

California Licensing for PMHC and PMHC-A Students at Lewis & Clark

Updated April 2025

Each state has specific requirements for licensure as a counselor. California has very specific requirements that differ from other states. These requirements can change, and the state does not notify out of state programs for changes in requirements. While the PMHC and PMHC-A programs make every effort to stay up to date on changes to requirements, students need to monitor changes periodically throughout their graduate program to make sure they understand and meet the requirements.

UPDATE 4.17.2020

A new law in California allows for someone who has been licensed in another state for at least two years to also be licensed in California. In Oregon it takes approximately two years after you graduate to become licensed. Students graduating from our programs would qualify for this path approximately 4 years after graduating.

More details here:

https://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/license_portability.pdf

California licensing requirements go beyond the requirements for CACREP and not all of the requirements can be met at Lewis & Clark. Currently the best way to look at their requirements are through the documentation provided on the California website. This document outlines the requirements for Path A for people who have already been licensed in another state for two years. Path B is for people who would be graduating from our program and moving back to California after graduation, before becoming licensed.

https://www.bbs.ca.gov/pdf/forms/lpc/lpcc_oos_req_guide.pdf

Page 7 and 8 of the above linked document lists the specific course areas required. Below is a summary of key areas to consider.

The majority of the coursework and CE credits required can be met AFTER graduation. However, two areas must be met DURING YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM. **First** is the requirement for 3 credits in Diagnosis. As of Spring 2020, the PMHC program meets that requirement. **Second**, you need 3 credits in Assessment. Our program may not currently meet this requirement. We are recommending that students take an additional credit of assessment. The easiest method to meet this is to take a 3-semester credit assessment class from another program (online CACREP approved programs are okay) and transfer in the credits toward your degree at Lewis & Clark. It may also be possible to do an Independent Study for 1 credit.

In addition to the assessment requirement for 1 additional credit needed **during** your program, you would need to meet additional course requirements **during or after** you obtain your degree. These include 1 additional credit in Crisis/Trauma, 3 credits in Psychopharmacology, and 1 credit in Addictions. Our PMHC-A program should meet the requirements in Psychopharmacology and Addictions.

If you are CERTAIN that you are going to move back to California we recommend that you apply for the Professional Mental Health Counseling – Addictions program. It more closely meets California requirements, but there is still additional coursework that is needed.

California also requires a set of trainings that are by clock hour, not graduate credit hour. These are listed on page 8 in the link and are generally taken after graduation, in California where there are multiple continuing education providers offering them.

Please note that California may change their requirements. We will assist you in meeting the requirements as we understand them but we cannot guarantee that a graduate will be accepted for California licensure. Our program meets requirements in the state of Oregon, and any state that accepts CACREP standards. Each state determines its licensing requirements. During a student's first semester we ask them to research the state where they are interested in obtaining licensure. We can then work with the student to assist them in taking additional coursework or obtaining additional clinical hours as needed.

Please contact Amy Rees at arees@lclark.edu if you have questions.