

**RCW 18.19.020 Definitions. (Effective until January 1, 2028.)**

The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Agency" means (a) an agency or facility operated, licensed, or certified by the state of Washington; (b) a federally recognized Indian tribe located within the state; or (c) a county.

(2) "Agency affiliated counselor" means a person registered, certified, or licensed under this chapter who is employed by an agency or is a student intern, as defined by the department.

(3) "Certified adviser" means a person certified under this chapter who is engaged in private practice counseling to the extent authorized in RCW 18.19.200.

(4) "Certified agency affiliated counselor" means a person certified under this chapter who is engaging in counseling to the extent authorized in RCW 18.19.215.

(5) "Certified counselor" means a person certified under this chapter who is engaged in private practice counseling to the extent authorized in RCW 18.19.200.

(6) "Client" means an individual who receives or participates in counseling or group counseling.

(7) "Counseling" means employing any therapeutic techniques, including but not limited to social work, mental health counseling, marriage and family therapy, and hypnotherapy, for a fee that offer, assist or attempt to assist an individual or individuals in the amelioration or adjustment of mental, emotional, or behavioral problems, and includes therapeutic techniques to achieve sensitivity and awareness of self and others and the development of human potential. For the purposes of this chapter, nothing may be construed to imply that the practice of hypnotherapy is necessarily limited to counseling.

(8) "Counselor" means an individual, practitioner, therapist, or analyst who engages in the practice of counseling to the public for a fee, including for the purposes of this chapter, hypnotherapists.

(9) "Department" means the department of health.

(10) "Hypnotherapist" means a person registered under this chapter who is practicing hypnosis as a modality.

(11) "Licensed agency affiliated counselor" means a person licensed under this chapter who is engaged in counseling to the extent authorized in RCW 18.19.215.

(12) "Mental health professional" has the same definition as under RCW 71.05.020.

(13) "Private practice counseling" means the practice of counseling by a certified counselor or certified adviser as specified in RCW 18.19.200.

(14) "Psychotherapy" means the practice of counseling using diagnosis of mental disorders according to the fourth edition of the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, published in 1994, and the development of treatment plans for counseling based on diagnosis of mental disorders in accordance with established practice standards.

(15) "Registered agency affiliated counselor" means a person registered under this chapter who is engaged in counseling to the extent authorized in RCW 18.19.215. This includes juvenile probation counselors who are employees of the juvenile court under RCW 13.04.035 and 13.04.040 and juvenile court employees providing functional family therapy, aggression replacement training, or other evidence-based programs approved by the department of children, youth, and families.

A student intern as defined by the department may be a registered agency affiliated counselor.

(16) "Secretary" means the secretary of the department or the secretary's designee. [2023 c 425 s 13; 2021 c 170 s 4; 2019 c 470 s 3; 2011 c 86 s 1; 2010 1st sp.s. c 20 s 1; 2008 c 135 s 1; 2001 c 251 s 18; 1991 c 3 s 19; 1987 c 512 s 3.]

**Effective date—2023 c 425 ss 1-7, 13-20, and 22-26:** See note following RCW 18.83.170.

**Findings—Intent—2021 c 170:** See note following RCW 71.24.887.

**Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 20:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 13, 2010]." [2010 1st sp.s. c 20 s 2.]

**Effective date—2008 c 135 ss 1, 2, 7-9, and 11-19:** "Sections 1, 2, 7 through 9, and 11 through 19 of this act take effect July 1, 2009." [2008 c 135 s 21.]

**Severability—2001 c 251:** See RCW 18.225.900.

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**Effective dates—2024 c 371 ss 1-12, 14, and 16:** "(1) Section 1 of this act takes effect January 1, 2028.

(2) Sections 2 through 12, 14, and 16 of this act take effect October 1, 2025." [2024 c 371 s 23.]

**Rule making—2024 c 371 ss 1-16:** See note following RCW 18.83.020.

**Effective date—2023 c 425 ss 1-7, 13-20, and 22-26:** See note following RCW 18.83.170.

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