



Alcohol & Substance Abuse Counselor

Alcohol and substance abuse counselors use their knowledge and skills to assess a client's problems with alcohol and drugs, and to help them make changes that will eliminate these problems. The assessment is based on conversations with the client, and may include an evaluation of the client's family, education, work, friends, and living conditions.

The counselor's strategy is to use verbal counseling to help the client understand his or her problem and to

develop a plan that will change the behavior, lifestyle, or environmental surroundings that contribute to this problem. The alcohol and substance abuse counselor acts much like a teacher, training clients to understand and solve their own problems. Frequently, counselors refer clients to additional information and professional services, including physicians, social workers, financial and housing assistance agencies, educational programs, mental health counselors, and other services.

Alcohol & Substance Abuse Counselor Facts:

Where do alcohol and substance abuse counselors work in Alaska?

Alcohol and substance abuse counselors are finding new opportunities for employment in rural Alaska. Many regional health corporations are developing programs that are coordinated in the regional centers but also employ counselors in smaller villages. Other employers include local, state, and federal governmental agencies, schools, churches, and non-profit organizations.

Educational Requirements

Alcohol and substance abuse counselor certification in the state of Alaska recognizes four levels of competency:

- Graduation from high school or completion of a GED
- Certification for Counselor Technician—one year full time work, a minimum of 100 contact training hours and 100 hours supervised practicum
- Certification for Chemical Dependency Counselor Level I—two years full time work experience, 146 contact training hours and 100 hours supervised practicum
- Certification at Chemical Dependency Counselor Level II—four years work experience, 110 contact training hours and 100 hours supervised practicum
- Certification at Chemical Dependency Clinical Supervisor—six years work experience, 140 contact training hours and 100 hours supervised practicum

Hourly Wage Range:

\$14.60-\$31.05 (Mean \$21.87)

Years in School:

2 - 4 years (after high school graduation).

Academic Programs in Alaska

For course and training information contact:

The Regional Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor Training Program (RADACT)
Phone: (907) 563-9202
Web site: <http://www.radact.com/>

University of Alaska Anchorage
Human Services Department, PSB 212
Phone: (907) 786- 6437
Web site: <http://hums.uaa.alaska.edu/>

State Contacts:

For more information on certification, contact:
Alaska Commission for Behavioral Health Certification
Web site: <http://www.akcertification.org>

Dept of Health & Social Services, Div of Behavioral Health
Web site: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dbh/>

National Contact:

NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals
Toll free: (800) 548-0497
Web site: <http://www.naadac.org>

