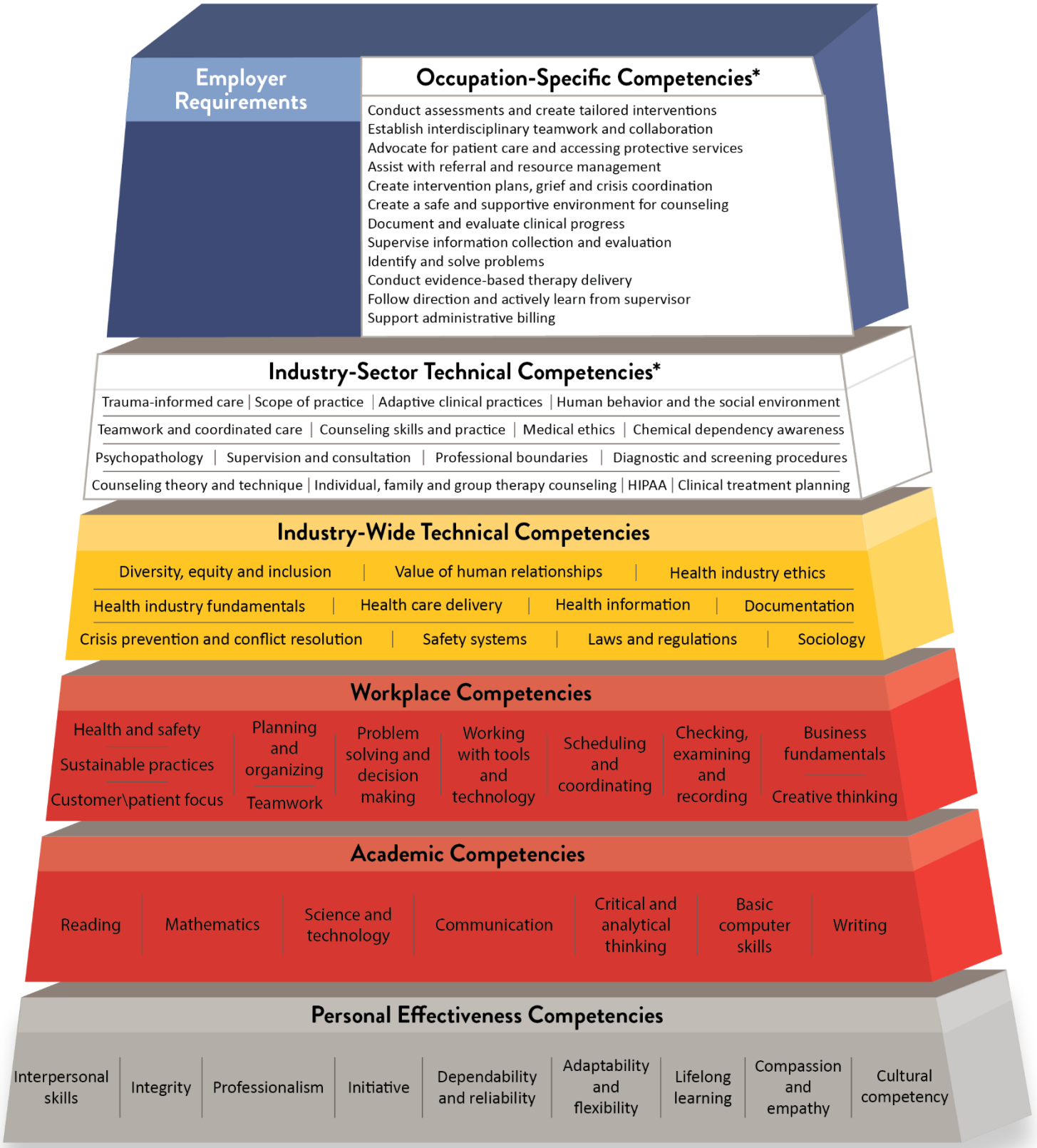
Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline

Competency Model for Health Care Services
Occupation: Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor



Based on: Fundamentals of Health Care Competency Model, Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor, February 2025. For more detailed information about competency model creation and sources, visit dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/health-care-services.

Competency Model for Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor

Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor – An individual who evaluates and treats clients who are dealing with mental health matters that can involve emotional, behavioral, or addiction problems. The individual works in a variety of healthcare settings and may specialize in any number of mental health sub-specialties. An individual in this role must follow the rules and requirements for becoming a licensed professional clinical counselor as outlined in law and overseen by the Minnesota Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy.

*Pipeline recommends the Industry-Sector Technical Competencies as formal training opportunities (provided through related instruction) and the Occupation-Specific Competencies as on-the-job (OJT) training opportunities.

Industry-Sector Technical Competencies

Related Instruction for dual training means the organized and systematic form of education resulting in the enhancement of skills and competencies related to the dual trainee's current or intended occupation.

- **Trauma-informed care** – Knowledge about how trauma impacts the physical, mental, behavioral, social, and spiritual areas for the patient and how to align care with the unique circumstances of the patient.
- **Scope of practice** – Understands the practice of service that incorporates caring for all patients in all settings through recognized clinical standards.
- **Adaptive clinical practices** – Adapts intervention strategies to the individual characteristics of the consumer, including but not limited to, disability, gender, sexual orientation, developmental level, culture, ethnicity, age, and health status.
- **Human behavior and the social environment** – Understanding of the contributors and characteristics of human behavior and how the social environment in which individuals live in society impacts and affects an individual's behavior.

- **Teamwork and coordinated care** – Know how to coordinate referrals to ensure access to services identified in treatment plan by following established procedures, addressing gaps in care, accessing additional resources to maximize patient self-sufficiency for a holistic care approach.

- **Counseling skills and practice** – Understand the fundamental skills associated with effective helping relationships. Understand that ethics and diversity considerations are integrated into the acquisition and application of counseling skills. Ability to apply basic skills for suicide risk assessment, safety planning, trauma-informed care, and clinical documentation.

- **Medical ethics** – Understands principles of medical ethics and how they apply in professional standards.

- **Chemical dependency awareness** – Knowledge and experience with patients with chemical dependency and the impact to a patient's mental health.

- **Psychopathology** – Understands the psychological symptoms of distress, maladjustment, transient disorders, anxiety states, psychosis, depression, mood, psychosomatic, personality disorders, and many other mental health conditions. Knowledge of the use of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) for diagnosis of mental health disorders.

- **Supervision and consultation** – Able to skillfully apply theory to inform supervision goals, structure, dynamics and processes. Knowledge of the supervisory process from both the supervisor and supervisee standpoint. Understand the importance of the role of professional consultation throughout a counselor's professional career.

- **Professional boundaries** – Understand what professional boundaries are and identify poor ones. Learn how to create healthy boundaries from the very beginning of the relationship and maintain them throughout.

- **Diagnostic and screening procedures** – Know how to use evidence-based critical analysis and interpretation of assessments to provide the basis for the health care plan.

- **Counseling theory and technique** – Understands major approaches and theories of personality, counseling, and psychotherapy with an emphasis on applying the knowledge to the practice of counseling.

- **Individual, family and group therapy counseling** – Understand many different therapy models that can be used effectively to provide treatment to adults and children in either an individual, family or group setting.

- **HIPAA** – Understand the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) for standards for electronic health record transactions, privacy, and security.

- **Clinical treatment planning** – Demonstrates a mastery of therapeutic process of clinical treatment planning. Understand the integration of assessing client needs and readiness, case conceptualization, laying out how counseling techniques and strategies may be used in clinical treatment, treatment models, and therapeutic relationships.

Occupation-Specific Competencies

On-the-Job Training is hands-on instruction completed at work to learn the core competencies necessary to succeed in an occupation. Common types of OJT include job shadowing, mentorship, cohort-based training, assignment-based project evaluation and discussion-based training.

- **Conduct assessments and create tailored interventions** – Understand a patient's situation, symptoms and needs and then match them with a diagnosis (when appropriate) and a treatment plan that will help them heal, grow and thrive.
- **Establish interdisciplinary teamwork and collaboration** – Able to coordinate with the health care team to develop an integrated plan of mental health care.
- **Advocate for patient care and accessing protective services** – Demonstrates awareness of patient rights and ethical decision making. Assures appropriate reporting of vulnerability or suspected abuse as mandated by law
- **Assist with referral and resource management** – Understands prudent utilization of all resources available to the patient, families, and caregivers to help them make informed decisions
- **Create intervention plans, grief and crisis coordination** – Able to formulate, develop and implement interventions including grief and crisis intervention, individual, family and/or group therapies.
- **Create a safe and supportive environment for counseling** – Demonstrate interaction with patients that builds a level of trust that includes active listening, empathy, and validating experiences and feelings. Able to maintain professional boundaries while being approachable. Know how to respect privacy and be confidential.
- **Document and evaluate clinical progress** – Understand team support of client progress and intervention while being able to keep record of intervention milestones and setbacks. Conduct record keeping that can assess how progress is or is not moving forward.
- **Supervise information and collection and evaluation** – Ensure the information collection and evaluation process is appropriate, data is of high quality and evaluation meets expectations.

- **Identify and solve problems** – Able to identify a mental health problem, weigh alternative options for intervention and decide how to manage and implement a mental health solution, then evaluate the effectiveness of the solution over time.
- **Conduct evidence-based therapy delivery** – Understand how to use research-based therapies that are tailored to meet people's needs, preferences and cultural expectations.
- **Follow direction and actively learn from supervisor** – Able to actively listen, ask questions, respond respectfully and act on what is learned from the supervisor.
- **Support administrative billing** – Depending on area of practice and if client/patient has insurance that will cover therapy services, may need to know how to coordinate documentation and paperwork for Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance to bill properly and follow payment procedures for patients/clients.

Updated December 2025