagraph (B) of subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section, as applicable, provided the commissioner finds that such experience is equal to or greater than the requirements of this state.

**Sec. 20-195ee. Disciplinary action. Grounds.** The Commissioner of Public Health may take any disciplinary action set forth in section 19a-17 of the general statutes against a professional counselor for any of the following reasons: (1) Failure to conform to the accepted standards of the profession; (2) conviction of a felony; (3) fraud or deceit in obtaining or seeking reinstatement of a license to practice professional counseling; (4) fraud or deceit in the practice of professional counseling; (5) negligent, incompetent or wrongful conduct in professional activities; (6) physical, mental or emotional illness or disorder resulting in an inability to conform to the accepted standards of the profession; (7) alcohol or substance abuse; (8) wilful falsification of entries in any hospital, patient or other record pertaining to professional counseling; or (9) violation of any provision of sections 1 to 4 , inclusive, of this act or any regulation adopted pursuant to section 6 of this act. The commissioner may order a license holder to submit to a reasonable physical or mental examination if his physical or mental capacity to practice safely is the subject of an investigation. The commissioner may petition the superior court for the judicial district of Hartford-New Britain to enforce such order or any action taken pursuant to said section 19a-17. The commissioner shall give notice and an opportunity to be heard on any contemplated action under said section 19a-17.

**Sec. 20-195ff. Regulations.** The Commissioner of Public Health may adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to further the purposes of subdivision (18) of subsection (c) of section 19a-14, subsection (e) of section 19a-88, subdivision (15) of section 19a-175, subsection (b) of section 20-9, subsection (c) of section 20-195aa to 20-195ff, inclusive, and sections 20-206jj to 20-206oo, inclusive.