



Behavioral Health Professional Pipeline

*A resource hub for
information on careers in
the behavioral health
field.*

Psychiatrist (MD / DO)

Job Description: This medical professional evaluates various factors impacting mood and behaviors, leading to diagnosing and treating patients for a wide range of mental health conditions (typically through medication).



Average Salary (South Carolina): \$240,418

Average Salary (National): \$268,094

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

*Optional step**

1. Bachelor's Degree (*Any major*)
2. Medical Degree (*Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO)*)
3. Residency
4. Fellowship(s)*

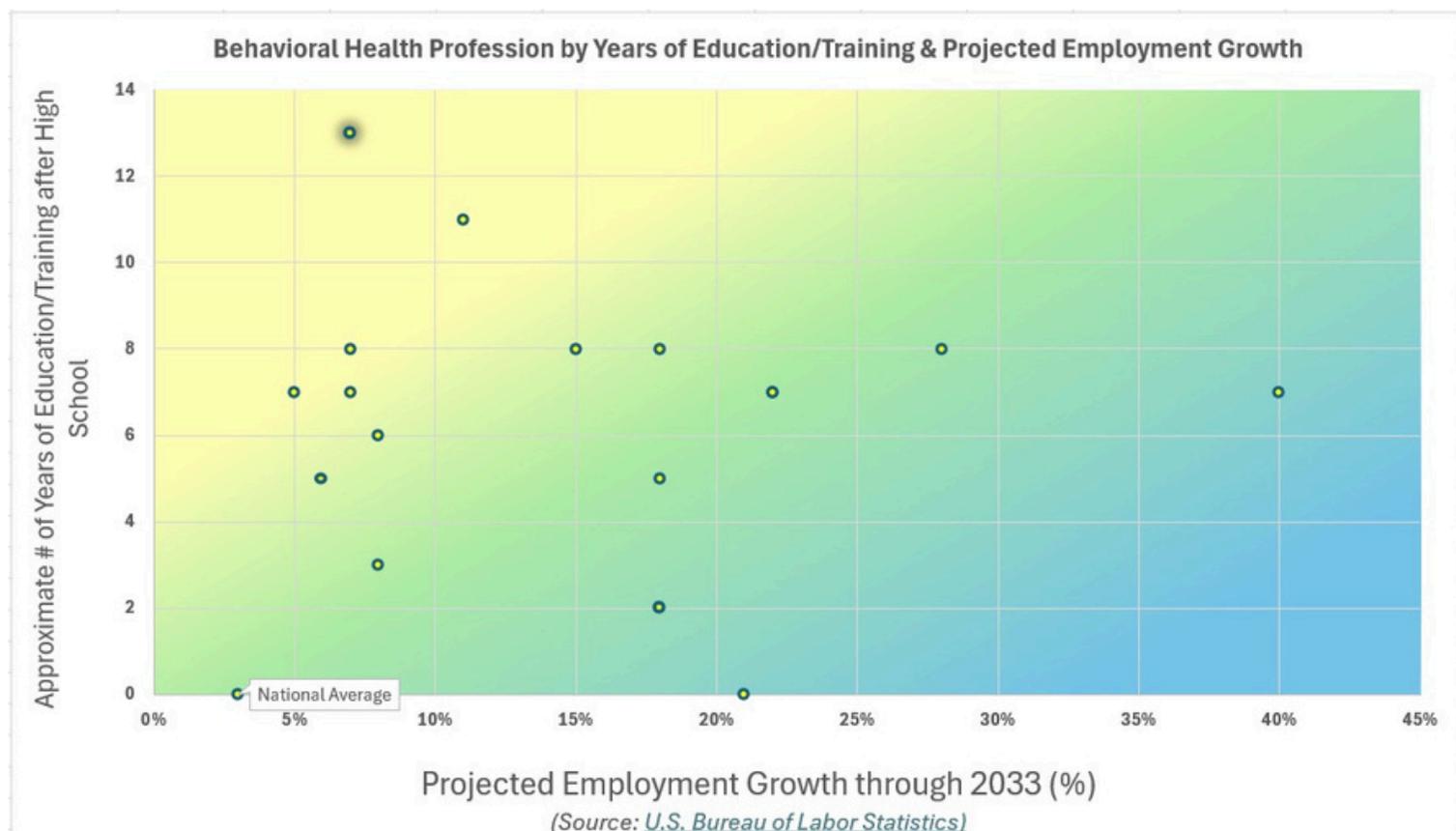
Eligible for [SC Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program](#) under certain criteria

Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

- State Licensure, Physician, *South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners (SCLLR)*

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- 40 hours of continuing education credits per licensure cycle (*every 2 years*)



Psychologist (PhD / PsyD)

Job Description: This professional performs mental health assessments and conducts talk therapy with individuals. They are not authorized to prescribe medication, as their focus is more on analyzing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.



Average Salary (South Carolina): \$109,800

Average Salary (National): \$100,078

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

*Optional step**

1. **Bachelor's Degree** (*Psychology*)
2. **Master's Degree** (*Psychology*)*
3. **Doctorate Degree** (*Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or Doctor of Psychology (PsyD)*)
4. **Supervised experience**

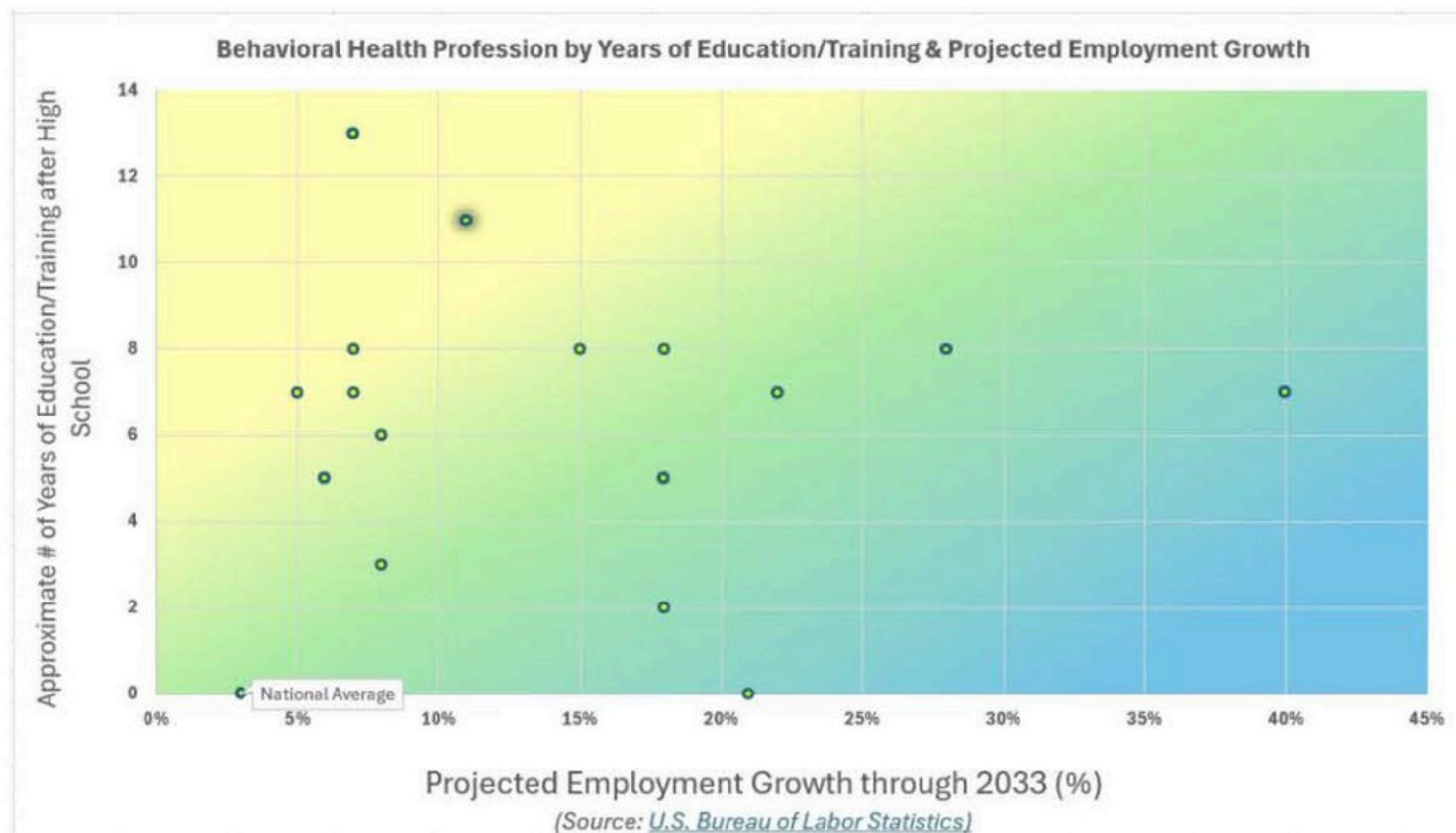
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Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

- **State licensure (Psychologist)**, *South Carolina Board of Examiners in Psychology*

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- **24 hours of continuing education units (CEUs)** *every 2 years*



Psychiatric Physician Assistant/Associate (PA)



Job Description: Under the supervision of a licensed physician, this professional provides care for patients with mental illnesses. Their work includes assessments, medication management, and treatment.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$113,436

National Salary Average: \$119,333

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

*Optional step**

1. Bachelor's Degree (*Any major*)
2. Hands-on clinical experience
3. Master's Degree (*Physician Assistant program*)
4. Fellowship or CAQ program in psychiatric/mental health specialty*

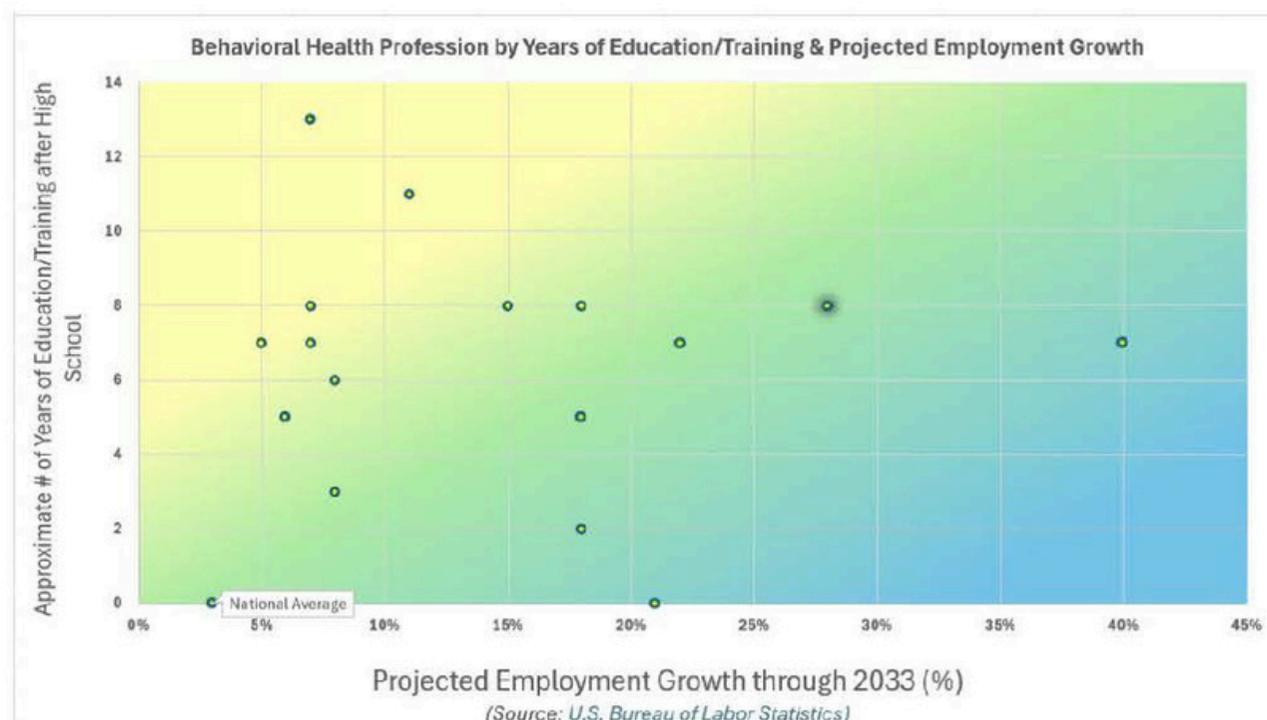
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Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

1. National Certification, Physician Assistant/Associate (PA), *National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)*
2. State Licensure, Physician Assistant/Associate (PA), *South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners*

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

1. 100 hours of continuing medical education (CME) credits every 2 years
2. Recertification through PANRE® exam every 10 years



Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)

Job Description: Under the supervision of a licensed physician, this advanced nursing professional prescribes medication to individuals with mental health and substance use disorders. They also perform diagnostic assessments and psychotherapy for their patients.



Average Salary (South Carolina): \$113,430

Average Salary (National): \$129,786

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

1. **Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)**
2. **Practical nursing experience**
3. **Master's Degree (Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) with a concentration in psychiatric mental health)**
4. **Faculty-supervised clinical hours**

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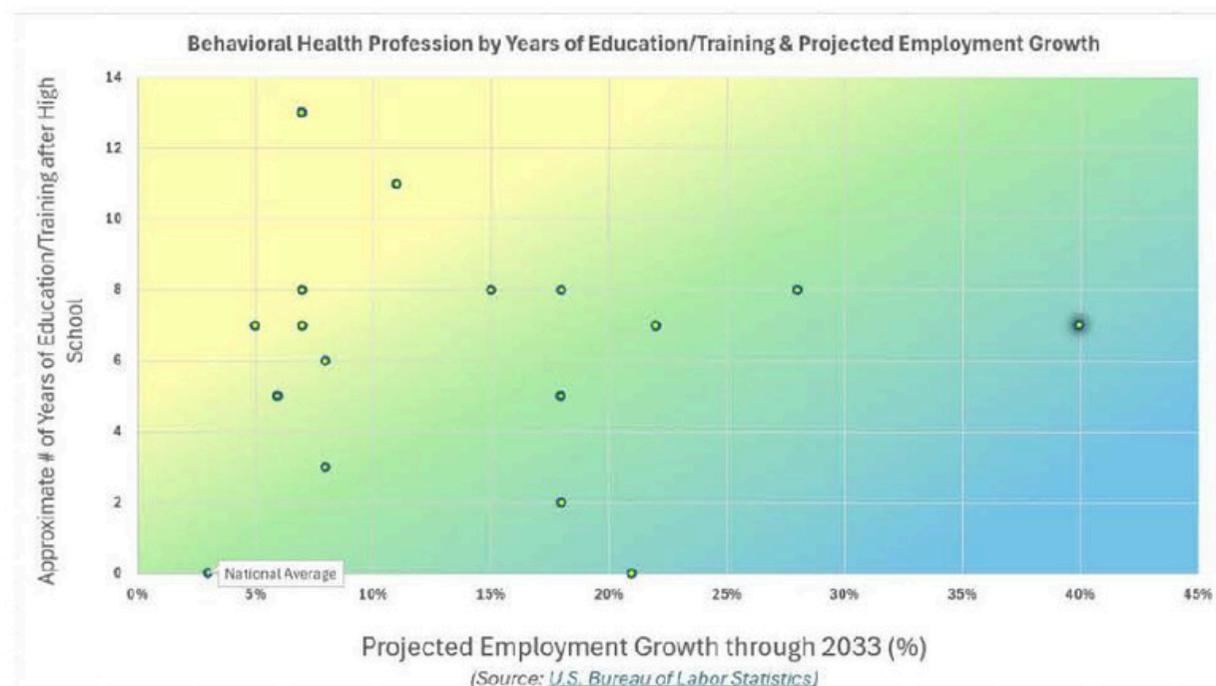
Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

*Optional step**

1. **National Licensure** (Registered Nurse (RN))
2. **National Certification (Board Certified Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP-BC))***
3. **State licensure** ((Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)), *South Carolina Board of Nursing*)
4. **State licensure (Advanced Practical Registered Nurse (APRN)),** *South Carolina Board of Nursing*

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

1. **30 contact hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 2 years**
2. **Recertification through PMHNP-BC™ exam every 5 years**



Psychiatric / Mental Health Registered Nurse (RN)



Job Description: This professional works closely with other healthcare professionals to assist in developing and implementing treatment plans. They perform assessments, monitor vitals, and educate patients on available mental health resources.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$79,000

Average Salary (National): \$86,490

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

1. **Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) or Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)**
2. **Hands-on clinical experience (mental health nursing)**

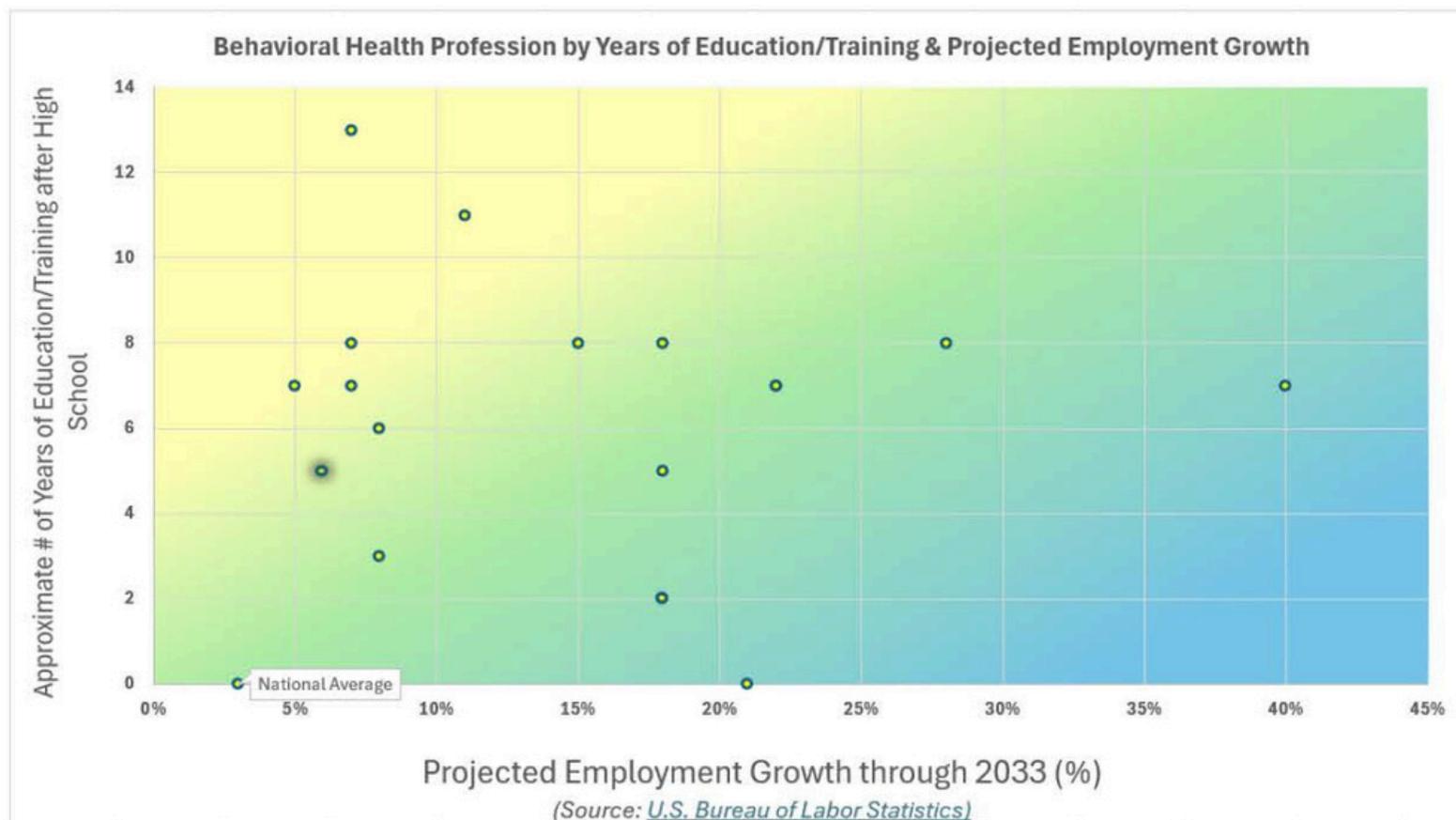
Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

*Optional step**

1. **National licensure (Registered Nurse (RN))**
2. **National certification (Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse - Board Certified (PMH-BC))***

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- **30 contact hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 2 years**



Certified Addiction Counselor, Level I (CAC I)



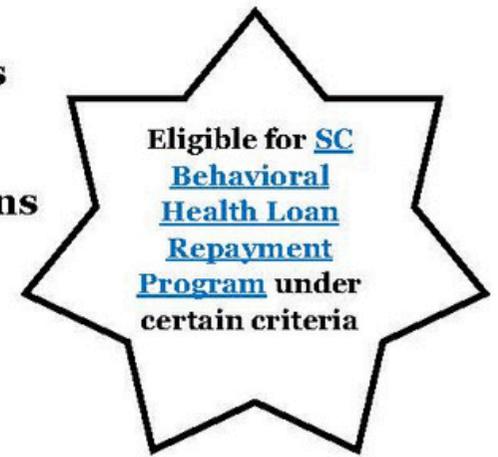
Job Description: This professional helps individuals struggling with substance use disorders (SUDs) through counseling, education, and support, working to develop treatment plans and promote recovery.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$55,920

Average Salary (National): \$58,500

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

1. **Associate's Degree (Human Services or related field) or Bachelor's Degree (Any major)**
2. **≥ 270 hours of coursework related to core counseling functions set forth by the Addiction Professionals of South Carolina (APSC)**
3. **≥ 4,000 hours of supervised field experience**
4. **≥ 150 hours of clinical supervision**

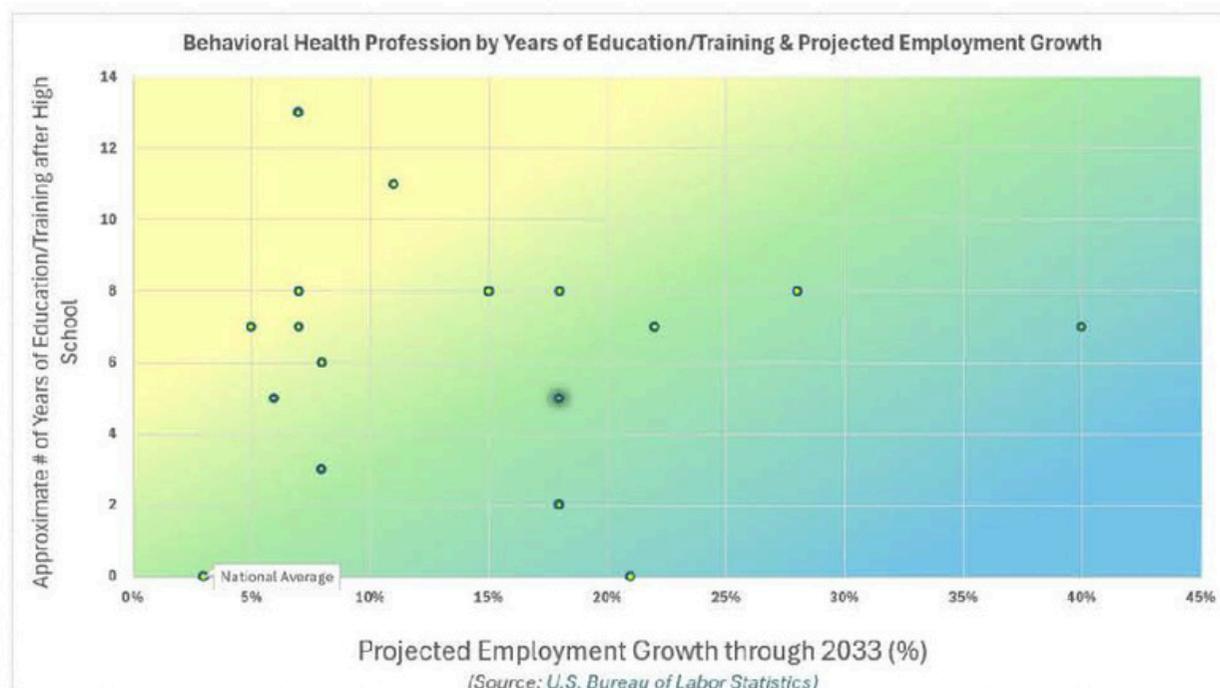


Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

- **National Certification (Certified Addiction Counselor (CAC I))** through either of the following:
 - a. **Certified Addiction Counselor Level I exam, National Certification Commission for Addiction Professionals (NCCAP)**
 - b. **Alcohol & Drug Counselor (ADC) exam, International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC & RC)**

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- **40 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 2 years**



Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)



Job Description: Licensed professional counselors (also known as mental health therapists or clinicians) help individuals, couples, families, and groups address mental health challenges through the use of counseling and psychotherapy.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$61,041

Average Salary (National): \$76,086

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

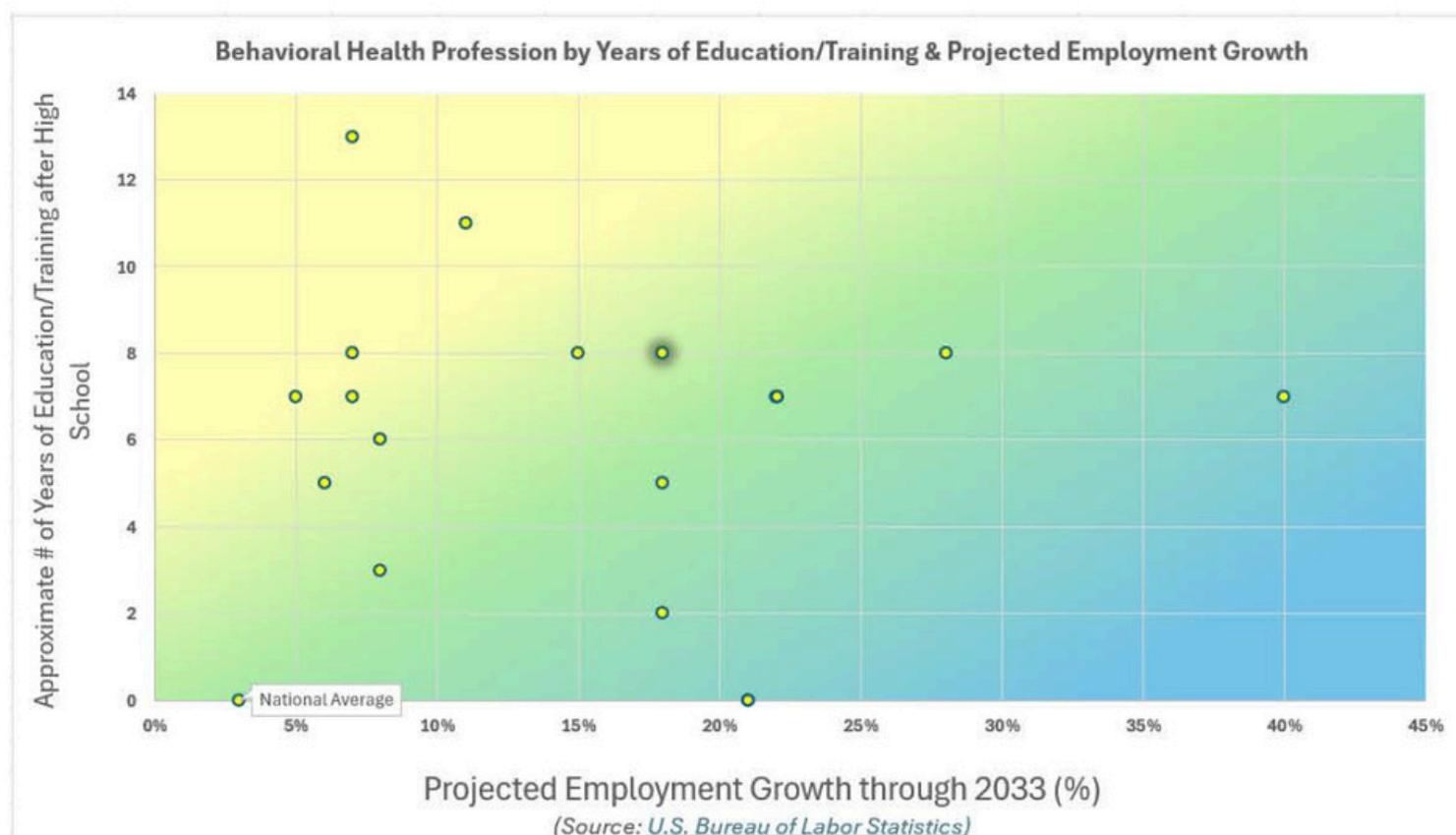
1. **Bachelor's Degree** (*Psychology or related field*)
2. **Master's degree from CACREP-accredited program** (*Counseling*)
3. **≥1,500 hours of supervised fieldwork**

Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

1. **National certification**, *National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC)*
2. **State licensure, Professional Counselor Associate (LPC-A)**, *South Carolina Board of Examiners for Licensure of Professional Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, Addiction Counselors and Psycho-Educational Specialists*
3. **State licensure, Professional Counselor (LPC)**, *South Carolina Board of Examiners for Licensure of Professional Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, Addiction Counselors and Psycho-Educational Specialists*

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- **40 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 2 years**



Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist (LMFT)

Job Description: These professionals work directly with individuals, couples, and families to treat mental or behavioral health disorders related to marriage and family systems. They look closely at relationships, communication, and conflict resolution between parties.



Average Salary (South Carolina): \$42,668

Average Salary (National): \$85,006

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

1. Bachelor's Degree (*Psychology or related field*)
2. Master's Degree (*Marriage & Family Therapy*)
3. $\geq 1,500$ supervised clinical hours

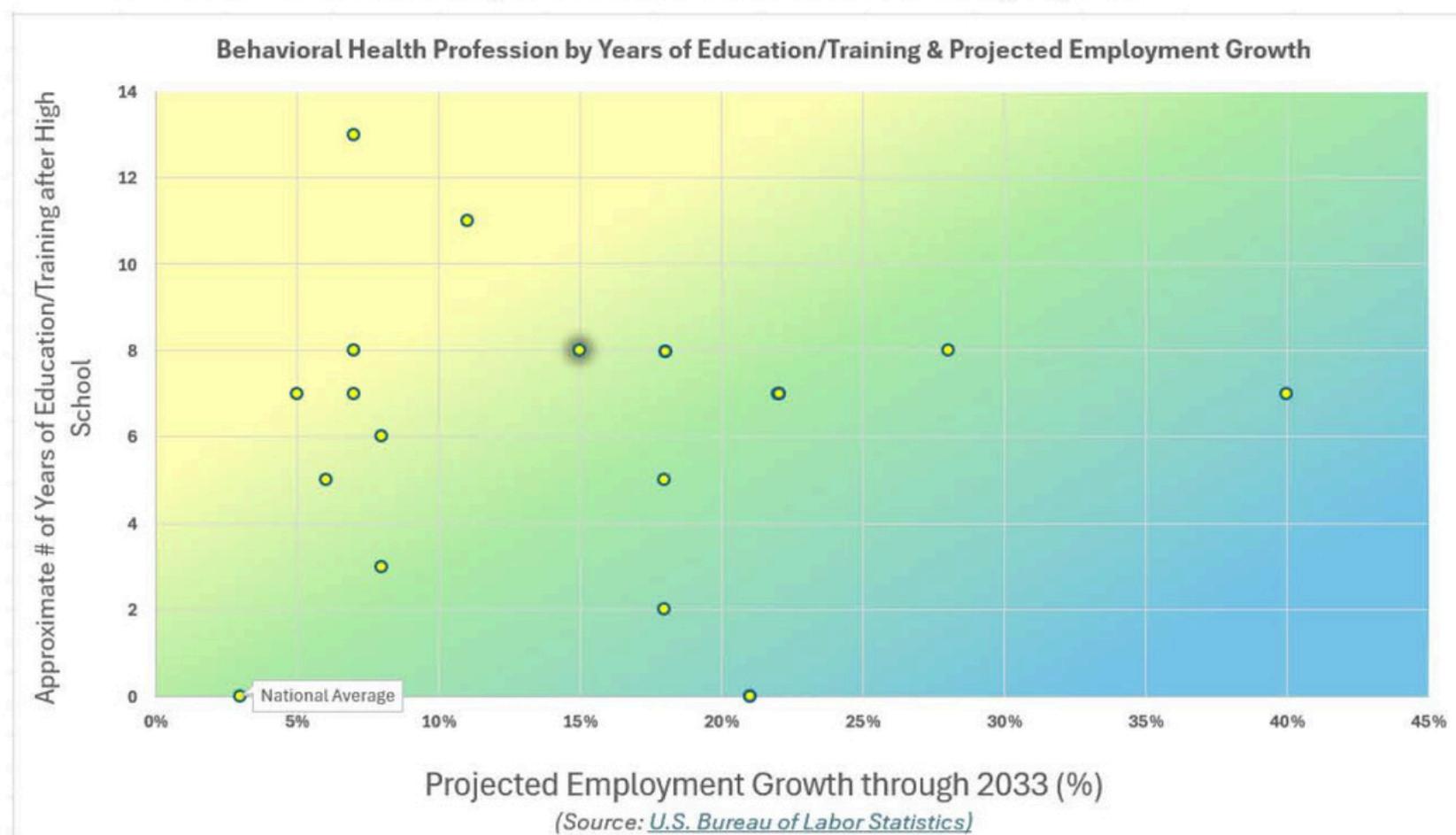
Eligible for [SC Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program](#) under certain criteria

Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

1. National licensure (**Marriage & Family Therapist**), *Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards (AMFTRB)*
2. State licensure (**Marriage & Family Therapist**), *South Carolina Board of Examiners for Licensure of Professional Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, Addiction Counselors and Psycho-Educational Specialists*

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- 40 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 2 years



Licensed Independent Social Worker – Clinical Practice (LISW-CP)



Job Description: As the highest master's-level social worker, LISW-CPs can operate independently in clinical practice to provide psychotherapy and diagnoses for individuals.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$76,337

National Salary Average: \$82,550

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

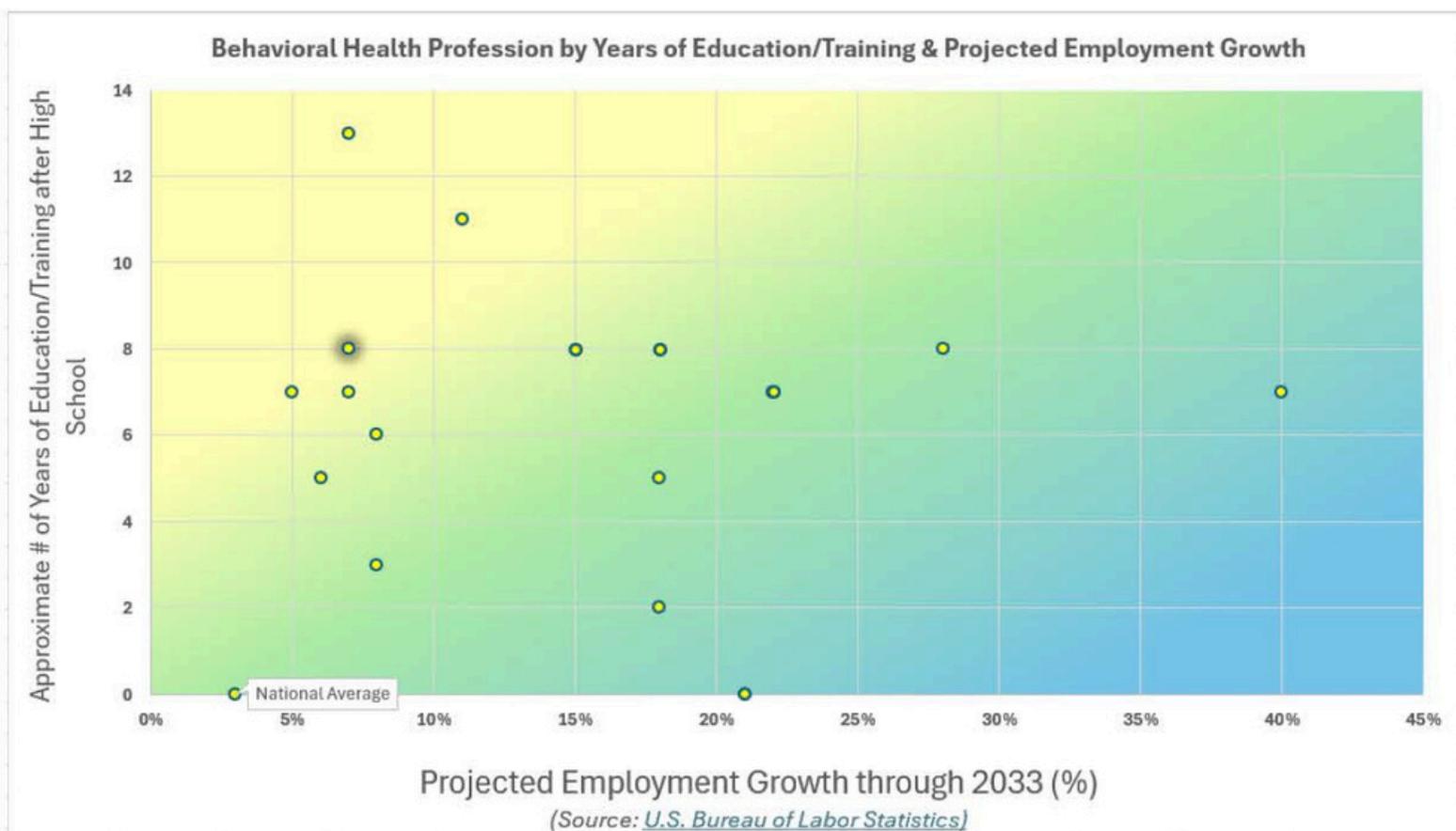
1. **College Degree** (Social Work or related field)
2. **Master's Degree** (Master of Social Work (MSW))
3. **Supervised field experience** ($\geq 3,000$ hours)

Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

1. **National Licensure, Master Social Worker (ASWB Masters Exam), South Carolina Board of Social Work Examiners (SCBSWE)**
2. **National Licensure, Independent Social Worker (ASWB Clinical Exam), South Carolina Board of Social Work Examiners (SCBSWE)**

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- **40 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 2 years**



Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW)

Job Description: Under the supervision of a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), these professionals assess clients' needs, develop treatment plans, provide therapy, and advocate for clients as they navigate mental or behavioral health concerns.



Average Salary (South Carolina): \$60,858

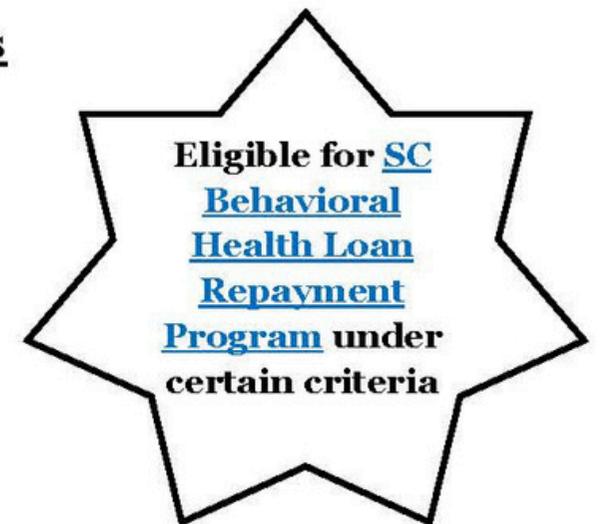
Average Salary (National): \$73,690

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

1. **Bachelor's Degree** (*Social Work or related field*)
2. **Master's Degree** (*Master of Social Work (MSW)*)

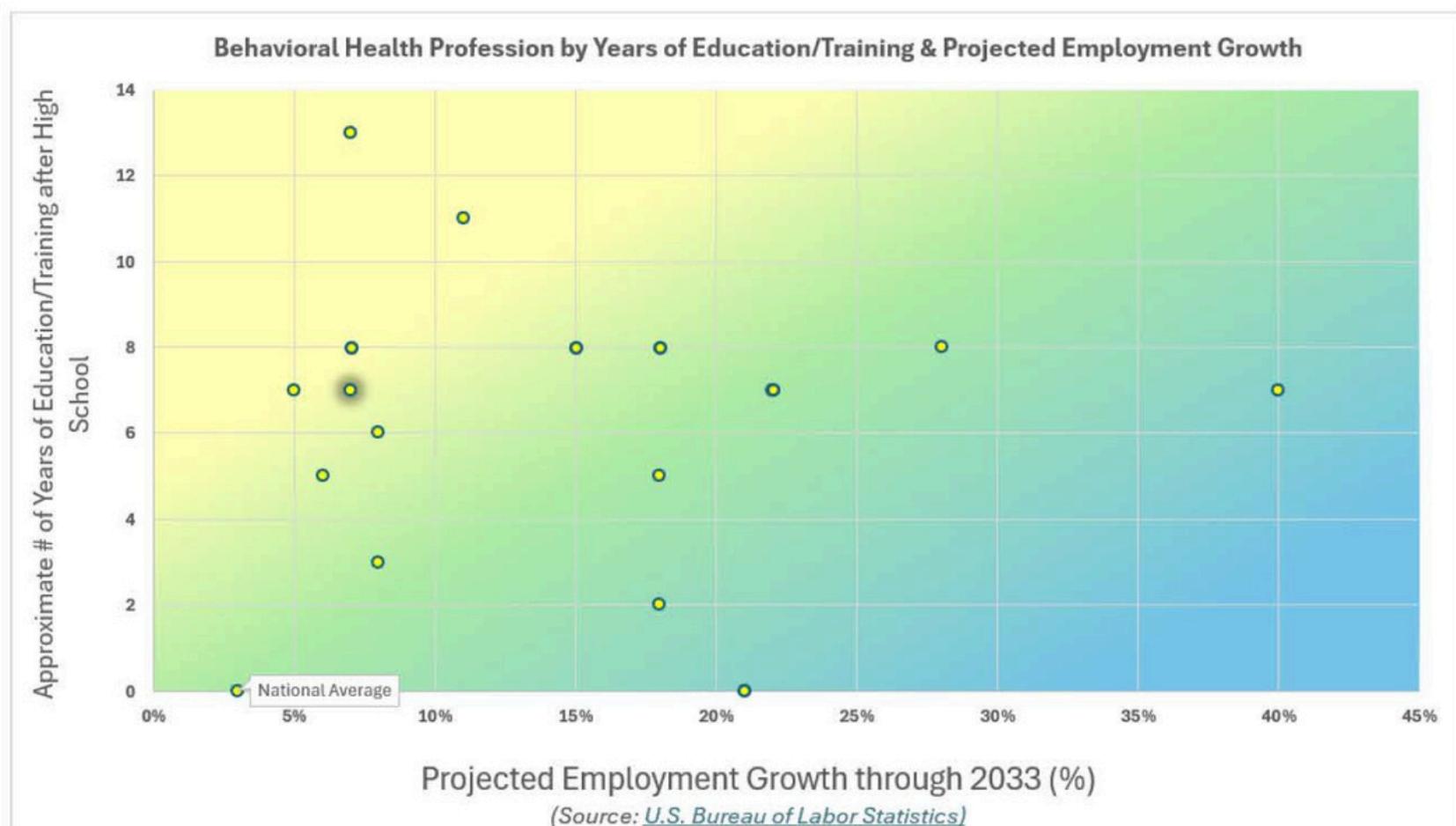
Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

- **National licensure, Master Social Worker (ASWB Masters Exam), South Carolina Board of Social Work Examiners (SCBSWE)**



Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- **40 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 2 years**



Mental Health Case Manager

Job Description: This professional is responsible for coordinating and managing care for clients by assessing needs, developing service plans, advocating for clients, and ensuring access to necessary resources/services.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$78,390

Average Salary (National): \$78,020



*Optional step**

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

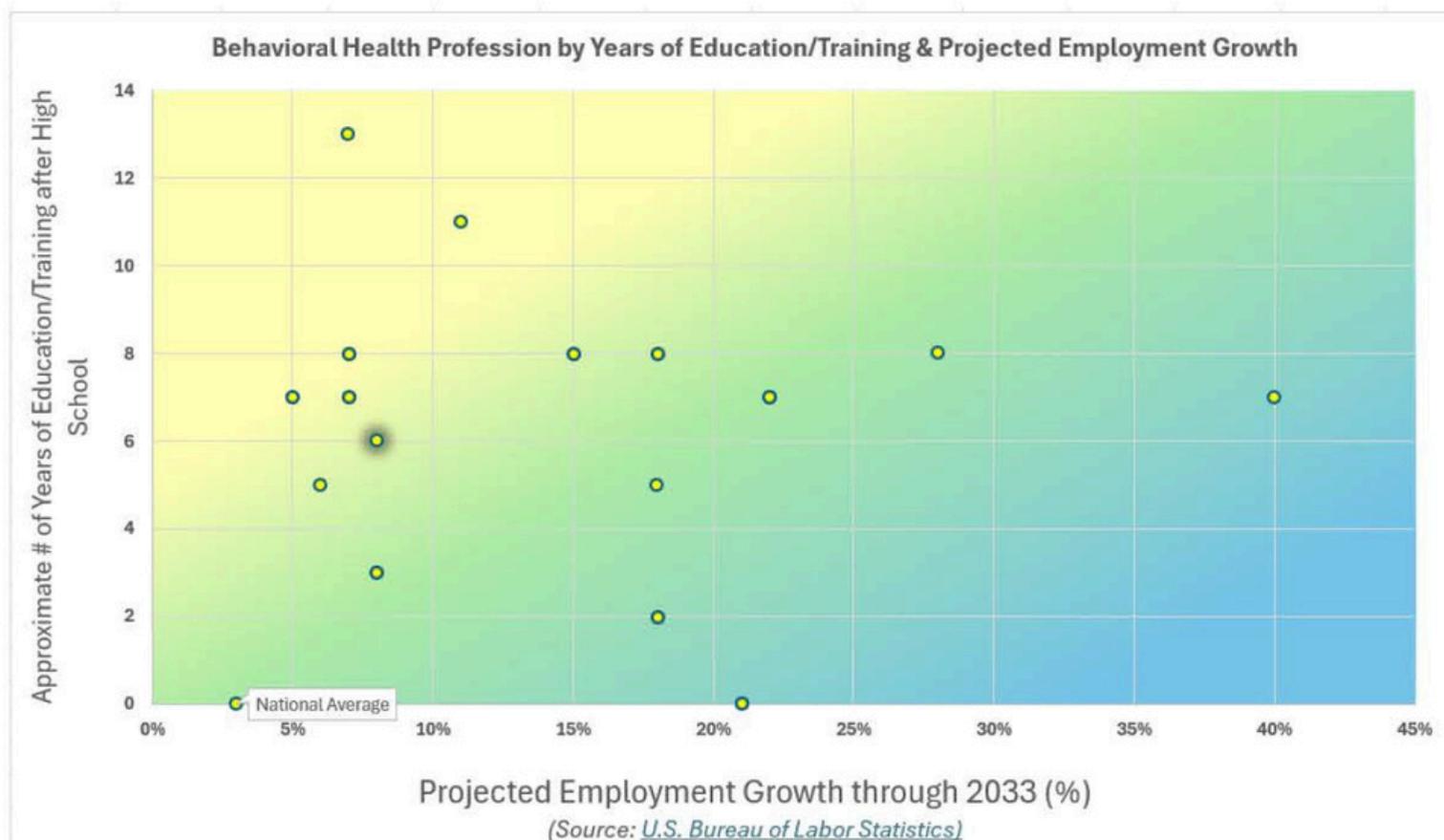
1. **Bachelor's Degree** (*Psychology, Social Work, or related field*)
2. **Supervised field experience** (*case management*)
3. **On-the-job training**
4. **Master's Degree***

Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

- **National certification** (*Certified Case Manager (CCM)*)*

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s) (if applicable)

- **80 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 5 years***
 - **NOTE:** *Only applicable to those who hold Certified Case Manager (CCM) designation*



Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS)

Job Description: This professional dedicates their expertise to the development and implementation of programs aimed at preventing substance use disorder, mental health issues, and other high-risk behaviors within communities.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$81,831

Average Salary (National): \$87,685



Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

*Optional step**

1. **Bachelor's Degree** (*Psychology, Social Work, or related field*)*
 2. **Prevention education** (~120 hours)
 3. **Direct supervision** (~120 hours)
 4. **Field experience** (~2,000 hours)

Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

- **State certification (Prevention Specialist)**, *South Carolina Association of Prevention Professionals and Advocates*

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- **40 hours of continuing education units (CEUs)** *every 2 years*



Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS)



Job Description: This professional provides support and guidance to individuals with mental health and/or substance use disorders, drawing on their *LIVED EXPERIENCE* to promote recovery and wellness.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$77,746

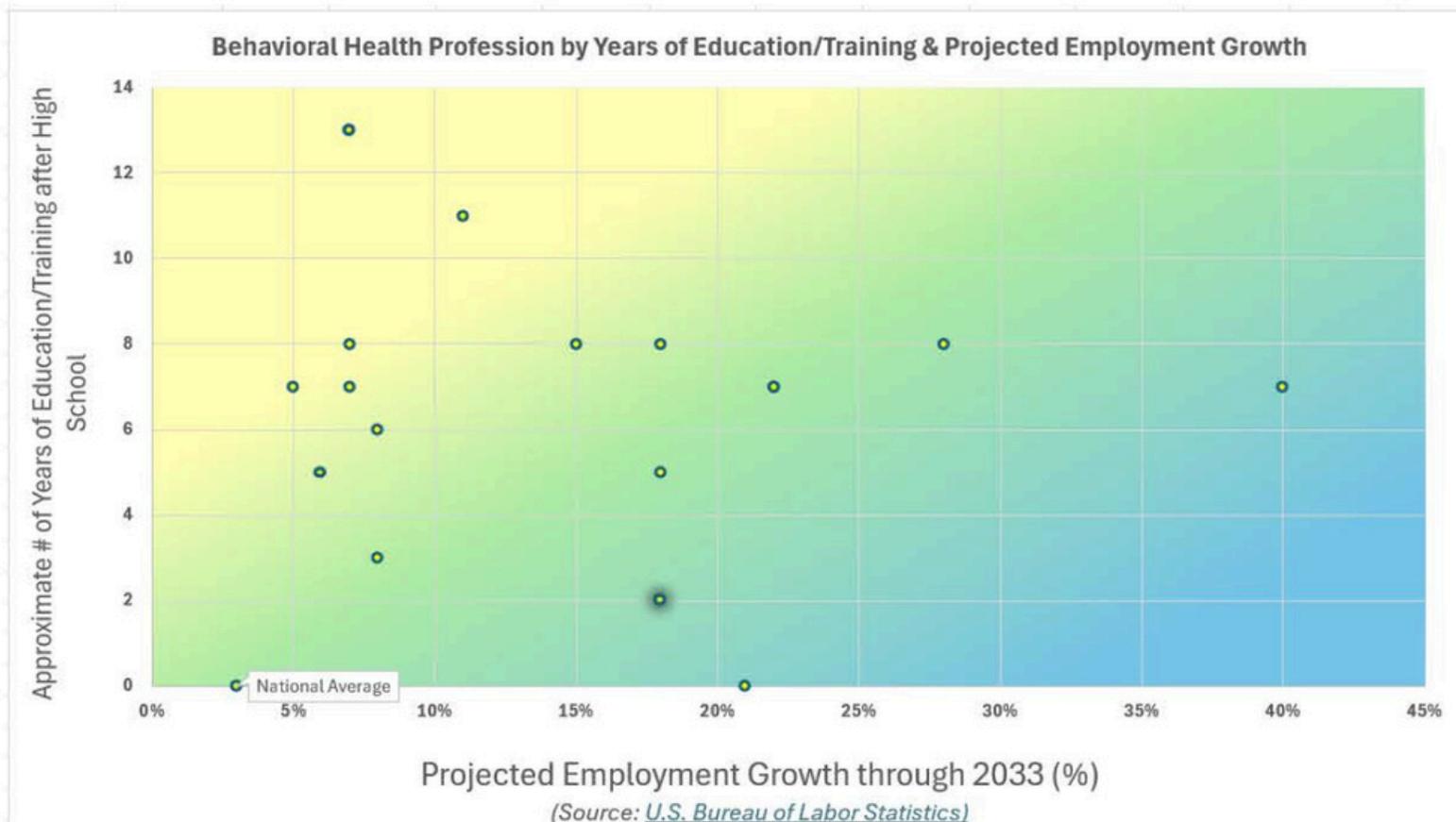
Average Salary (National): \$82,434

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

1. **High school Diploma (or equivalent)**
2. **Continuous, sustained ≥ 1 year of lived recovery and practical experience**
(must be verified)
3. **Completion of 46-hour training program from a South Carolina PSSCC Certified Training Center**

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- **≥ 12 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 2 years**



Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®)



Job Description: This healthcare professional assesses, analyzes, and develops behavior modification plans for individuals with behavioral challenges (often relating to developmental disabilities) by utilizing Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) techniques in a variety of clinical settings.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$69,630

Average Salary (National): \$73,760

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

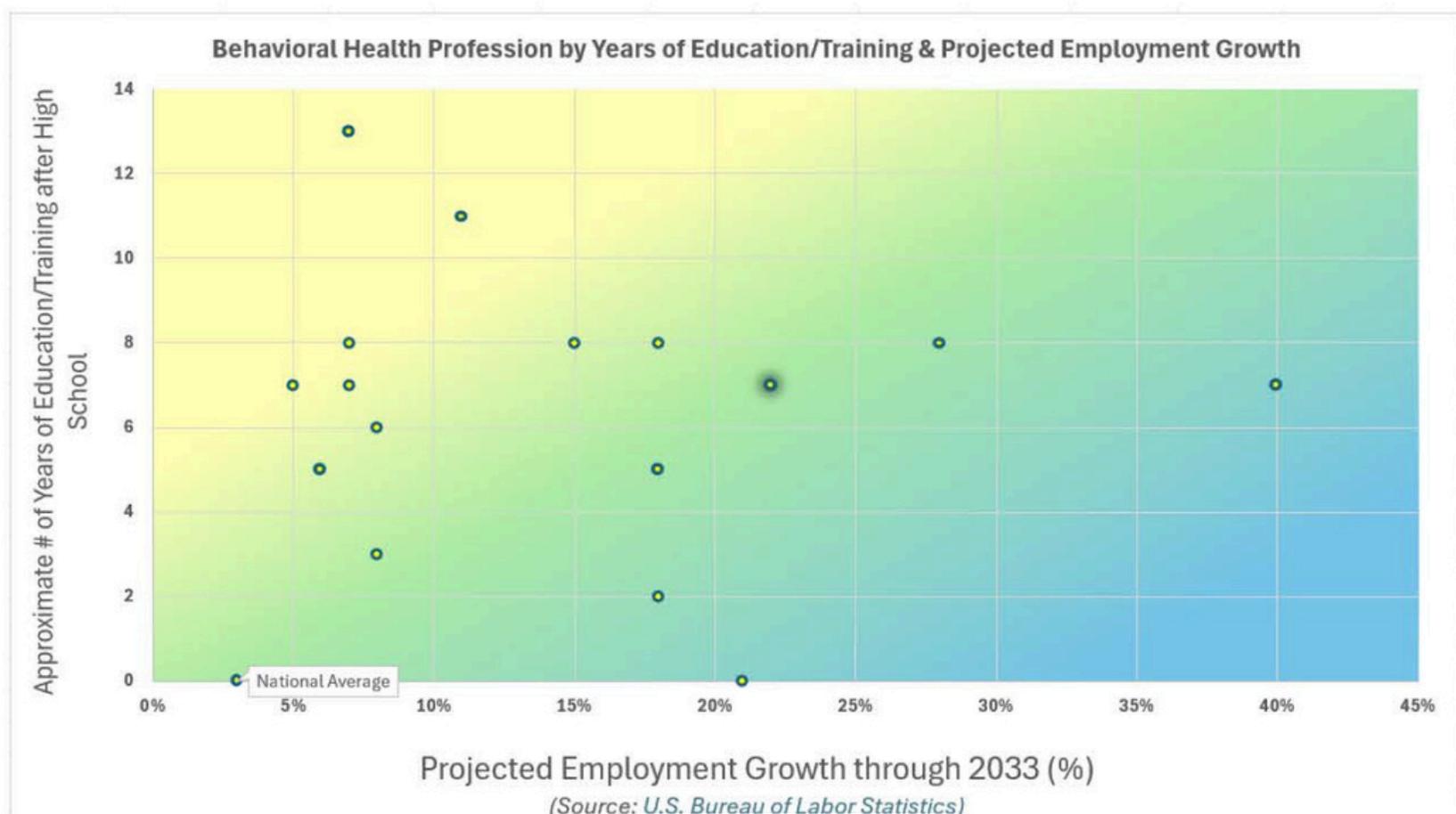
1. **Bachelor's Degree** (*Psychology or related field*)
2. **Master's Degree** (*Applied Behavior Analysis*)

Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

- **National certification** (Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®)), *Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB)*

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- **32 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 2 years**



Registered Behavior Technician® (RBT®)

Job Description: Under the supervision of a Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®), this professional provides Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services to individuals with autism or other developmental disabilities, focusing primarily on acquiring skills and reducing unhealthy behaviors.



NOTE: Must be at least 18 years old to work in this profession.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$34,664

Average Salary (National): \$37,355

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

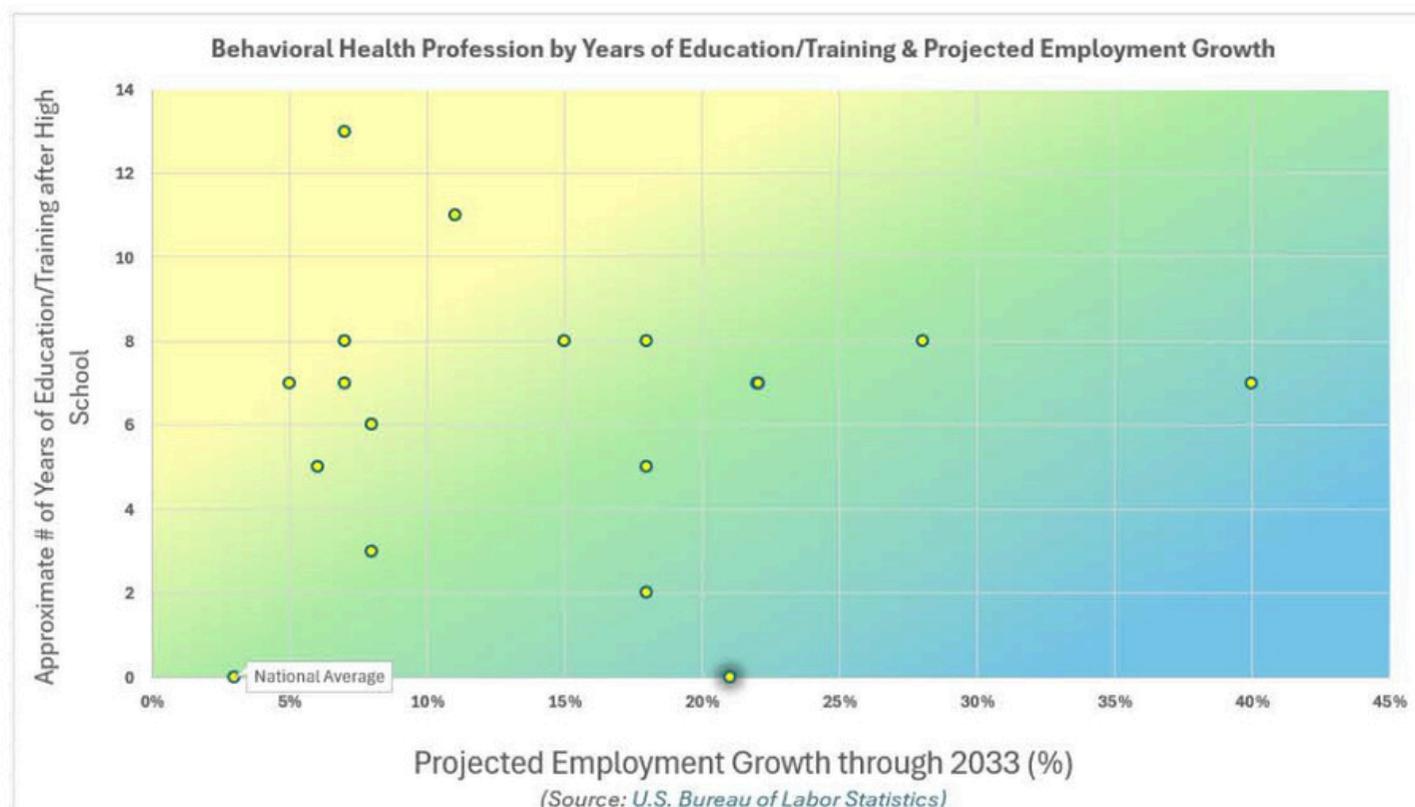
1. **High School Diploma** (or equivalent)
2. **Pass criminal background check**
3. **Completion of 40-hour training that meets requirements set forth by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB)**
4. **Completion of RBT Initial Competency Assessment, Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB)**

Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

- **National certification (Registered Behavior Technician® (RBT®)), Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB)**

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

1. **Must undergo ongoing supervision from a qualified RBT® Supervisor and/or RBT® Requirements Coordinator**
2. **Must adhere to the RBT® Ethics Code (2.0) and Self-Reporting Requirements**
3. **Must renew certification via RBT® Renewal Competency Assessment every year**



School Counselor



Job Description: School counselors are professionals who support students' academic, social, and emotional development by providing counseling, guidance, and support services to help them succeed in school and beyond.

Average Salary (South Carolina): \$57,030

Average Salary (National): \$60,406

Educational/Experiential/Training Requirements

1. **Bachelor's Degree** (*Psychology or related field*)
2. **Master's Degree** (*School Counseling*)
3. **Praxis I Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST)**, *Educational Testing Service (ETS) Praxis*
4. **Praxis II: Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) examination**, *Educational Testing Service (ETS) Praxis*
5. **Praxis II: School Guidance and Counseling examination**, *Educational Testing Service (ETS) Praxis*

Licensure/Certification Requirement(s)

- **State Certification, South Carolina School Counselor**, *South Carolina Department of Education*

Continuing Education Renewal Requirement(s)

- **40 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) every 2 years**

