

Choosing a Licensed Counselor or Therapist

Seeking support, encouragement, and information through professional counseling can help you to be your best, personally and professionally. You can partner with a trusted counselor to improve yourself, your relationships, or get help with common issues like depression or anxiety.

Several types of professionals provide counseling: licensed professional counselors (LPC), licensed clinical social workers (LCSW), licensed marriage and family therapists (LMFT), psychologists, and psychiatrists.

Every state has specific laws, regulations, and requirements for obtaining a professional license. A master's degree from an accredited university, supervised experience, and agreement to ethical codes, along with passing a licensing exam, are minimal requirements.

LPCs, LCSWs, LMFTs and psychologists can provide different types of counseling (or talk therapy) based upon specialties, chosen focuses, or client needs. Counseling treatments or approaches may be cognitive, emotional, or behavioral based. Psychiatrists must be licensed as physicians and some may focus more on traditional medical treatments, such as pharmaceuticals. You can verify the credentials of these professionals through each state's health board websites.

Here are some ideas for seeking a referral and choosing a counselor:

1. Contact [AMAS](#), the ALPA Aeromedical Office, at 303-341-4435.
2. Ask for a referral from a medical professional you already work with and trust, such as a primary care physician.
3. Ask friends or family if they can recommend someone.
4. Search the list of in network providers on your health insurance website. Typically, you can specify gender, location, specialties, modality (online, skype), and more.
5. Contact your [EAP](#) (Employee Assistance Program) (login FedEx), at 866-621-0130 or 44-20-8987-6230 internationally.
6. Search "behavioral health board providers" for your state or country.
7. Contact your local community mental health center, university, church, or school.
8. Shop online directories hosted by national organizations, such as www.networktherapy.com, www.psychologytoday.com, <https://nbcc.org/search>, www.onlinecounseling.com, or www.betterhelp.com,

You may also contact ALPA's licensed mental health consultant for any questions—Susan Gillpatrick, LPC 901-500-8907.

Once you have a referral or two, call them and feel free to ask about their approach or specialties. You can also share what area of your life you want help with. You want to feel comfortable in speaking with them on the phone and/or in meeting in person. Your sense of trust in your provider, along with your personal responsibility, greatly influence your success in therapy.

Not all visits to counselors are reportable to the FAA on your MedXpress FAA Form 8500. To find out more about your FAA reporting obligations or about other medical certification issues, call AMAS at 303-431-4435 to speak confidentially with a medical professional.

Whether you are going through a stressful phase of life or experiencing a crisis, your ALPA benefits include resources to support you.

Trained peers can provide a helpful and empathetic ear in circumstances where professional therapy or counseling is not needed. Contact [PATH](#) at 1-866-FDX-ALPA, or Chairman F/O [Kandy Bernskoetter](#) for peer support and resource information. Get needed support and discover strategies to help you be your best—personally and professionally.