

SB 5054 Scope of Practice Analysis for Mental Health Counselors (MHC)

"Mental health counseling" is defined in RCW 18.225.010(9) as the application of principles of human development, learning theory, psychotherapy, group dynamics, and etiology of mental illness and dysfunctional behavior to individuals, couples, families, groups, and organizations, for the purpose of treatment of mental disorders and promoting optimal mental health and functionality. Mental health counseling also includes, but is not limited to, the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, as well as the application of a wellness model of mental health.

The completed analysis revealed 39 states are deemed to have an equivalent and/or greater scope to Washington; 11 states scopes were deemed not to be substantially equivalent to Washington:

1. Arkansas
2. Iowa
3. Maine
4. Michigan
5. Minnesota
6. Mississippi
7. Missouri
8. Nebraska
9. New Jersey
10. South Carolina
11. Wisconsin

The analysis of scope of practices is based strictly on statutory and rules language of each state. Differing states may refer to mental health counselors by various titles (i.e. licensed professional counselors, etc.). However, this assessment is based on statutory and rule language on the practice of clinical counseling at the master's degree level.

State	Equivalent Scope of Practice?	Summary
Alabama	<u>YES</u>	The language in Alabama scope of practice is very similar to Washington's and is considered substantially equivalent. However, Alabama's scope differentiates mental health counseling in private practice from clinical practice within agencies.
Alaska	<u>YES</u>	Alaska's scope of practice includes language that make it greater in equivalency to Washington's. Specifically, the language includes the application of tests and other diagnostic tools to diagnose and develop treatment plans.

State	Equivalent Scope of Practice?	Summary
Arizona	YES	Arizona's scope of practice is less defined than Washington's; however, is considered substantially equivalent.
Arkansas	NO	The statutory language of Arkansas's scope of practice, as written, does not include diagnosis or treatment of mental and emotional disorders, and is not considered substantially equivalent to Washington's. This statutory constraint drives the determination that Arkansas' scope is not equivalent, even if administrative code or policy statements by the board attempt to interpret the statutory language broadly.
California	YES - California Board of Behavioral Sciences Statutes and Rules (Page 110)	The scope of practice of California is similar to Washington and considered substantially equivalent. The scope language also includes techniques to address personal growth, disabilities, and crisis and psychosocial interventions.
Colorado	YES	The scope of practice in Colorado is consistent with Washington's, yet is greater in equivalence. The scope language includes that application of interventional strategies to address crisis intervention, personal and career development, and testing toward diagnosis.
Connecticut	YES	The language in Connecticut's scope of practice is similar to Washington's and is considered substantially equivalent.
Delaware	YES	The language in Delaware's scope of practice is less defined; however, is considered substantially equivalent to Washington's standards for mental health counseling.
District of Columbia	YES	The language in the District of Columbia's scope of practice is similar to Washington's and considered substantially equivalent.
Florida	YES	Florida's scope of practice exceeds the language found in Washington for the services provided by mental health counselors. The language of Florida's scope expands upon the role of mental health counselors allowing licensees to provide substance use, crisis intervention, and mental dysfunction services for clients. And, allows the treatment of sexual dysfunction and the use of hypnotherapy as a modality of practice.

State	Equivalent Scope of Practice?	Summary
Georgia	<u>YES</u>	<p>The statutory language of Georgia’s scope of practice is better defined and is substantially equivalent to Washington.</p> <p>The language in Georgia’s scope exceeds Washington’s, allowing licensees to both administer and interpret educational and vocational tests and assessment tools – if the licensee has appropriate training. In addition, the scope language allows practitioners to use functional assessments in evaluating clients with disabilities.</p>
Hawaii	<u>YES</u>	<p>The statutory language of Hawaii’s scope of practice is better defined and is substantially equivalent to Washington. Additionally, Hawaii’s scope directly includes substance use counseling; substance use counseling is implied for licensees in Washington.</p>
Idaho	<u>YES</u>	<p>Idaho’s scope of practice is similar to Washington and substantially equivalent.</p> <p>The language references human development principles across the lifespan to develop treatment modalities across the continuum of care reflective of contemporary society.</p>
Illinois	<u>YES</u>	<p>The statutory language of Illinois’ scope of practice is substantially equivalent to Washington. The scope also extends licensee practice to include conducting and interpreting testing.</p> <p>However, the language of Illinois’ scope clearly separates professional from clinical professional counseling. Licensees in Illinois may not engage in clinical professional counseling in independent private practice.</p>
Indiana	<u>YES</u>	<p>Indiana’s scope of practice is substantially equivalent to Washington. However, the scope language also extends licensee practice to include conducting and interpreting testing based on licensee’s education and training.</p>
Iowa	<u>NO</u>	<p>Iowa's scope of practice is less defined and does not include language allowing diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders. Therefore, it is not considered substantially equivalent to Washington.</p>

State	Equivalent Scope of Practice?	Summary
Kansas	<u>YES</u>	Kansas's scope of practice language is less defined; however, is considered substantially equivalent to Washington. Kansas separates the practice of professional counseling from general professional counseling.
Kentucky	<u>YES</u>	The language of Kentucky's scope of practice is less defined; however, is considered substantially equivalent to Washington.
Louisiana	<u>YES</u>	Language of Louisiana's scope of practice is substantially equivalent to Washington's;
Maine	<u>NO</u>	Maine's scope of practice language does not include diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders and is therefore not considered substantially equivalent to Washington's. Maine does allow licensees to use and interpret results of testing tools, and to refer based on those results.
Maryland	<u>YES</u>	The language in Maryland's scope of practice is less defined; however, considered substantially equivalent to Washington.
Massachusetts	<u>YES</u>	The language in Massachusetts's scope of practice is similar to the language of Washington's and is considered substantially equivalent.
Michigan	<u>NO</u>	Michigan's scope of practice language does not include diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, and is thus not considered substantially equivalent to Washington's.
Minnesota	<u>NO</u>	The language of Minnesota's scope of practice language does not directly include diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, and is thus not considered substantially equivalent to Washington. The language does appear to allow licensees to implement treatment interventions and participate in treatment planning. However, it does not appear to allow independent diagnosis or development of treatment modalities.
Mississippi	<u>NO</u>	The language of Mississippi's scope of practice language is not as defined as Washington's, and does not directly include diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders. Therefore, it is not considered substantially equivalent.

State	Equivalent Scope of Practice?	Summary
Missouri	<u>NO</u>	<p>Missouri’s scope of practice language does not directly include diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, and is thus not considered substantially equivalent to Washington’s.</p> <p>The language does appear to allow licensees to use assessment tools/testing, implement treatment interventions and participate in treatment planning. However, the language does not appear to allow independent diagnosis or development of treatment modalities.</p>
Montana	<u>YES</u>	<p>The scope of practice in Montana is well-defined and considered greater in equivalence to Washington. The language allows the use of diagnostic tools and tests to assess, diagnose, develop treatment plans, and care objectives.</p>
Nebraska	<u>NO</u>	<p>Nebraska’s scope of practice language does not directly include diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders.</p> <p>Substantial equivalency to Washington is difficult to determine as the language limits the practice of psychology, limits diagnosing major mental illnesses and disorders, and directs consultation with clinical psychologists or physicians. Washington's scope does not have similar limits or consultation requirements.</p>
Nevada	<u>YES</u>	<p>Nevada’s scope of practice language is substantially equivalent to Washington’s. The language does limit a practitioner’s ability to diagnose and treatment psychotic disorders.</p>
New Hampshire	<u>YES</u>	<p>The language in New Hampshire's scope of practice is similar to and substantially equivalent to Washington.</p>
New Jersey	<u>NO</u>	<p>New Jersey’s scope of practice language does not directly include diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders, and is thus not considered substantially equivalent to Washington’s.</p> <p>The language does appear to allow licensees to use assessment tools/testing, implement treatment interventions and participate in treatment planning, but does not appear to allow independent diagnosis or development of treatment modalities.</p>

State	Equivalent Scope of Practice?	Summary
New Mexico	<u>YES</u>	New Mexico's scope of practice language is not as defined as Washington's, but is considered substantially equivalent to Washington's.
New York	<u>YES</u>	New York's scope of practice language is not as defined as Washington's, but is considered substantially equivalent. The language does allow practitioners to use tools to test and assess dysfunctions.
North Carolina	<u>YES</u>	The language in North Carolina's scope of practice is substantially equivalent to Washington's.
North Dakota	<u>YES</u>	Although not as defined as Washington's, North Dakota's scope of practice language is substantially equivalent.
Ohio	<u>YES</u>	Ohio's scope of practice language is substantially equivalent to Washington's.
Oklahoma	<u>YES</u>	Oklahoma's scope of practice is considered substantially equivalent to Washington's.
Oregon	<u>YES</u>	The language in Oregon's scope of practice is very similar to Washington's and is considered substantially equivalent.
Pennsylvania	<u>YES</u>	The language in Pennsylvania's scope of practice is better defined and substantially equivalent to Washington's.
Rhode Island	<u>YES</u>	Rhode Island's scope of practice is substantially equivalent to Washington's. The scope language also extends licensee practice to include conducting and interpreting testing based on the licensee's education and training.
South Carolina	<u>NO</u>	Although the language of South Carolina's scope of practice is well defined, it does not specifically indicate licensee's ability to diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders independently. However, the language does include substance use counseling and the use of hypnotherapy as part of the scope of practice.
South Dakota	<u>YES</u>	South Dakota's scope of practice is substantially equivalent to that of Washington.

State	Equivalent Scope of Practice?	Summary
Tennessee	YES	<p>The language of Tennessee’s scope of practice is substantially equivalent to Washington’s.</p> <p>However, the language separates the practice of professional counseling from the practice of counseling. Only those licensed to provide counseling as a mental health services provider are allowed to diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders.</p>
Texas	YES	<p>Texas’s scope of practice is substantially equivalent to Washington’s.</p> <p>The language includes the application of human development principles, care across the lifespan, and techniques to establish treatment goals and objectives.</p>
Utah	YES	<p>The language in Utah's scope of practice is very similar to Washington’s and is considered substantially equivalent.</p>
Vermont	YES	<p>Vermont's scope of practice is well defined and is substantially equivalent to Washington’s.</p>
Virginia	YES	<p>The language of Virginia's scope of practice is substantially equivalent to Washington’s.</p>
West Virginia	YES	<p>The language of West Virginia’s scope of practice is substantially equivalent to Washington’s.</p> <p>However, the language separates the practice of clinical counseling from the practice of professional counseling. Only those licensed to provide professional counseling are allowed to diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders.</p>
Wisconsin	NO	<p>Wisconsin’s scope of practice language does not directly include diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders and is thus not considered substantially equivalent to Washington’s.</p>
Wyoming	YES	<p>The language of Wyoming's scope of practice is substantially equivalent to Washington’s.</p>