**Brief Review of Labor Market Information**

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The labor market of a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) is growing in the recent years. Being an LPC is a highly in-demand job in general and 2024 makes it no different. General growth projections are estimated to be much faster than average, being 18% for substance abuse, behavioral disorder and mental health counselors (U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2024a). The U.S. Department of Labor groups these professions together. There were an estimated 55,900 job openings total for occupations like substance abuse, behavioral disorder and mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, and community health workers in 2022 (U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2024).

The annual median annual wage of substance abuse, behavioral disorder and mental health counselors was $49,710 per year (Torpey, 2023). The average annual wage of community mental health workers was $46,190 per year (Torpey, 2023). In 2022, 55.8 million U.S. adults received mental health counseling too (Vankar, 2024). With this very large demand of counselors, it makes sense as to why there are so many job openings. However, the pay to compensate for the work of a counselor is noted to be lower than other helping professions (Lee, 2022). To put the median salary in context, the lower-income side of the middle class starts at $52,000 per year in 2021 (Kochhar et al., 2022).

Job outlook for LPCs are growing, but lower salary options may mitigate this (U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2024b). Substance abuse, behavioral disorder and mental health counselors are projected to be the highest growing profession out of all the counseling professions subtypes (U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2024b). LPCs currently will not need to look far for a job, but may need to look into to the role of advocating for better living wages.

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