



FACT SHEET: STATES AND THE COUNSELING COMPACT

The **Counseling Compact** will allow qualified professional counselors to practice in *all states that join the compact*. This will remove the need for counselors to obtain a separate license in each state in which they want to practice.

THE BASICS

- The Counseling Compact is an *interstate compact* — a constitutionally authorized, legally binding contract between states.
- The Counseling Compact is the same in form and function as other occupational licensure compacts like the Nurse Licensure Compact, the EMS Compact, the Physical Therapy Compact, and the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact.
- The Counseling Compact authorizes interstate practice, both in-person and through telehealth, by professional counselors who hold a valid, unrestricted home state license in a Compact member state.
- The practice of professional counseling takes place in the state in which the client is located at the time of the counselor-client encounter. Counselors must observe the laws and rules of the state in which they are practicing.
- The Counseling Compact takes effect upon its enactment by ten states.
- The National Center for Interstate Compacts at the Council of State Governments facilitated the development of the Counseling Compact and is providing technical assistance to states as they consider the Compact.

BENEFITS

- Preserves and strengthens state licensure systems
- Enhances public safety through a shared interstate database of licensure and disciplinary information, allowing for rapid verification of license status
- Improves access to professional counseling services
- Increases market opportunities for professional counselors by authorizing practice in member states, including via telehealth
- Enhances mobility for professional counselors
- Supports relocating military spouses
- Improves continuity of care when clients travel or relocate
- Ensures cooperation among compact member states in regulating the practice of professional counseling

DISPELLING THE MYTHS

- As with the existing licensure compacts, the Counseling Compact has no impact on a state's scope of practice — this is *not* a takeover of state regulatory authority.
- As with existing licensure compacts, the Counseling Compact leaves state-specific licensure requirements in place — this is *not* a takeover of state licensing systems.
- The Counseling Compact enhances states' authority to protect the public and regulate the counseling profession.
- The Counseling Compact will have no significant fiscal implications for states.