



Montana Board of Behavioral Health
PO Box 200513
301 S Park, 4th Floor
Helena, MT 59620-0512
Phone: 406-444-6880

E-Mail: dlibsdhhelp@mt.gov Website: www.bbh.mt.gov

Licensing Requirements and Application Checklist Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC)

- This checklist is for applicants who **HAVE** already completed 1000 hours of supervised work experience in qualified treatment program post-graduation.
- If you have **NOT** already completed 1000 hours of supervised work experience in qualified treatment program and/or are **NOT** licensed as an LAC in another jurisdiction you may qualify for licensure as an LAC candidate. See the [LAC candidate application checklist](#).

License Requirements for Licensed Addition Counselor Not Currently Licensed in Another Jurisdiction

Below are the minimum requirements you must meet to be licensed in the state of Montana.

1. You must meet the degree requirements as described in either Option 1, Option 2, **or** Option 3. [[MCA 37-35-202](#)]
 - Option 1 – baccalaureate or advanced degree from an accredited college or university in one of the following areas: alcohol and drug studies; psychology; sociology; social work; counseling; human services; psychiatric rehabilitation; or community health;
 - Option 2 – associate of arts degree or a certificate from an accredited institution in one of the following areas: alcohol and drug studies; addiction; or substance abuse;
 - Option 3 – baccalaureate or advanced degree in alcohol and drug studies, psychology, sociology, social work, or counseling from an accredited institution.
2. Included with and/or in addition to the degree requirement in (1), you must have a minimum of 330 contact hours of addiction courses in the following areas. *Note that for purposes of college credits, 1 semester credit equals 15 hours and 1 quarter credit equals 10 hours.* [[ARM 24.219.5006](#)]
 - 60 hours - chemical dependency assessment and patient placement (must include chemical dependency assessment, biopsychosocial testing, diagnosis, referrals, and patient placement)
 - 90 hours - counseling
 - 30 hours - pharmacology (must include drug classification, effects, detoxification, and withdrawal)
 - 10 hours - ethics
 - 30 hours - alcohol and drug studies
 - 30 hours - treatment planning and documentation
 - 20 hours - multicultural competency - knowledge of and sensitive to the cultural factors and needs of diverse populations and demonstrate competency in applying culturally relevant skills;
 - 30 hours - co-occurring disorders
 - 30 hours gambling/gaming disorder assessment and counseling.
3. Proof of completion of 1,000 hours of supervised addiction counseling experience in a qualified treatment program. [[ARM 24.219.5008](#), [24.219.5010](#)]
4. Submit fingerprints to the Montana Department of Justice for a fingerprint and background check. [[MCA 37-35-202](#)]
5. Pass one of the following exams. Applicants who are NOT licensed in another jurisdiction must have passed the exam within four years of the date of the application. [[ARM 24.219.5006](#)]

- Option 1 – National Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors Certification Commission (NCC) Level 1 or Level 2 exam;
- Option 2 – Northwest Certified II or III exam;
- Option 3 – Southwest Certification II exam; or
- Option 4 – International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC) Alcohol and Drug Counselor (ADC) examination or Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (AADC) exam.

License Requirements for LAC Currently Licensed in Another Jurisdiction

1. Meet all the criteria above for applicants not currently licensed; **OR**
2. Hold a current, active license in good standing in another state or jurisdiction that has current licensing requirements that are substantially equivalent to Montana standards; **AND**
 - a. have completed supervised post-degree work that meets the requirements in ARM 24.219.5010;
 - b. have passed one of the exams described above [ARM 24.219.5006]; and
 - c. submit fingerprints to the Montana Department of Justice for a fingerprint and background check. [\[MCA 37-35-202\]](#) **OR**;
3. You can count experience for education and/or exam if you do not meet the requirements in (1) or (2):
 - a. If the degree requirement jurisdiction you are licensed in is not substantially equivalent to Montana's requirement then five years of additional post-degree work experience in a qualified treatment program as described in ARM 24.219.5010 in addition to the supervised work experience counts toward the education requirement.
 - b. Additionally, if the examination requirement from that state or jurisdiction is not substantially equivalent to Montana's requirement you are not required to pass an examination under ARM 24.219.5020 if you have five years of additional post-degree work experience in a qualified treatment program.

Checklist of Required Documents to Submit for Application for LAC

The following documents and additional forms are required in addition to the basic application. Some documents may be submitted directly by the applicant as part of the application. Others, such as transcripts, may need to be sent to the board directly from the source.

- Official license verification from states and jurisdictions in which you hold or have ever held a professional license of any type. Montana accepts whatever official form of verification is offered by other states or jurisdictions.
- If you answered yes to discipline questions, include a detailed explanation on the event(s) and documentation from the source (licensing board, federal agencies/programs, or civil/criminal court proceedings such as initiating/charging documents, final disposition/judgment documents, etc.),
- Certified education transcript(s) sent directly to the department from the college or university.
- [Addiction Specific Courses form](#) listing degree coursework and/or training acquired outside of the degree that meets the requirements in [ARM 24.219.5006\(2\)\(b\)](#).
- Proof of completion of any addiction specific contact hours that are not part of official education transcripts
- Completed fingerprint and background check results sent directly to the department from the Montana Department of Justice ([click here to access the forms](#) you will need to submit to the Department of Justice)
- [Noncriminal Justice Applicant's Rights](#) form
- Proof of passage of one of the following exams from a primary source: National Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors Certification Commission (level 1 or 2); Northwest Certification II or III; or Southwest Certification II; International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC)



Alcohol and Drug Counselor (ADC) examination; or IC&RC Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (AADC) exam.

- Proof of completion of 1000 hours of supervised work experience which meets the requirements in [ARM 24.219.5008](#) (see ARM [24.219.5010](#) for the definition of a qualified treatment setting)
 - **Applicants currently licensed in another jurisdiction** may submit that jurisdiction's documentation showing completion of those hours; or complete the Montana [Evaluation of Supervised Experience form](#) if that jurisdiction's supervisor(s) is available to sign the form.
 - **Applicants not currently licensed in another jurisdiction who previously obtained hours in another jurisdiction** may submit that jurisdiction's documentation showing completion of those hours; or complete the Montana [Evaluation of Supervised Experience form](#) if that jurisdiction's supervisor(s) is available to sign the form. [[ARM 24.219.5008](#)]

Application Fee(s) for LAC

The following fee(s) must be submitted with your application. Online applicants can pay using a credit card or e-check. If you submit a paper application you must submit a check. Do not mail cash.

- \$250 application fee

You can apply for a license online at <https://ebiz.mt.gov/POL/> or download a paper application from the website. Online application is recommended.

Please include a valid e-mail address with your application. E-mail is the department's primary form of communication.

If you have any questions about the application process or the licensing requirements please contact the Department of Labor and Industry Professional Licensing Bureau using the contact information at the top of this checklist.