



facilities throughout the country. Although the VA recognizes that many state licensing boards use different acronyms or abbreviations to refer to counselors, as a national federal agency, the VA uses LPMHC to encompass all counselors.

Thus far in 2019, the number of counselors in the VA has continued to grow as LPMHCs (and other disciplines) from both inside and

8 Association of CEs team (LPMHCs) employed 22 physicians, including 11 LPMHCs. Dr. Pollack presented, along with two of her LPMHC colleagues, at the ACA 2019 Conference in New Orleans and

who can provide you with clinical supervision toward licensure is already employed at the facility. The VA provides this supervision free of charge until full licensure status is achieved and the counselor can function independently.

It is important to note that all LPMHCs hired within the VA must hold a master's or doctoral degree in clinical mental health counseling, clinical rehabilitation counseling, or a related field from a program accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). It is also important to understand that because the VA is a federal agency and has supremacy, it can hire individuals licensed in a different state from where the person is planning on working as long as their state license allows them to diagnose and provide treatment. To look for opportunities within the VA, interested counselors should go to [USAjobs.gov](https://www.usajobs.gov) and complete a search for "LPMHC" positions.

As of this past April, the number of LPMHCs employed in VA facilities had risen to approximately 350. This number will continue to grow as LPMHCs who are already employed in the VA advocate for sites to post mental health positions across a range of disciplines. Currently, approximately 40% of VA medical centers have hired LPMHCs; these medical centers, as well as other VA facilities, continue to open opportunities for LPMHCs to apply for positions. Although many sites still have hired only one or two LPMHCs, the discipline has quite a presence at two Texas facilities, with VA Central Texas currently having 31 LPMHCs onboard and VA Texas Valley Coastal Bend having hired 21 LPMHCs. It is great to see how these facilities have embraced LPMHCs and hired them in a range of positions, both as front-line clinicians and in leadership positions.

For those curious about salaries, the salary of an LPMHC at the full performance level (GS-11) in the VA ranges from \$53,062 to \$87,544. A discipline has quite pay (A)5.9 (lo9 (ogrs)5.y)74a rghTd (will continue to grow)5baent and coAJobs.gov

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Letters to the editor: