



austin center for
therapy &
assessment

LPC-Intern FAQs

WHAT DOES LPC-INTERN STAND FOR?

LPC-Intern stands for Licensed Professional Counselor Intern.

IS AN LPC-INTERN A STUDENT?

No. An intern has already completed their graduate degree, completed at least 300 hours of direct counseling experience via practica and other experiential training in graduate school, successfully passed the National Counselor Examination, and been temporarily licensed by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors. Interns are not students, but initiates into the profession of counseling in the early stages of building a professional identity as a counselor.

IS AN LPC-INTERN INEXPERIENCED?

No. The various graduate school programs and State Board have determined that each LPC-Intern is equipped with enough knowledge and experience to provide beneficial psychotherapy to others. While in graduate school, students are required to complete practicum, which is hands-on, live experience counseling real clients in the community. While in graduate school, students often pick a niche area, specific populations of interest, or interventions that fit with their therapeutic philosophy. Many have specialized training with experts in the field before graduation.

If you compare an LPC-Intern to a LPC-Supervisor who has been counseling clients for 20 years, then of course, the LPC-Intern is not as experienced. However, in comparison to a layperson, LPC-Interns have ample experience and knowledge to help you address your issues and concerns. LPC-Interns have studied and practiced counseling specifically for years before sitting with you in a therapy session. Some equivalent comparisons are a lawyer who has graduated from law school and passed the bar exam, or a person in a trade profession who has completed their training and is now working under a master tradesperson to hone their skills.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN LPC AND AN LPC-INTERN?

	LPC-INTERN	LPC
Completed a graduate degree in counseling or a related field	✓	✓
Passed the National Counselor Examination	✓	✓
Has completed at least 300 hours of direct counseling experience	✓	✓
Practices under a board-approved LPC-Supervisor	✓	
Has completed at least 1500 hours of direct counseling experience		✓
May accept insurance and work independently in private practice		✓

WHY HIRE AN LPC-INTERN?

In the minimum 18 months awaiting full licensure, LPC-Interns cannot accept insurance and therefore often accept lower, out-of-pocket fees than a fully-licensed LPC. Often LPC-Interns accept a payment close to your regular insurance copay amount.

Clients also have the unique benefit of having two clinicians with different skill sets and expertise working on their case, because interns are required to meet weekly with a supervisor. During supervision, LPC-Interns and their LPC-Supervisor collaborate on treatment options, how to manage the case, find resources for the client, and much more. LPC-Supervisors are often very seasoned clinicians, and you as the client benefit from two therapists working on your needs.

Also, time often leads to wisdom, as it should, but time alone is not the only ingredient that makes a good counselor. Passion, compassion, presence, and empathy are also essential characteristics that an LPC-Intern may bring to the counseling relationship at any age or level of experience.