



Subject: Counseling Compact

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Counseling Association, this letter supports the Counseling Compact. The mission of the Wisconsin Counseling Association is to enhance the quality of life in society by promoting the development of professional counselors, advocating for professional practices in the profession of counseling, and promoting respect for human dignity and diversity.

The mission of the Wisconsin Counseling Association aligns with the Counseling Compact, an interstate licensure compact designed to foster interstate licensure portability and increase access to professional counseling services. It enhances continuity of care when clients travel and relocate. It also preserves and strengthens state licensure systems and increases market opportunities for professional counselors. Here is more information on the Counseling Compact:

- This interstate compact is a constitutionally authorized, legally binding contract between states.
- This authorizes interstate practice, in-person and through telehealth, by professionals who hold a valid, unrestricted home state license in a compact member state.
- The Counseling Compact is the same in form as other occupational licensure compacts like the Nurse Licensure Compact, the EMS Compact, the Physical Therapy Compact, the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, and the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact.

As this letter is being written, the Counseling Compact has already been enacted in 28 states. In addition, there is legislation pending in seven more states. This includes the great state of Wisconsin with Assembly Bill 207 and Senate Bill 196. The Wisconsin Governor's Office declared 2023, the "Year of Mental Health," and a proclamation was signed to declare April 2023 as Counseling Awareness Month. Furthermore, the National Alliance on Mental Illness reports that millions of people are affected by mental illness each year. With 57.8 million U.S. adults experiencing mental illness in 2021, which is one in five adults. In 2021, 14.1 million adults experienced serious mental illness, and 7.7 million youth aged 6-17 experienced a mental health disorder. Bipartisan support of the Counseling Compact would help the mental health needs of those in Wisconsin and beyond, and the time is now.

Sincerely,

2023-2024 Wisconsin Counseling Association Executive Board