



Washington Mental Health Counselors Association  
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## SCOPE OF PRACTICE DEFINITIONS FOR LICENCED MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

The excerpts presented below are from the licensure law enacted in the 2001 regular session of the Washington State Legislature. Be sure that your continuing education offering is consistent with the scope of practice for the discipline(s) for which you want approval.

### LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING:

“...the application of principles of human development, learning theory, psychotherapy, group dynamics, and etiology of mental illness and dysfunctional behavior to individuals, couples, families, groups, and organizations for the purpose of treatment of mental disorders and promoting optimal mental health and functionality. Mental health counseling also includes, but is not limited to, the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, as well as the application of a wellness model of mental health.”

### LICENSED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY:

“...the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders, whether cognitive, affective, or behavioral within the context of relationships, including marriage and family systems. Marriage and family therapy involves the professional application of psychotherapeutic and family systems theories and techniques in the delivery of services to individuals, couples, and families for the purpose of treating such diagnosed nervous and mental disorders. The practice of marriage and family therapy means the rendering of professional marriage and family therapy services to the individuals, couples, and families, singly or in groups whether such services are offered directly to the general public or through organizations, either public or private, for a fee, monetary or otherwise.”

### LICENSED SOCIAL WORK

“...*advanced social work*” – “the application of social work theory and methods including emotional and biopsychosocial assessment, psychotherapy under the supervision of a licensed independent clinical social worker, case management, consultation, advocacy, counseling, and community organization.”

“...*independent clinical social work*” – “the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders based on knowledge of human development, the causation and treatment of psychopathology, psychotherapeutic treatment practices and social work practice as defined in “advanced social work.” Treatment modalities include but are not limited to diagnosis and treatment of individuals, couples, families, groups or organizations.”