

Mental Health Provider Comparison (with Settings)

Title	Education	Licensing	Can Provide Therapy?	Can Prescribe Medication?	Typical Focus	Common Work Settings
MS in Clinical Psychology	Master's (2–3 yrs)	Often requires supervision/licensure	Sometimes (under supervision)	No	Research, testing, supervised counseling	Clinics, research labs, schools, community agencies
PhD in Clinical Psychology	Doctorate (5–7 yrs)	Licensed Psychologist	Yes	No	Therapy, testing, research	Universities, hospitals, private practice, clinics
PsyD (Doctor of Psychology)	Doctorate (4–6 yrs)	Licensed Psychologist	Yes	No	Therapy, assessments (practice-oriented)	Private practice, clinics, hospitals
MSW (Master of Social Work)	Master's (2–3 yrs)	Requires licensure for clinical practice	Sometimes (depends on licensure)	No	Social services, advocacy, some counseling	Social service agencies, schools, hospitals, community centers

LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker)	MSW + supervised hours	Licensed	Yes	No	Therapy, crisis intervention, resources	Private practice, clinics, hospitals, schools
LPC / LMHC / LPCC (Licensed Counselors)	Master's in Counseling (2–3 yrs)	Licensed	Yes	No	Therapy, coping strategies, mental health counseling	Private practice, schools, community agencies, outpatient clinics
Psychiatrist (MD/DO)	Medical School + Psychiatry Residency (8+ yrs)	Licensed Physician	Sometimes	Yes	Diagnosis, medication management	Hospitals, private practice, outpatient psychiatry, inpatient units
Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)	Master's/Doctorate in Nursing	Licensed NP	Yes	Yes	Medication + therapy	Hospitals, community clinics, private practice
MHP (Mental Health Professional)	Varies	Broad designation	Yes (if licensed)	Sometimes	General therapy/support	Broad: hospitals, clinics, schools, agencies

Licensed Mental Health Provider	Varies (umbrella term)	State-defined	Yes	Sometimes	Therapy, assessments, medication (if MD/NP)	Any licensed clinical setting
Coach (Life/Wellness/Health)	Certificate or training program	Not licensed	No (not psychotherapy)	No	Personal growth, motivation, lifestyle goals	Private practice, corporate, online platforms