

How to Become an Addiction Counselor

Addiction professionals in Louisiana are regulated by the Addictive Disorder Regulatory Authority (ADRA), which is a state agency headquartered in Baton Rouge. Below is a brief summary of the credentialing process. For more detail you can look at their web page www.la-adra.org. You can download necessary forms from there too.

There are three levels of Addiction Counselor credentials, depending upon your current educational level. All three levels require completion of both educational and work experience hours. Candidates for credentialing must submit an application to the ADRA verifying completion of these requirements. When the application is approved, candidates are scheduled for testing. Once the test is passed, the appropriate credential is issued.

These are the three levels of credentials:

Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC) - requires a master's degree in a human science field; 2,000 hours of supervised addiction work, of which 300 clock hours must be under supervision by a Certified Clinical Supervisor (CCS); 300 hours of addiction education, of which 180 hours must be substance abuse specific, **and** testing.

Certified Addiction Counselor (CAC) - requires a bachelor's degree in a human science field; 4,000 hours of supervised addiction work, of which 300 clock hours must be under supervision by a Certified Clinical Supervisor (CCS); 300 hours of addiction education, of which 180 hours must be substance abuse specific, **and** testing.

Registered Addiction Counselor (RAC) – must have a high school diploma or GED, but no college degree is required; 6,000 hours of supervised addiction work is required, of which 300 clock hours must be under supervision by a Certified Clinical Supervisor (CCS); 300 hours of addiction education, of which 180 hours must be substance abuse specific, **and** testing.

The **entry status** for **all** levels is **Counselor in Training (CIT)**. A CIT applicant must have completed the required 180 hours of substance abuse specific education (see next paragraph); have a high school diploma or GED and have a job in the addiction field working under the supervision of a Certified Clinical Supervisor (CCS). CIT status must be renewed annually and can be held for a maximum of 72 months. A criminal background check is also required, and applicant must have been drug free for two years.

The education requirement for credentialing at every level is 300 hours in addiction studies, of which 180 hours must be specific to substance abuse. LASACT operates a school called the Louisiana Addiction Counselor Training (LACT) Program to provide these 180 hours. Information about our school and enrollment forms can be found on our web site www.lasact.org under the tab for "Education". Forms can be downloaded and mailed, emailed, or faxed to us along with the enrollment fee. Currently, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, classes are being held online through Zoom.

Graduation from LACT means that - if you completed all 180 hours - you are eligible to apply to be a CIT. You are NOT certified as an addiction counselor. While a CIT you can acquire the required additional education and the work experience required for the credential you are seeking.