

Brief Review of Counseling Labor Market Information

The U.S Bureau of labor and statistics reported a surge in job opportunities for career counselors from 2018 and this is expected to continue increasing up to 2026 (Top Counseling Schools, 2021). In essence, it is projected that by 2028, close to 70,000 career opportunities for counselors, specifically in areas like mental health, behavioral disorders, and substance use will open up (Top Counseling Schools, 2021).

The demand for counseling professionals will continue to increase mainly because of the high number of substance use and mental health disorders (Best Value Schools, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic also added to the stresses that communities experienced and even though the pandemic has been controlled to a large extent, the negative implications continue to manifest, which increases demand for counselors in diverse work environments. Generally, every counseling specialty has a different job outlook that depends on the kinds of opportunities available in the given field.

The salaries for counselors vary depending on their areas of specialization, employer, level of education, work experience, and area of work. Mental health, behavioral disorders, and substance use counselors get an average income of approximately \$45,000 annually while rehabilitation counselors get an average of \$40,000 annually (Top Counselling Schools, 2021). On the other hand, school counselors get an average of \$56,000 annually. From the insights shared, it is clear that some counseling professions may pay higher than others but the type of employer also plays a significant role in dictating the salaries given. Therefore, counseling professionals must strive to align themselves in employment areas that will allow them to maximize their potential while also drawing sufficient payment from the professional services rendered to clients.

For a long time, the basic education requirement for counselors was a bachelor's degree but as the demand for specialized services continues to increase, a master's degree in the relevant area is a crucial requirement in most job sectors (Best Value Schools, 2021). Part of the requirements for practice is licensure and some work environments like the school setting require extra licensure to ensure that the services delivered resonate with the core needs of the students. It is also important to note that even with the required level of training, there is still a need for peer support in the work environments for counseling professions to find their niche in the employment world. Through this, counsellors can specialize in diverse areas including aged care, wellness, and the military (Best Value Schools, 2021). The work environment also helps to set the pace for individuals interested in setting up their own private practice so that they are better placed to help individuals lead a happy and healthy life while also maximizing growth opportunities for the business side of things (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). There are also opportunities for established counselors to train or mentor others joining the profession both in the public and private sector.

References

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- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022, September 8). *School and career counselors and advisors: Occupational outlook handbook*. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved November 28, 2022, from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/school-and-career-counselors.htm>