



Human development
PROGRAM

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

JOB DESCRIPTION

Clinical psychologists work most often in counseling centers, independent or group practices, hospitals, or clinics. They help mentally and emotionally disturbed clients adjust to life and may assist medical and surgical patients in dealing with illnesses or injuries. Some clinical psychologists work in physical rehabilitation settings, treating patients with spinal cord injuries, chronic pain or illness, stroke, arthritis, and neurological conditions. Others help people deal with times of personal crisis, such as divorce or the death of a loved one. Clinical psychologists often interview patients and give diagnostic tests. They may provide individual, family, or group psychotherapy and may design and implement behavior modification programs. Areas of specialization within clinical psychology include health psychology, neuropsychology, and geropsychology.

EXPERIENCE & SKILLS

Aspiring psychologists who are interested in direct patient care must be emotionally stable, mature, and able to inspire, and deal effectively with people. Patience and perseverance are vital qualities, because achieving results in the psychological treatment of patients or in research may take a long time.

- Compassion/sensitivity
- Patience
- Excellent communication skills
- Maturity
- Leadership skills
- Confidence

EDUCATION & TRAINING

A doctoral degree usually is required for employment as an independent licensed clinical or counseling psychologist. Psychologists with a Ph.D. qualify for a wide range of teaching, research, clinical, and counseling positions in universities, health care services, elementary and secondary schools, private industry, and government. Psychologists with a Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) degree usually work in clinical positions or in private practices, but they also sometime teach, conduct research, or carry out administrative responsibilities. In clinical or counseling psychology, the requirements for the doctoral degree include at least a 1-year internship. Psychologists in independent practice or those who offer any type of patient care—including clinical, counseling, and school psychologists—must meet certification or licensing requirements in all States and the District of Columbia.

SALARIES

Salaries vary depending on work setting, years of experience, specialty and region or state.

Entry level: \$40,000	Individual/family services: \$42,640	School settings: \$58, 360
Average: \$ 54,950	Outpatient care facilities: \$46,850	Health practitioner offices: \$64, 460
Experienced: \$71,880		

EMPLOYMENT & ADVANCEMENT PROSPECTS

Employment of psychologists is expected to 18-26% for through 2014, because of increased demand for psychological services in schools, hospitals, social service agencies, mental health centers, substance abuse treatment clinics, consulting firms, and private companies. Advancement is good and can occur when promoted to supervisor or by relocating to a larger more prestigious facility.

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

- Counselors
- Social workers
- Special education
- Physicians

REFERENCES

The American Board of Professional Psychology at <http://www.abpp.org/>

Occupational Outlook Handbook, U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, www.bls.gov 2005-06.