

ILLINOIS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE 2025

REGIONAL ASSESSMENT OF BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH WORKFORCE DATA AND
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



BHWC

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
WORKFORCE CENTER



SIU SCHOOL
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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE DATA	5
STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DATA SNAPSHOT	8
REGIONAL WORKFORCE DATA	13
Region 1: Cook County	14
Region 2: Northern	15
Region 3: North Central	16
Region 4: Central Illinois	17
Region 5: Southern	18
HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM DATA	22
Region 1: Cook County	26
Region 2: Northern	30
Region 3: North Central	34
Region 4: Central	38
Region 5: Southern	42
REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT	45
RECOMMENDATIONS	46
REFERENCES	47
APPENDICES	48

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The ongoing behavioral health crisis in the United States has been significantly intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic, exposing critical gaps in the behavioral health workforce (Twenge et al., 2019). In response, the Illinois General Assembly enacted House Bill 5111—the Behavioral Health Workforce Act, which established the Behavioral Health Workforce Education Center, hereafter referred to as the Behavioral Health Workforce Center (BHWC), or simply *the Center* (State of Illinois, 2021). The primary mission of the Center is to strengthen Illinois’s behavioral healthcare system through a series of coordinated initiatives that:

- Assess behavioral health workforce shortages and needs across Illinois on an ongoing basis, with a focus on identifying regions experiencing the most critical gaps in services.
- Increase the number and diversity of behavioral health professionals—including individuals with lived experience, social workers, counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, and other mental health and substance use professionals providing effective behavioral health services across the state.
- Identify and address barriers to recruitment, training, and retention within the behavioral health workforce.
- Improve the quality of care by supporting training and professional development initiatives.
- Expand access to services by increasing provider capacity to address mental health and substance use needs through telehealth integration and care delivery in nontraditional and primary care settings (State of Illinois, 2021).

Methodology

From November 2023 through June 2025, the Behavioral Health Workforce Center collected baseline data on the behavioral health workforce in Illinois. Data sources included the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR); the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), within the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS); Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE); the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME); and the Illinois Certification Board (ICB). These agencies provided data related to the licensure and certification of behavioral health professionals across the state. Additionally, the Center analyzed degree conferral data provided by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in November 2023. This dataset spans five academic years and includes information on behavioral health–related degrees conferred by Illinois institutions of higher education.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this report is to identify and provide analysis of statewide and regional behavioral health workforce gaps and provide recommendations for further study. This report serves as a baseline, combining current evidence and a recent BHWC workforce study to describe the significant challenges in Illinois’s behavioral health workforce. The report’s primary limitations are the need for interagency data collection and data sharing. State and regional data were compiled into tables, findings, and recommendations. The BHWC study cited professional challenges in pay and support from organizations as primary reasons to leave the profession. IBHE detailed occupation reports are cited in this report and included in the appendices. The findings illustrate significant evidence of limited regional educational and clinical training

opportunities in the central and southern portions of Illinois. Although the limited scope of this report well documents the evidence regarding statewide and regional workforce gaps, it does not address differences in need for access based on the social determinants for health such as poverty, comorbidity, etc. that can be found in future BHWC reports.

Professional Titles

The Center's analysis focuses on the following professional titles within the behavioral health workforce:

- Certified Recovery Support Specialists (CRSSs)
- Certified Alcohol and Other Drug Counselors (CADCs)
- Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs)
- Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors (LCPCs)
- Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs)
- Licensed Social Workers (LSWs)
- Psychologists
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs)
- Occupational Therapists (OTs)
- Psychiatrists

A summary of roles and licensure levels associated with each of these professional titles are described in the following section. The BHWC lacked substantial workforce data for Primary Mental Health and Physician Assistant professions and will cover these professions more thoroughly in future workforce reports.

Key Findings

- Statewide averages for behavioral health providers per 100,000 population indicate that the number of licensed clinical social workers (LCSWs), psychologists, occupational therapists (OTs), and psychiatrists in Illinois exceeds the national average.
- Despite this, these numbers remain well below the benchmarks necessary to ensure equitable access to behavioral health services for all residents. Additionally, regional analysis reveals significant geographic disparities in workforce distribution.
- Illinois has fewer licensed clinical professional counselors (LCPCs), licensed professional counselors (LPCs), licensed social workers (LSWs), and licensed marriage and family therapists (LMFTs) per 100,000 population compared to national averages.
- The North Central (Region 3), Central (Region 4), and Southern (Region 5) regions fall below the national average across all behavioral health workforce categories included in this report.
- Cook County (Region 1), Northern Illinois (Region 2), and North Central (Region 3) have fewer certified recovery support specialists (CRSSs) than the Central (Region 4) and Southern (Region 5) regions.
- The Southern Region (Region 5) has more CRSSs and certified alcohol and other drug counselors (CADCs) than any other region in Illinois.
- Southern Illinois (Region 5) is the only region in the state without a psychiatry residency program.
- The number of psychology degrees conferred in Central (Region 4) and Southern (Region 5) Illinois is lower than in other regions of the state.

- Fewer social work degrees are conferred in the Central Region (Region 4) compared to other regions.
- Based on currently available data, only Cook County (Region 1) and North Central Illinois (Region 2) confer degrees in marriage and family therapy (MFT) and occupational therapy (OT). However, Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) has launched an OT program in Region 5. The program celebrated its first graduating class in May 2025.

Recommendations

- Expand high-quality clinical placement sites for students and recent graduates across behavioral health degree programs in all regions. Where appropriate, develop and disseminate key curricular components and core learning experiences.
- Expand access to high-quality clinical education and placements for LPCs, LSWs, and LMFTs to increase the number of licensed counselors, social workers, and therapists across all regions of Illinois.
- Expand OT and MFT degree programs in the North Central (Region 3), Central (Region 4), and Southern (Region 5) regions to increase training opportunities and access to therapy services.
- Increase the number of high-quality training sites for LSWs and LPCs to support clinical supervision in evidence-based psychotherapies.
- Establish a psychiatry residency program in the Southern Region (Region 5) to improve access to psychiatric care and expand workforce capacity. Additional child psychiatry training programs are also needed in the Central (Region 4) and Southern (Region 5) regions.
- Expand psychology education and training opportunities—including degree programs, accredited internships, and postdoctoral placements—in the Central and Southern regions to strengthen access to psychological services.
- Develop structured, experiential clinical curricula for psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner (PMHNP) students. Consider establishing post-graduate training programs for PMHNPs and physician assistants (PAs).
- Expand CRSS and CADC education and training programs in Cook County (Region 1) and Northern Illinois (Region 2) to improve the availability of peer professionals as integrated members of behavioral health care teams.

Areas for Further Study

- Institutions of higher education vary in how behavioral health degree programs are housed within departments. Some programs focus on clinical practice preparation, while others emphasize non-clinical paths such as teaching, research, or public health. Further data collection and analysis are needed to identify programs focused primarily on clinical practice.
- Some counseling and therapy programs are located within departments not traditionally considered part of behavioral health (e.g., education or rehabilitative services). Additional research is necessary to accurately identify and include these programs that are part of the pathway towards clinical study.

- Current data on the regional demand for clinical behavioral health services is limited. The Center plans to collect and assess regional demand data in Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) to better align workforce development with local needs.
- Postgraduate internship and preceptor data were not included in this report. However, the recommendations outlined here begin to address these emerging gaps in clinical training pathways.
- PMHNP and PA professions are not included in the FY2025 workforce report. The Center intends to add these professions for data tracking and reporting.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE DATA

Introduction

The ongoing behavioral health crisis in the United States and Illinois has placed significant pressure on the existing workforce to meet the increasing demand for services. Rates of psychological distress, depression, and suicide were already rising before the COVID-19 pandemic (Twenge et al., 2019). During the pandemic, the behavioral health system faced unprecedented challenges that affected individuals across all age groups (The White House, 2022).

In response, the Illinois General Assembly established the Behavioral Health Workforce Center to:

- Assess behavioral health workforce shortages and needs across Illinois on an ongoing basis, with a focus on identifying regions experiencing the most critical gaps in services.
- Increase the number and diversity of behavioral health professionals—including individuals with lived experience, social workers, counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, and other mental health and substance use professionals providing behavioral services across the state.
- Identify and address barriers to recruitment, training, and retention within the behavioral health workforce.
- Improve the quality of care by supporting training and professional development initiatives.
- Expand access to services by increasing provider capacity to address mental health and substance use needs through telehealth integration and care delivery in nontraditional and primary care settings (State of Illinois, 2021).

Behavioral Health Professions Overview

The behavioral health workforce includes a wide range of professionals, each contributing uniquely to the assessment, treatment, and support of individuals with behavioral health needs. Education, training, and licensure requirements vary by profession, state, and credentialing body. In Illinois, the Center monitors the following behavioral health professions:

- Certified Recovery Support Specialists (CRSSs)
- Certified Alcohol and Other Drug Counselors (CADCs)
- Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs)
- Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors (LCPCs)
- Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs)
- Licensed Social Workers (LSWs)
- Psychologists
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs)
- Occupational Therapists (OTs)
- Psychiatrists

Behavioral Health Professional Licensure and Workforce Diversity

The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) is responsible for overseeing the licensure process and ensuring licensed professionals have met the education,

supervision, and exam requirements. Recent statewide gender and race demographic estimates from the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) highlight race and gender disparities across all behavioral health professions:

- Psychiatrists in Illinois are 69 percent male and the majority are White.
- Seventy five percent of Psychologists are white female professionals.
- Occupation Therapist are 72 percent White and over 90 percent female.
- Among Social Workers, 60 percent are White, 22 percent Black or African American, and 11 percent Hispanic or Latino.
- Counselors are approximately 60 percent female, with 59 percent identifying as White, 22 percent as Black or African American, and 13 percent Hispanic or Latino.

The disparities highlight the need to increase diversity early in behavioral health career pathways. Additional demographic details are available in Appendix A. General information about each behavioral health profession is below (HRSA, 2025).

A **Licensed Social Worker (LSW)** holds a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree and provides services to individuals, groups, or communities across various domains of social work practice. LSWs are required to practice under the supervision of a licensed clinician and may bill for clinical services when supervised by a **Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)**.

A **Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)** also holds an MSW but has completed additional supervised clinical experience, qualifying for independent licensure. LCSWs are authorized to provide psychotherapy and other clinical services without supervision.

A **Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)** possesses a master's degree in counseling or a related field and provides therapeutic services, including assessments and treatment planning, under clinical supervision. LPCs may bill for services delivered under the supervision of a **Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC)**.

A **Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC)** has fulfilled the requirements for independent licensure and is qualified to provide a broad range of mental health services, including the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and psychological conditions, and the promotion of optimal mental well-being.

An **Associate Marriage and Family Therapist (AMFT)** has earned a graduate degree in marriage and family therapy or a closely related discipline. AMFTs must practice under supervision and are required to complete the licensure process for **Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)** within five years.

A **Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)** is independently licensed to assess and treat mental health conditions within the context of relationships and family systems. LMFTs often employ brief, solution-focused therapeutic approaches.

An **Occupational Therapist (OT)** assists individuals affected by illness, disability, or aging by enhancing their ability to perform daily activities. OTs use goal-directed interventions to promote independence and improve functional performance and are essential providers for persons experiencing Autism (IDFPR, 2022).

A ***Psychologist*** is an independently licensed professional with a doctoral degree in psychology. Psychologists provide psychotherapy, conduct psychological testing and assessments, and may specialize in clinical, counseling, school, or neuropsychology subfields.

A ***Psychiatrist*** is a licensed medical doctor who has completed medical school and a four-year psychiatric residency. Psychiatrists diagnose and treat mental illnesses, prescribe medications, and provide a range of therapeutic and medical interventions (Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, 2023).

Professions Credentialed by the Illinois Certification Board

The Center collected information from the Illinois Certification Board (ICB), a private, non-profit organization that promotes standards for certified professionals in mental health and substance use disorder services (ICB, n.d.). The ICB is responsible for overseeing the professional certification process for key behavioral health professions highlighted in this report.

Certified Recovery Support Specialists (CRSSs) are peer professionals who have lived experience in recovery from mental illness, with or without co-occurring substance use disorders. These individuals are trained to draw upon their personal recovery journeys to support others in their recovery processes. To promote the development of this workforce, the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health, has established the CRSS Success Program, which provides expanded training and accelerated pathways into the CRSS profession.

Certified Alcohol and Other Drug Counselors (CADC) are professional counselors trained to treat substance use disorders. The Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (SUPR), has collaborated with the ICB to expand education, training, and access to certification for those interested in becoming CADCs.

STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DATA SNAPSHOT

Professions Credentialed by the Illinois Certification Board

In March 2024, the Center reviewed regional data on the number of active CRSS and CADC professionals using the Illinois Certification Board database. At that time, there were a total of 325 Certified Recovery Support Specialists and 3,745 Certified Alcohol and Other Drug Counselors statewide. These numbers were considered in regional workforce analyses. (See Table 1.)

Table 1: Total number of CRSS & CADC in Illinois and number per 100,000 population

Region	Number of CRSSs	CRSS per 100,000 population	Number of CADCs	CADC per 100,000 population
1 Cook County	29	0.55	381	7.29
2 Northern	68	1.65	1,198	29.05
3 North Central	51	3.64	328	23.42
4 Central	59	6.87	245	28.52
5 Southern	118	10.27	1,593	138.62
Total	325	2.55	3,745	29.35
*Source: Illinois Certification Board. https://iaodapca.org/Members/Member-Directory Census, May 2024				

General Observations

- The Southern Region (5) has more CRSSs and CADCs than any other region.
- Cook County (1) has the fewest CRSSs compared to the other regions of the State.
- The North Central Region (3) has the fewest number of CADCs in the State.

Licensed Behavioral Health Professionals in Illinois

The Center collected professional licensure data from the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR), the regulatory authority for licensed professionals in the State of Illinois. Licensure data was obtained on November 30, 2023, for the following behavioral health professions: Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs), Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors (LCPCs), Licensed Social Workers (LSWs), Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs), Occupational Therapists (OTs), Psychologists, and Psychiatrists (Tables 2,3, & 4).

It is important to note the following data limitations:

- Licensure does not guarantee clinical practice. The presence of a license does not confirm that an individual is actively working in a clinical setting.

- Location may not reflect practice. Some individuals may hold an active Illinois license while residing and practicing in another state.
- Telehealth impact. Many telehealth providers hold multi-state licensure and serve clients across state lines, which may further obscure actual service delivery within Illinois.

Table 2: Total Number of Licensed Professionals in Illinois, IDFPR database

Occupation	Total Number
LPCs	6,225
LCPCs	10,311
LSWs	8,123
LCSWs	15,175
LMFTs	923
OTs	7,014
Psychologists	4,903
Psychiatrists	1,731

*Source: Professional Licensing. Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation <https://data.illinois.gov/dataset/professional-licensing>. (May 2024)
Area Health Resources Files (AHRF) 2022-2023. US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Workforce, Rockville, MD. (HRSA, 2023)

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average number of professionals per 100,000 population in the United States are: Psychiatrists (7.49), Psychologists (21.64), LCSWs (90.42), LSWs (123.89), LCPCs (145.61), LPCs (109.59), OTs (43.70), and LMFTs (19.11). (Table 3)

Table 3: National Average of Providers per 100,000 Population

Occupation	Per 100k
LPCs ¹	109.59
LCPCs ²	145.61
LSWs ³	123.89
LCSWs ⁴	90.42
LMFTs	19.11
OTs	43.70
Psychologist	21.64
Psychiatrists	7.49

Estimate is a combination of 'Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors' & 'Counselors, All Other.'¹ Estimate is a combination of 'Rehabilitation Counselors' & 'Substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors.'²
Estimate is a combination of 'Child, Family, and School Social Workers' & 'Social Workers, All Other.'³
Estimate is a combination of 'Healthcare Social Workers' & 'Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers.'⁴
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics. <https://www.bls.gov>, April 2024. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.)
U.S. Census Bureau. (2020). RACE. Decennial Census, DEC Redistricting Data (PL 94-171), <https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALPL2020.P1?q=US Population>, April 2024. U.S. (Census Bureau, 2020)

In Illinois, the average number of behavioral health providers per 100,000 population are: Psychiatrists (13.57), Psychologists (38.43), LCSWs (118.95), LSWs (63.67), LCPCs (80.82), LPCs (48.79), LMFTs (7.23), and OTs (54.98). (Table 4)

Table 4: Illinois Average Number of Providers per 100,000 Population

Occupation	Per 100K
LPCs	48.79
LCPCs	80.82
LSWs	63.67
LCSWs	118.95
LMFTs	7.23
OTs	54.98
Psychologists	38.43
Psychiatrists	13.57

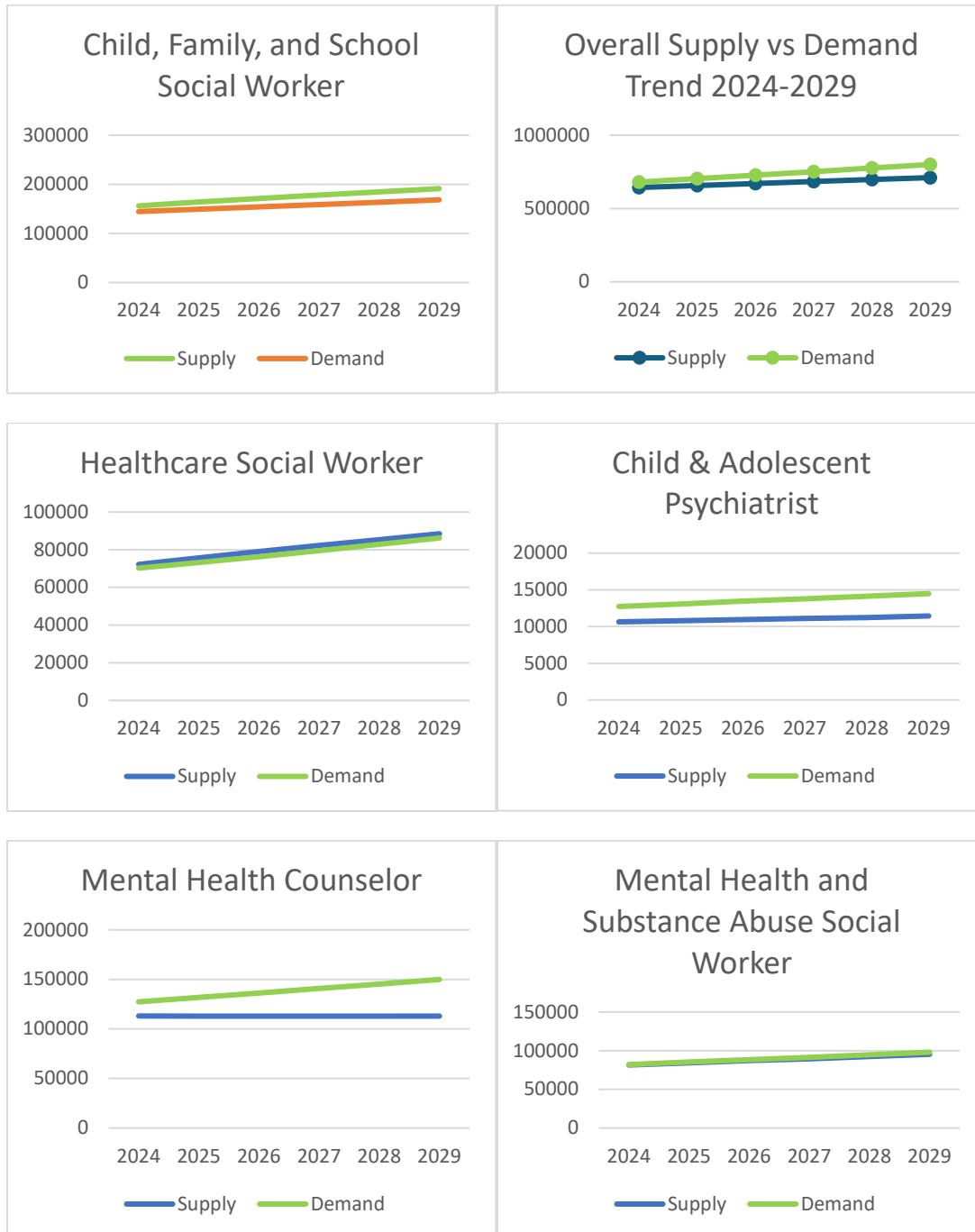
*Source: Professional Licensing, Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. <https://data.illinois.gov/dataset/professional-licensing>. May 2024.
Area Health Resources Files (AHRF) 2022-2023, US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Workforce, Rockville, MD. May 2024.

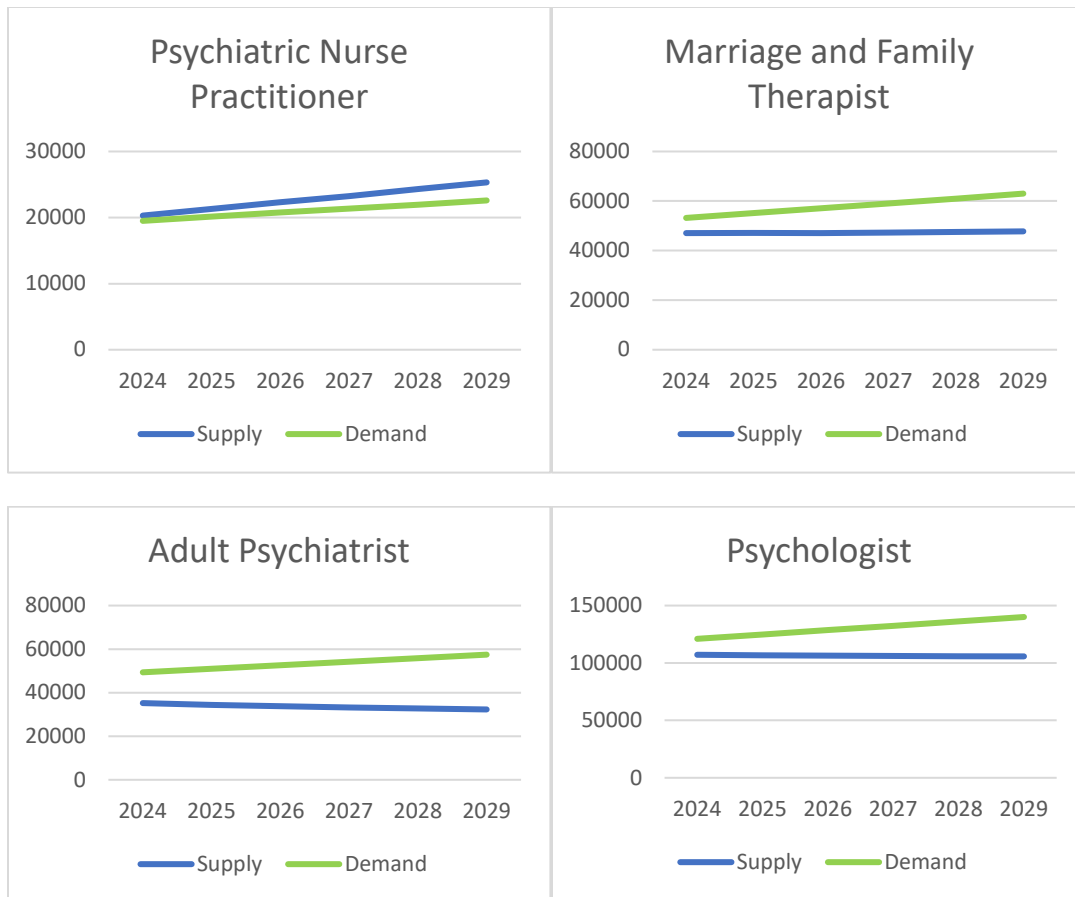
Supply and Demand for Behavioral Health Services

The Center will continue to assess data related to the demand for behavioral health services in Illinois. Access to accurate demand data will support tracking service needs by profession and monitoring educational and licensure pathways to anticipate and address future workforce gaps. According to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) workforce projections dashboard, national demand for behavioral health providers is expected to increase from 680,010 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in 2024 to 800,090 FTEs by 2029. During the same period, the projected supply will increase from 643,270 to 710,470, resulting in a projected shortfall of 89,620 behavioral health providers.

Graph 1 represents the projected national supply and demand data for psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric nurse practitioners, social workers, marriage and family therapists, and mental health counselors.

Graph 1: HRSA National Behavioral Health Supply and Demand Projections





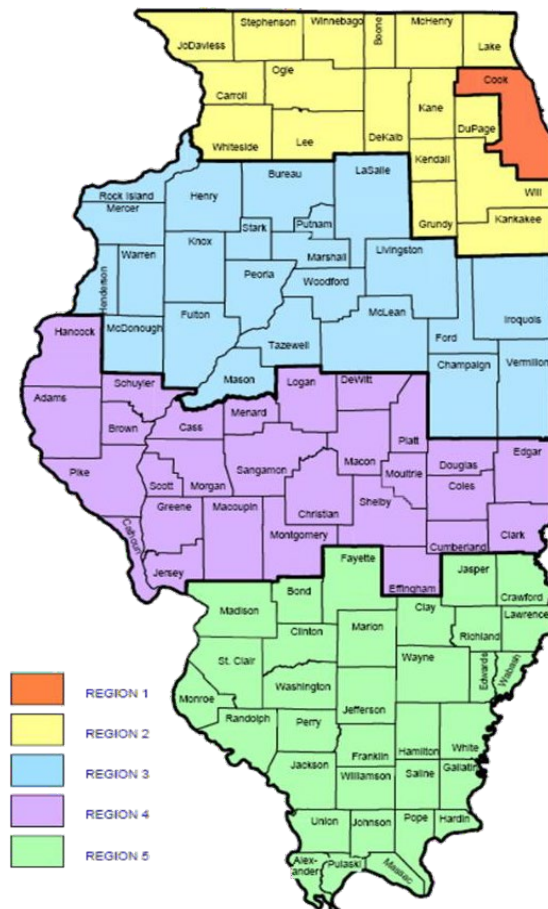
REGIONAL WORKFORCE DATA

Regional Map

For this report, the Center analyzes the behavioral health workforce across five regions defined by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS, n.d.):

- Region 1: Cook County
- Region 2: Northern
- Region 3: North Central
- Region 4: Central
- Region 5: Southern

Map 1: Regional Map, Illinois Department of Human Services



Regional State Workforce Averages

Illinois exceeds national averages in the number of Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs), Psychologists, Occupational Therapists (OTs), and Psychiatrists per 100,000 population. However, the state falls below national benchmarks for Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors (LCPCs), Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs), Licensed Social Workers (LSWs), and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs). Provider-to-population ratios vary significantly across regions, contributing to inadequate access to behavioral health services throughout Illinois, particularly in the North Central, Central, and Southern Regions (Regions 3, 4, and 5).

Region 1: Cook County

Region 1 has a concentration of behavioral health providers in key areas, with Psychiatrists, Psychologists, OTs, and LCSWs exceeding both national and state averages. However, this region remains below national benchmarks for LCPCs, LPCs, LSWs, and LMFTs. While Cook County performs better than the state average for most professions, LCPCs and LPCs remain underrepresented.

Key Highlights from Table 5

- Psychiatrists (+164%) and Psychologists (+141%) far exceed national averages.
- LCSWs are 56% above the national average and 18% above the state average.
- LPCs and LCPCs are more than 50% below national levels and slightly below or at parity with state levels.

Table 5: Region 1 Comparative Data to National and State Averages of Providers per 100,000 Population

Region 1					
Occupation	National	Illinois	Region 1	Regional vs National	Regional vs Illinois
LPC	109.59	48.79	47.23	-57%	-3%
LCPC	145.61	80.82	69.55	-52%	-14%
LSW	123.89	63.67	74.25	-40%	+17%
LCSW	90.42	118.95	140.95	+56%	+18%
LMFT	19.11	7.23	8.06	-58%	+11%
OT	43.7	54.98	55.21	+26%	+0%
Psychologist	21.64	38.43	52.25	+141%	+36%
Psychiatrist	7.49	13.57	19.75	+164%	+46%

*Source Data: Professional Licensing, Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Area Health Resource files, 2022- 2023 County Level Data, U.S. Census Bureau (2022). Total Population, American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, May 2024. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022)

Region 2: Northern

Region 2 has a more constrained workforce, with most professions falling below both national and state averages, except for OTs which exceed both. While LCSWs, Psychologists, and Psychiatrists exceed national levels, they still remain below Illinois state averages, indicating a need for targeted investment.

Key Highlights from Table 6

- LPCs and LCPCs are significantly underrepresented compared to both national and state benchmarks.
- OTs exceed both national (+36%) and Illinois (+8%) averages.
- Psychiatrists (+61%) and Psychologists (+48%) exceed national levels but fall below Illinois averages.

Table 6: Region 2 Comparative Data to National and State Averages per 100,000 population

Region 2					
Occupation	National	Illinois	Region 2	Regional vs National	Regional vs Illinois
LPC	109.59	48.79	35.65	-67%	-27%
LCPC	145.61	80.82	66.68	-54%	-17%
LSW	123.89	63.67	60.91	-51%	-4%
LCSW	90.42	118.95	106.55	+18%	-10%
LMFT	19.11	7.23	6.55	-66%	-9%
OT	43.7	54.98	59.24	+36%	+8%
Psychologist	21.64	38.43	32.06	+48%	-17%
Psychiatrist	7.49	13.57	12.05	+61%	-11%
*Source Data: Professional Licensing, Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Area Health Resource files, 2022- 2023 County Level Data, U.S. Census Bureau 2022. Total Population, American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables.					

Region 3: North Central

Region 3 falls below both national and Illinois averages in all tracked behavioral health professions, highlighting one of the most underserved areas in the state. The largest gaps appear in the availability of LCPCs, LPCs, LSWs, and LMFTs, which are more than 60% lower than national averages. This suggests a critical workforce shortage that limits access to care in the region.

Key Highlights from Table 7

- LMFTs (-85%), LPCs (-81%), and LSWs (-64%) show the largest deficits relative to national averages.
- Psychologists and Psychiatrists are also well below both benchmarks, reflecting reduced access to specialty services.
- No profession in Region 3 exceeds or meets either national or state averages.

Table 7: Region 3 Comparative Data to National and State Averages per 100,000 Population

Region 3					
Occupation	National	Illinois	Region 3	Regional vs National	Regional vs Illinois
LPC	109.59	48.79	20.78	-81%	-57%
LCPC	145.61	80.82	51.42	-65%	-36%
LSW	123.89	63.67	44.35	-64%	-30%
LCSW	90.42	118.95	80.41	-11%	-32%
LMFT	19.11	7.23	2.86	-85%	-60%
OT	43.7	54.98	27.92	-36%	-49%
Psychologist	21.64	38.43	14.43	-33%	-62%
Psychiatrist	7.49	13.57	6.64	-11%	-51%
*Source Data: Professional Licensing, Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Area Health Resource files, 2022- 2023 County Level Data, U.S. Census Bureau (2022). Total Population, American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables.					

Region 4: Central Illinois

Region 4 also performs below both national and state averages across all behavioral health professions. The most notable shortages are seen in LMFTs (–90%), LSWs (–72%), and LPCs (–73%). While this region slightly outperforms Region 3 in some categories, the provider-to-population ratios still indicate significant service access issues.

Key Highlights from Table 8

- Psychiatrists are the only profession near national average (+4%) but remain 43% below the Illinois state average.
- Mental health professions that require clinical supervision (e.g., LPC, LMFT) remain notably underrepresented.
- The region would benefit from targeted expansion of clinical training pathways and retention efforts.

Table 8: Region 4 Comparative Data to National and State Averages per 100,000 Population

Region 4					
Occupation	National	Illinois	Region 4	Regional vs National	Regional vs Illinois
LPC	109.59	48.79	29.46	-73%	-40%
LCPC	145.61	80.82	51.23	-65%	-37%
LSW	123.89	63.67	35.04	-72%	-45%
LCSW	90.42	118.95	59.73	-34%	-50%
LMFT	19.11	7.23	1.86	-90%	-74%
OT	43.7	54.98	31.9	-27%	-42%
Psychologist	21.64	38.43	9.43	-56%	-75%
Psychiatrist	7.49	13.57	7.80	+4%	-43%
*Source Data: Professional Licensing, Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Area Health Resource files, 2022- 2023 County Level Data, U.S. Census Bureau (2022). Total Population, American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables.					

Region 5: Southern

Region 5 has the lowest provider rates in the state relative to both national and state averages. The most critical shortages are in LPCs (-86%), LMFTs (-91%), and Psychologists (-63%), indicating substantial barriers to accessing behavioral health services. This region also lacks a psychiatry residency program, further challenging workforce growth.

Key Highlights from Table 9

- Every profession is below national and state averages, some by more than 70%.
- Psychiatrist availability is 51% below the national average and 73% below the Illinois average.
- LMFTs and Psychologists face the steepest deficits, suggesting urgent need for regional training and recruitment investments.

Table 9: Region 5 comparative data to national and state averages per 100,000 population

Region 5					
Occupation	National	Illinois	Region 5	Regional vs National	Regional vs Illinois
LPC	109.59	48.79	15.75	-86%	-68%
LCPC	145.61	80.82	40.64	-72%	-50%
LSW	123.89	63.67	34.11	-72%	-46%
LCSW	90.42	118.95	65.79	-27%	-45%
LMFT	19.11	7.23	1.65	-91%	-77%
OT	43.7	54.98	34.02	-22%	-38%
Psychologist	21.64	38.43	8.09	-63%	-79%
Psychiatrist	7.49	13.57	3.65	-51%	-73%
*Source Data: Professional Licensing, Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Area Health Resource files, 2022- 2023 County Level Data, U.S. Census Bureau (2022). Total Population, American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables.					

Statewide Workforce Implications

While Illinois overall exceeds national averages in LCSWs, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, and OTs, these strengths are not equally distributed and accessible throughout the state. The geographic imbalance in behavioral health workforce availability limits access to quality care, especially in rural and underserved areas. Strengthening educational pathways, expanding residency and supervision opportunities, and improving provider retention are critical steps to closing these regional gaps.

Workforce Retention Challenges in Illinois

Behavioral health workforce shortages in Illinois are driven not only by a limited pathways for new professionals but also by early exits and mass retirements from the field. To better understand retention-related challenges, the Behavioral Health Workforce Center at University of Illinois Chicago distributed a survey in 2023–2024 to community mental health providers working primarily with publicly insured populations (BHCW, 2024).

Findings from 555 respondents (see full results at illinoisbhwc.org/bhwc-reports) highlighted several key reasons why providers may leave their current positions in the next year:

- Low compensation (most frequently cited)
- Limited professional development opportunities
- High caseloads and productivity expectations
- Unsupportive organizational culture
- Lack of recognition and appreciation
- Extensive documentation requirements

Notably, African American/Black providers reported a higher intention to leave, with nearly two-thirds citing low pay as a primary factor. This racial disparity signals the need for retention strategies that consider equity and provider experience.

Among all respondents, low compensation was also the primary reason cited for considering leaving direct practice entirely. While race/ethnicity did not significantly influence reasons for leaving the field overall, educational and credentialing levels did. Providers with lower levels of education and fewer credentials were more likely to view low pay as a critical factor in their decision to exit the field.

These findings suggest that addressing compensation, workload, and organizational support structures are essential to improving retention and strengthening the behavioral health workforce statewide.

Key Findings

1. Illinois exceeds national averages in the number of Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs), Psychologists, Occupational Therapists (OTs), and Psychiatrists per 100,000 population. However, regional disparities in provider distribution led to workforce shortages in several areas of the state. Additionally, statewide supply remains below the benchmarks necessary to meet the clinical needs of the population.
2. Illinois falls below national averages in the number of Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors (LCPCs), Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs), Licensed Social Workers (LSWs), and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs).

3. Regions 1, 2, and 3 (Cook County, Northern, and North Central) have fewer Certified Recovery Support Specialists (CRSSs) than Regions 4 and 5 (Central and Southern).
4. Region 5 (Southern Illinois) has more CRSSs and Certified Alcohol and Other Drug Counselors (CADCs) than any other region in the state.
5. Low compensation is a significant factor contributing to workforce retention challenges among behavioral health professionals in Illinois.

Workforce Recommendations

1. Expand CRSS and CADC training programs, especially in Cook County and Northern Illinois (Regions 1 and 2), to increase access to peer professionals and support integration into interdisciplinary care teams.
2. Increase education and training opportunities for LPCs, LSWs, and LMFTs across all regions to improve the availability of licensed counselors, social workers, and family therapists statewide.
3. Establish a Psychiatry residency program and child and adolescent focused fellowships in regions 4 (Central Illinois) and 5 (Southern Illinois) to enhance access to psychiatric services and grow the provider pipeline in underserved areas.
4. Expand psychology education and training programs in regions 4 and 5 (Central and Southern Illinois) to strengthen the availability of psychological services and promote regional workforce development.
5. Increase access to OT and MFT education and training programs in regions 3, 4, and 5 (North Central, Central, and Southern Illinois) to address regional shortages and expand service capacity.

Summary

The findings and recommendations reflect an in-depth analysis of Illinois' behavioral health workforce across the five Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) regions. While Illinois as a whole exceeds national averages in the number of LCSWs, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, and Occupational Therapists, this strength is not equitably distributed. Regions 3 (North Central), 4 (Central), and 5 (Southern) consistently report lower-than-average provider-to-population ratios across nearly all behavioral health professions, including LCPCs, LPCs, LSWs, and LMFTs. These geographic disparities significantly limit access to care, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Regional imbalances and workforce retention challenges further strain the behavioral health system. Recent survey data collected by the Behavioral Health Workforce Center at University of Illinois Chicago revealed that low compensation, limited opportunities for professional development, high caseload demands, and unsupportive agency environments are key factors contributing to provider turnover. These concerns are more pronounced among professionals with lower levels of credentialing and among African American/Black providers, who report an elevated risk of leaving their current roles due to systemic inequities. The findings represent the need for region and profession-specific interventions, expanded training opportunities, improved retention strategies, and greater workforce equity to ensure that Illinois can meet the increasing demand for behavioral health services statewide.

Higher Education Pathways and Future Workforce Capacity

Understanding the current behavioral health workforce gaps is only one part of the challenge. Equally important is assessing whether Illinois' higher education institutions are equipped to train and sustain a workforce that can meet future behavioral health needs. The next section examines the number and distribution of behavioral health degrees conferred across regions, identifying areas where academic programs are limited or underdeveloped. Potential gaps in educational capacity—particularly in Central and Southern Illinois—may further contribute to long-term workforce shortages if not addressed through strategic investment, program expansion, and alignment with regional service needs.

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM DATA

Higher education continues to serve as a cornerstone for individual advancement, community well-being, and the economic health of the state. In Illinois, the Behavioral Health Workforce Center (BHWC) is funded by the Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health, and administered by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). IBHE functions as the coordinating agency for all sectors of higher education in the state and oversees a vast and diverse network of institutions.

As of 2023, IBHE has oversight of:

- 12 public universities
- 48 community colleges
- 93 independent not-for-profit institutions
- 10 independent for-profit institutions
- 37 out-of-state institutions operating in Illinois
- 43 Private Business and Vocational School (PBVS) not-for-profit institutions
- 231 PBVS for-profit institutions

This totals 474 higher education institutions across the state. The 16-member IBHE Board, which includes student representation, is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Illinois State Senate. IBHE works collaboratively with the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and other higher education consortia to support adult learners, traditional students, and workforce-aligned degree and certificate programs, including those in behavioral health.

Degree Conferral Data

To better understand the state's capacity to develop its behavioral health workforce, the BHWC analyzed data provided by IBHE in November 2023. This dataset included the number of behavioral health-related degrees conferred statewide from 2019 to 2023. During those five years, Illinois institutions awarded the following clinically licensed degrees:

- Psychology – 1,524 degrees
- Social Work – 9,077 degrees
- Counseling – 621 degrees
- Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) – 358 degrees
- Occupational Therapy (OT) – 897 degrees

These figures represent a baseline measure of educational capacity and help identify potential gaps between current educational output and future behavioral health workforce needs. Regional breakdowns of degree conferral are discussed in the following sections to highlight geographic trends in educational access and workforce pathway development (IBHE, 2024).

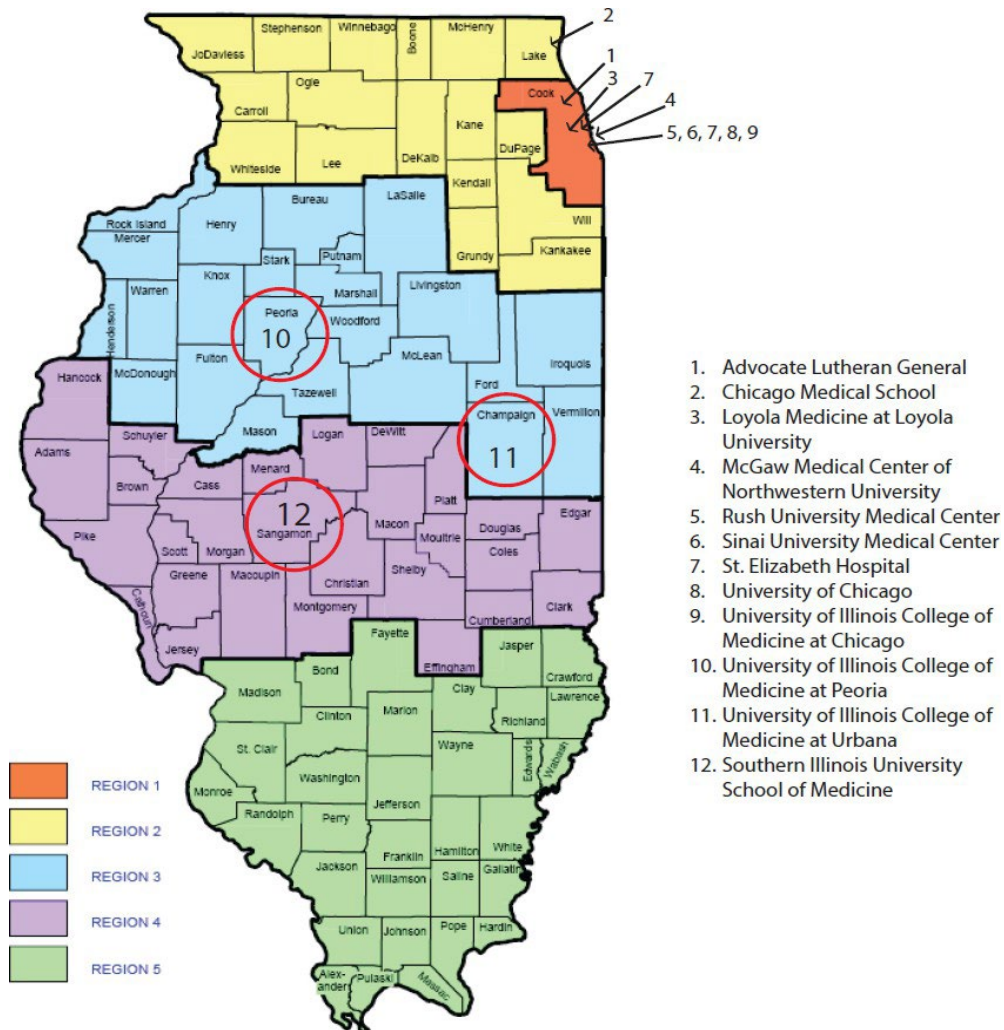
Psychiatry Residency Programs

While the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) collects data on behavioral health-related degree conferrals, it does not track Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs such as Psychiatry residencies and fellowships. To assess the training pipeline for psychiatrists, the Center utilized data from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), which accredits residency programs nationwide.

As of 2024, Illinois trains a total of 366 Psychiatry residents annually across a range of programs throughout the state. Psychiatry residency is a four-year specialized training undertaken by licensed medical doctors (MDs) following medical school. According to ACGME data, 57.1% of Psychiatry Residents who completed their training between 2013 and 2022 remained in the state where they trained—a retention rate that has remained stable for the previous training decade as well (2012–2021) (ACGME, 2023).

This residency retention rate is significant because it underscores the importance of the geographic distribution of training programs. Regions with access to psychiatry residency opportunities are more likely to retain providers and build a sustainable psychiatric workforce over time. Notably, Southern Illinois (Region 5) does not currently have an ACGME-accredited Psychiatry Residency Program, highlighting a potential training and service gap in that region (Map 2).

Map 2: Psychiatry Residency Programs by Region



The table below presents all ACGME-accredited Psychiatry Residency programs in Illinois, including the number of approved residency slots and the year the program was established. It is important to note that the last psychiatry residency program was established more than 20 years ago (Table 10).

Table 10: Psychiatry Residency Programs and Approved Positions in 2024, ACGME

Program Name	Approved positions	Year Program Established
Advocate Lutheran General Hospital	16	1925
Chicago Medical School (Rosalind Franklin University)	28	1977
Loyola Medicine at Loyola University	24	1971
McGaw Medical Center of Northwestern University	40	1966
Rush University Medical Center	32	2002
Sinai University Medical Center	32	1936
St. Elizabeth Hospital	38 (Psychiatry + Med Psych)	1974
SIU School of Medicine	40 (Psychiatry + Med Psych)	1970
University of Chicago	28	1925
University of Illinois College of Medicine at Chicago	48	1933
University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria	24	1973
University of Illinois College of Medicine at Urbana (Carle Foundation Hospital)	16	2004
Source: Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), May 2024.		

Regional Analysis of Behavioral Health Degree Conferrals

To evaluate the current educational pathways for behavioral health professionals, the Center reviewed data provided by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) on the number of degrees conferred by IBHE-recognized institutions between 2019 and 2023 (Appendix B). This analysis provides insight into the regional distribution of educational programs and their capacity to meet workforce needs. By assessing the number of clinically licensed-eligible degrees conferred in Psychology, Counseling, Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT), and Occupational Therapy (OT), the Center aims to highlight both educational strengths and potential gaps across the five DHS-defined regions of Illinois.

Region 1: Cook County

The Cook County Region (Region 1) serves as a major educational hub for behavioral health professions in Illinois. Between 2019 and 2023, institutions in this region conferred the highest number of degrees across all major behavioral health disciplines. This output reflects strong educational infrastructure and capacity to supply a significant portion of the state's behavioral health workforce. The region conferred a total of 3,928 clinically license eligible psychology degrees, 332 clinically license eligible counseling degrees, 4,484 clinically license eligible social work degrees and 1,202 non-clinically licensed social work degrees, 282 clinically license eligible MFT degrees, and 579 clinically license eligible occupational therapy degrees.

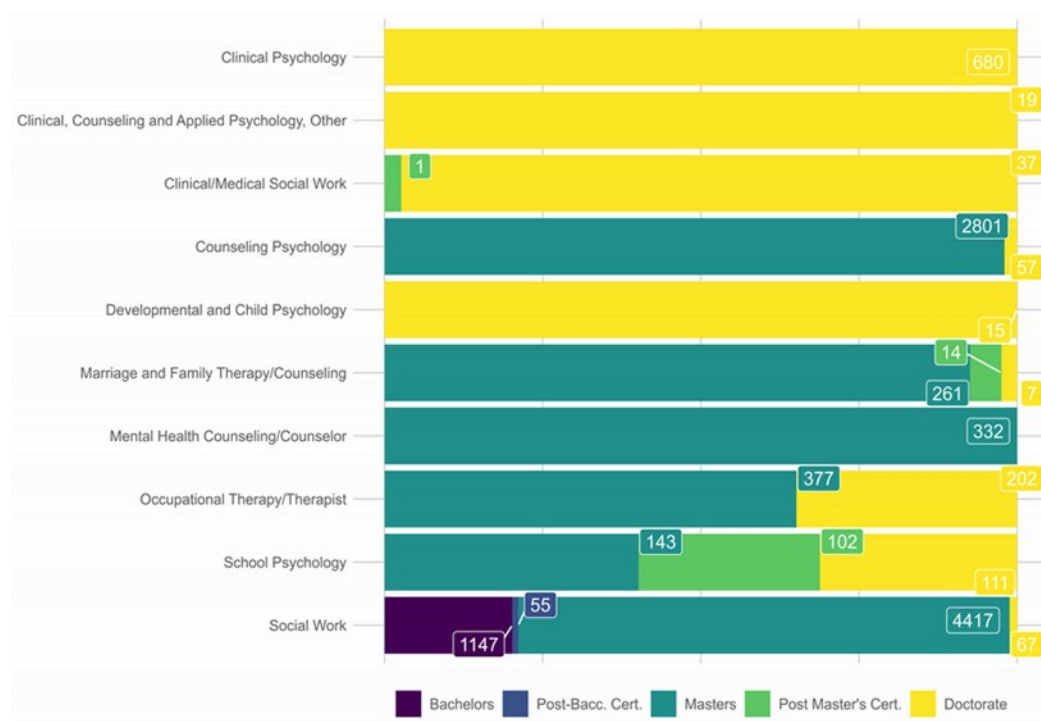
Key Observations and Conclusions

1. Cook County is the Primary Statewide Hub for Graduate Psychology Education.
 - 78% of all Clinical Psychology doctorates in Illinois were conferred in region 1.
 - For specialized fields like Counseling Psychology, School Psychology, and Developmental and Child Psychology, Region 1 conferred 81%–100% of doctoral degrees statewide.
 - These figures underscore Region 1's critical role in producing advanced-level psychologists for Illinois.
2. Social Work Degree Output Is Substantial but Not Dominant
 - Region 1 awarded 50% of the state's Master of Social Work (MSW) degrees and 29% of Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degrees.
 - While Cook County plays a major role, MSW programs are distributed more evenly across regions compared to psychology, suggesting broader statewide educational access to social work.
3. Limited contribution to Occupational Therapy and Mental Health Counseling
 - Region 1 conferred only 43% of OT master's degrees and 50% of OT doctoral degrees statewide.
 - In Mental Health Counseling, Region 1 awarded just over half (54%) of all master's degrees, signaling the need for broader OT and counseling program access statewide.
4. Region 1 awarded 73% of all MFT master's degrees and 100% of post-master's certificates and doctoral degrees in the field.

Strategic Implications

- Strengthen Downstate Access
 - Psychology and MFT education are heavily concentrated in Cook County. Expanding these programs in other regions could reduce workforce shortages outside of region 1.
- Build Clinical Pathways from BSW to MSW
 - Given Region 1's large share of BSW degrees, targeted efforts to bridge bachelor's-level graduates into advanced clinical licensure programs may strengthen the pipeline.

Table 11: Total Number of Degrees Conferred in Region 1 from 2019-2023



Data Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education, 2019-2023 *Degrees Conferred Region 1*

Table 12: Region 1 Percentage of Degrees Conferred

Per 100k		% of total degrees conferred in Illinois
Clinical Psychology		
Doctorate	13.01	78%
Clinical, Counseling and Applied Psychology, Other		
Doctorate	0.36	100%
Clinical/Medical Social Work		
Post Master's Cert.	0.02	100%
Doctorate	0.71	100%
Counseling Psychology		
Masters	53.60	85%
Doctorate	1.09	100%
Developmental and Child Psychology		
Doctorate	0.29	100%
Marriage and Family Therapy/Counseling		
Masters	4.99	73%
Post Master's Cert.	0.27	100%
Doctorate	0.13	100%
Mental Health Counseling/Counselor		
Masters	6.35	54%
Occupational Therapy/Therapist		
Masters	7.21	43%
Doctorate	3.87	50%
School Psychology		
Masters	2.74	56%
Post Master's Cert.	1.95	47%
Doctorate	2.12	81%
Social Work		
Bachelors	21.95	29%
Post-Bacc. Cert.	1.05	96%
Masters	84.53	50%
Doctorate	1.28	50%

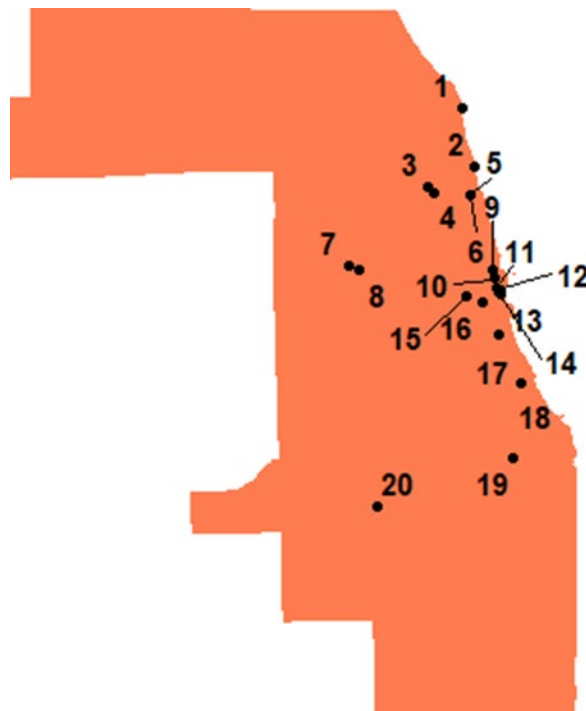
Region 1 did not produce degrees in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse/Nursing.

Data Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education, 2019-2023

General Observations

- High Concentration
 - The Cook County Region (1) has a particularly high concentration of professionals in Psychology Doctoral programs and Masters of Social Work.
- Certification Focus
 - Bachelors Certificate in Psychology and Social Work, were almost exclusively awarded in Cook County (1). Need assessment with pipeline to advanced degrees.
- Field Distribution
 - The region's share of professionals in Marriage and Family Therapy and OT is notably high.

Map 3: Region 1 Behavioral Health Degree Programs



1	Northwestern University
2	Loyola University of Cook County
3	Northeastern Illinois University
4	North Park University
5	St. Augustine College
6	Institute for Clinical Social Work
7	Dominican University
8	Concordia University Cook County
9	Moody Bible Institute
10	Erikson Institute

11	Adler University
12	National Louis University
13	DePaul University
14	Roosevelt University
15	Rush University
16	University of Illinois Cook County
17	Illinois Institute of Technology
18	University of Cook County
19	St. Xavier University
20	Trinity Christian College

Region 2: Northern

The Northern Region (2) conferred a total of 531 clinically license eligible psychology degrees, 144 clinically license eligible counseling degrees, 3,314 clinically license eligible social work degrees and 1,290 non-clinically licensed social work degrees, 90 clinically license eligible MFT degrees, and 695 clinically license eligible occupational therapy degrees.

Key Observations and Conclusions

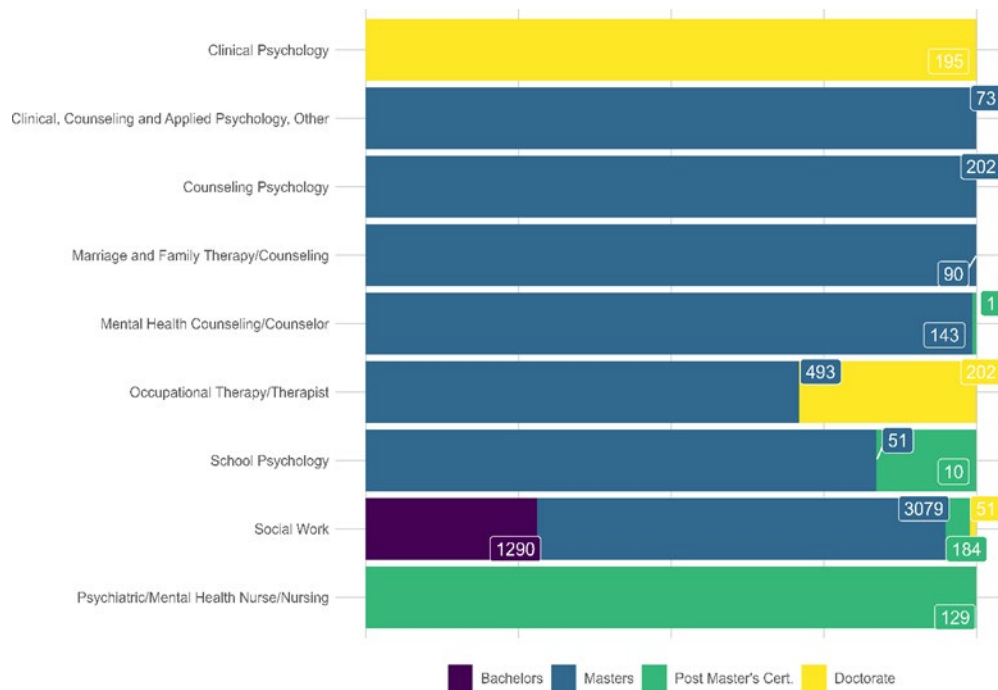
1. Region 2 is a major contributor to Illinois' Occupational Therapy pipeline, producing 57% of the state's OT doctorates and 50% of OT master's degrees. This indicates a well-established infrastructure for OT education and training in the Northern region.
2. Region 2 produces 35% of Illinois' MSW degrees and 31% of BSW degrees, showing a solid, though not dominant, role in the social work education pipeline. The region also contributes a notable portion of doctoral degrees (38%) in this field.
3. Although Region 2 confers some clinical psychology doctoral degrees (22%), other psychology and counseling-related programs such as Counseling Psychology, School Psychology, and Marriage and Family Therapy show limited output, with percentages under 25% of statewide totals.
4. Region 2 did not produce degrees in Clinical/Medical Social Work or Developmental and Child Psychology during the review period, indicating clear gaps in program availability.
5. The region includes a wide distribution of 13 institutions, including public universities (e.g., NIU, Governors State), private institutions, and medical universities (e.g., Rosalind Franklin). This spread offers a foundation for future program development to address regional shortages.

Strategic Implications

To balance the statewide workforce pipeline and improve regional access to underrepresented specialties, Region 2 would benefit from:

- Expansion of doctoral and clinical training in psychology and counseling fields
- Introduction or growth of child-focused behavioral health programs
- Development of programs in MFT and school psychology to reduce workforce bottlenecks in suburban and rural districts

Table 13: Total Number of Degrees Conferred in Region 1 from 2019-2023



Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education from years 2019-2023

Table 14: Region 2 Percentage of Degrees Conferred

	Per 100k	% of total degrees conferred in Illinois
Clinical Psychology		
Doctorate	4.73	22%
Clinical, Counseling and Applied Psychology, Other		
Masters	1.77	100%
Counseling Psychology		
Masters	4.90	6%
Marriage and Family Therapy/Counseling		
Masters	2.18	25%
Mental Health Counseling/Counselor		
Masters	3.47	23%
Post Master's Cert.	0.02	50%
Occupational Therapy/Therapist		
Masters	11.95	57%
Doctorate	4.90	50%
Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse/Nursing		

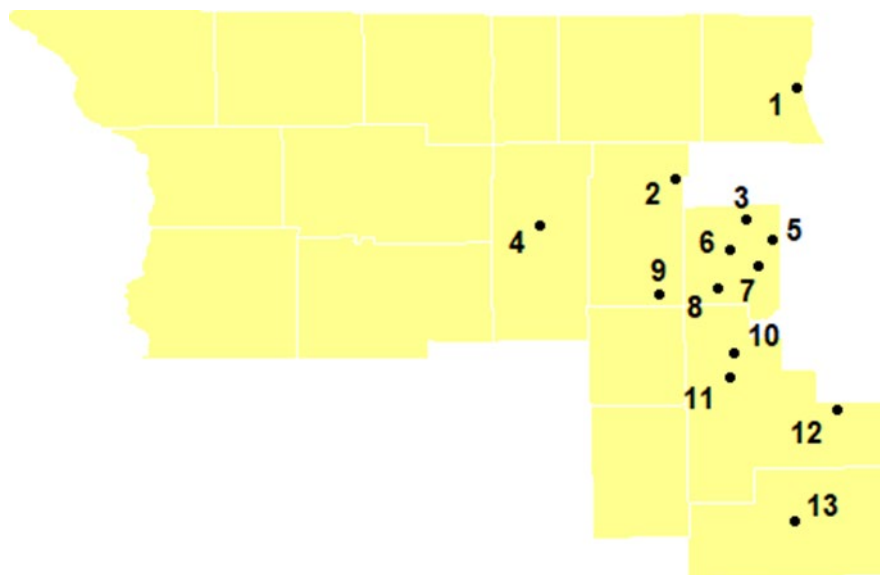
Post Master's Cert.	3.13	93%
School Psychology		
Masters	1.24	20%
Post Master's Cert.	0.24	5%
Social Work		
Bachelors	31.28	32%
Masters	74.66	35%
Post Master's Cert.	4.46	99%
Doctorate	1.24	38%

Region 2 did not produce degrees in Clinical/Medical Social Work and Developmental and Child Psychology.

General Observation

- The Northern Region (2) is a significant hub for Occupational Therapy degrees, especially at the Masters level, where it produces a majority of the state's OT degrees.

Map 4: Region 2 Behavioral Health Degree Programs



1	Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine & Science
2	Judson University
3	Chamberlain University
4	Northern Illinois University
5	Elmhurst University
6	Wheaton College

7	Midwestern University
8	North Central College
9	Aurora University
10	Lewis University
11	University of St. Francis
12	Governors State University
13	Olivet Nazarene University

Data Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education, 2019-2023

Region 3: North Central

The North Central Region (3) conferred 133 clinically licensed psychology degrees, 141 counseling clinically license eligible degrees, 967 clinically license eligible social work degrees and 942 non-clinically license eligible social work degrees. There were no OT programs in the North Central Region (3). Data is not available for MFT programs in the region.

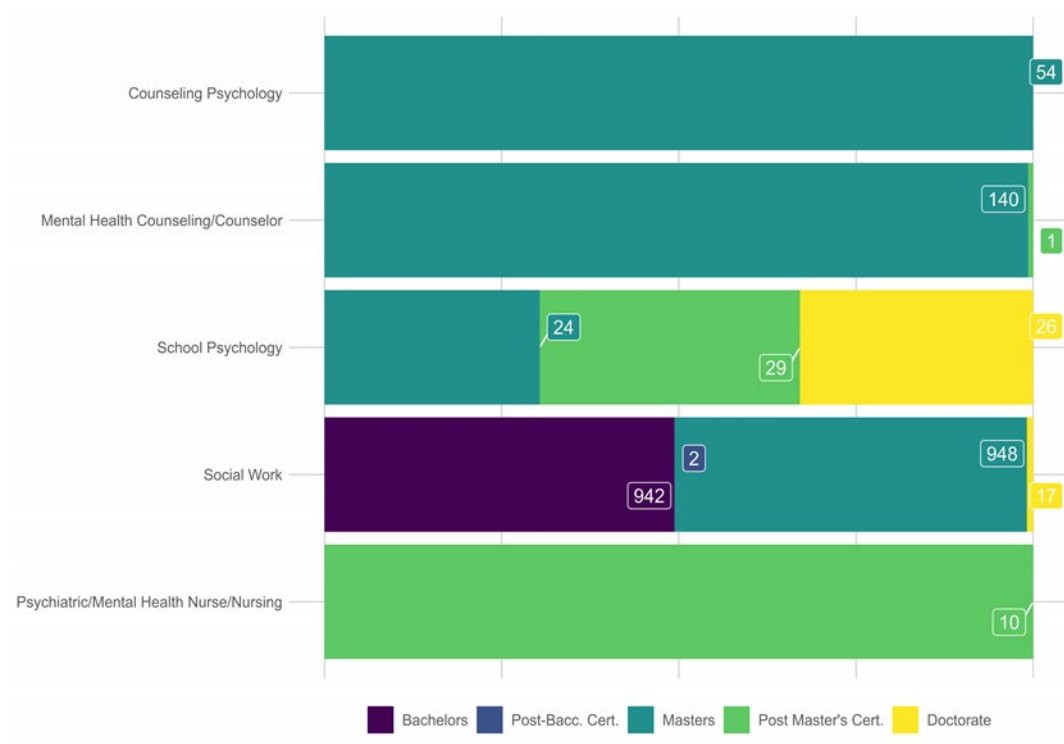
Key Observations and Conclusions

1. Limited Advanced Clinical Education Capacity
 - Region 3 conferred relatively few clinically license eligible graduate degrees across most behavioral health disciplines. Notably:
 - No degrees were conferred in Clinical Psychology, MFT, or Occupational Therapy programs.
 - Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) programs were present but limited (only 10 degrees conferred).
 - Master's level degrees in counseling and social work are present but not at high levels relative to state totals.
2. Heavy Emphasis on Social Work at the Undergraduate Level
 - Region 3 conferred a notably high percentage (23%) of the state's bachelor's-level social work degrees, suggesting a robust pipeline of entry-level professionals. However, only 11% of the state's MSW degrees were conferred in the region, indicating a potential gap in advancing these professionals into clinical licensure pathways.
3. Absence of Key Disciplines
 - There were no programs in Clinical Psychology, MFT, or OT—three essential disciplines for comprehensive behavioral health service delivery. This gap may hinder the availability of specialized mental health services in Region 3.
4. Gaps in Degree Conferral Relative to Need
 - Despite some educational infrastructure (Bradley University, ISU, WIU, and UIUC), Region 3 contributes a small share of the total behavioral health graduate degrees conferred statewide. The shortfalls likely contribute to the low regional provider ratios identified earlier in the report.
5. Need for Program Development and Pathway Support
 - The data suggests an opportunity to expand graduate-level training programs in counseling, psychology, MFT, and OT fields. There is also a need to support students in bachelor's-level programs with pathways to licensure.

Here is a bar chart visualizing the behavioral health degrees conferred in region 3 (North Central Illinois) between 2019 and 2023. It highlights:

- A strong emphasis on Social Work degrees (both clinically eligible and non-clinical).
- Very limited output in Psychology and Counseling.
- No degrees conferred in Occupational Therapy or Marriage and Family Therapy.

Table 15: Region 3 Behavioral Health Degrees Conferred



Data Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education from years 2019-2023

Table 16: Region 3 Percentage of Degrees Conferred

	Per 100k	% of total degrees conferred in Illinois
Counseling Psychology		
Masters	3.86	2%
Mental Health Counseling/Counselor		
Masters	10.00	23%
Post Master's Cert.	0.07	50%
Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse/Nursing		
Post Master's Cert.	0.71	7%
School Psychology		
Masters	1.71	9%
Post Master's Cert.	2.07	13%
Doctorate	1.86	19%
Social Work		
Bachelors	67.27	23%
Post-Bacc. Cert.	0.14	4%
Masters	67.70	11%
Doctorate	1.21	13%

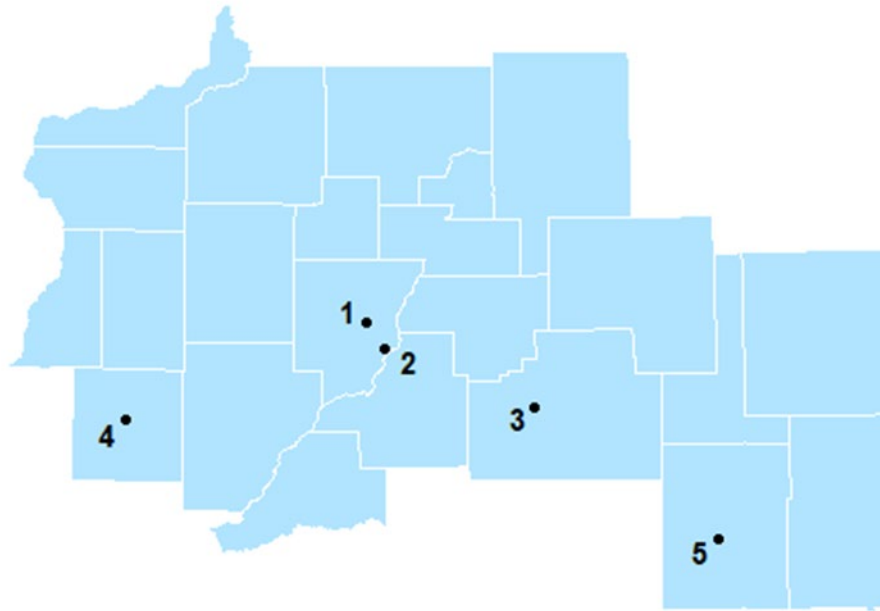
Region 3 did not produce degrees in Clinical Psychology, Clinical, Counseling and Applied Psychology, Other, Clinical/Medical Social Work, Developmental and Child Psychology, Marriage and Family Therapy/Counseling, and Occupational Therapy/Therapist.

Data Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education from years 2019-2023

General Observation

- High Representation of Bachelor's Degrees: The North Central Region (3) had more undergraduate degrees conferred in Psychology and Social Work than Masters and Doctoral degrees.

Map 5: Region 3 Behavioral Health Degree programs



	Institution
1	Methodist College
2	Bradley University
3	Illinois State University
4	Western Illinois University
5	University of Illinois Urbana/Champaign

Region 4: Central

The Central Region (4) conferred the lowest amount of clinically licensed degrees in all 5 regions, including 5 in MFT, 268 in psychology. All 150 social work degrees conferred were Bachelor degrees that are not eligible for licensure. There were no OT degrees conferred in this region.

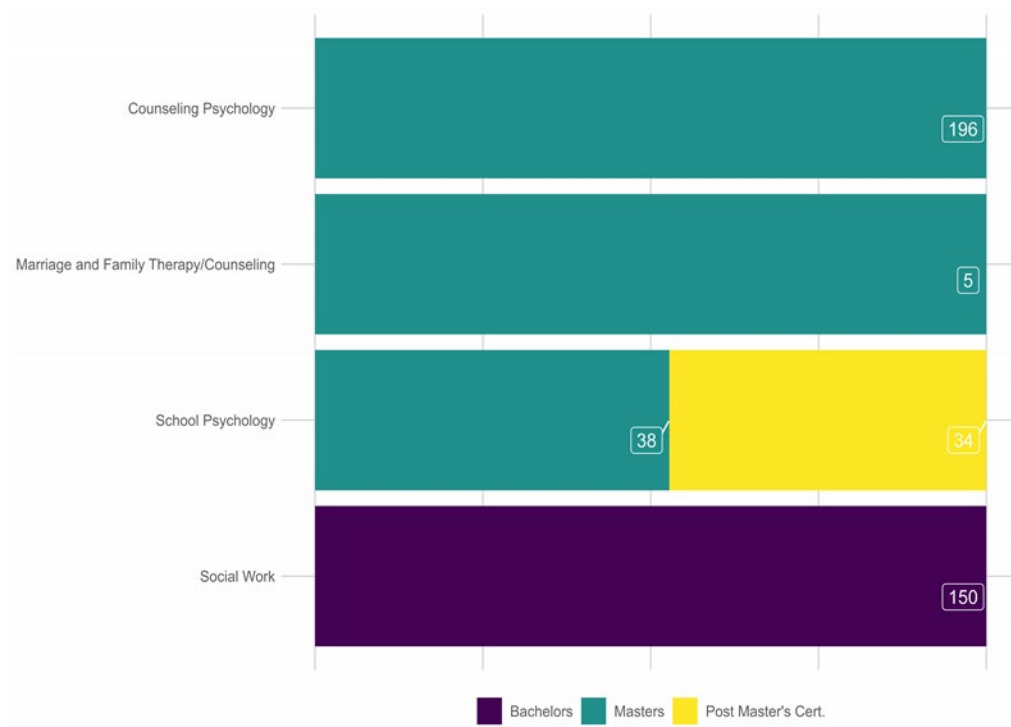
Key Observations and Conclusions

1. Lowest Degree Output Across Regions
 - Region 4 conferred the fewest clinically license-eligible behavioral health degrees among all five regions, suggesting significant limitations in the local training pathways for behavioral health professionals.
2. Limited Degree Diversity
3. Undergraduate-Dominant Social Work Output
 - All 150 social work degrees conferred were at the bachelor's level, which does not qualify for clinical licensure in Illinois. The absence of master's-level social work programs limits the region's capacity to grow a licensed social work workforce.
4. Minimal Contribution to the Statewide Pipeline with Region 4 accounting for only:
 - 4% of Illinois' social work bachelor's degrees
 - 6% of counseling psychology master's degrees
 - 1% of MFT degrees
 - The region is underrepresented in contributing to the state's behavioral health workforce pipeline
5. Education and Workforce Mismatch
 - Region 4's workforce needs are high, yet the local training capacity is disproportionately low. This mismatch may drive workforce shortages unless addressed through expanded academic programming and partnerships.

Strategic Implications

- Increase clinical field training opportunities for all professions to bring local clinicians to the Central Region for their post graduate work.
- Create a pathway for Bachelor's level social workers to continue their education while working in the field.
- Degrees in clinical psychology, mental health counseling, and developmental and child psychology were entirely absent. Increase training sites for specialty post-doctoral internships in Central region.
- Significant investment in higher education pathways for clinically licensed professions. The lack of graduate-level programs and field-specific diversity contributes to existing workforce shortages in the region.

Table 17: Region 4 Behavioral Health Degrees Conferred



Data Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education, 2019-2023, *Degrees Conferred Region 4*

Table 18: Region 4 Percentage of Degrees Conferred

	Per 100k	% of total degrees conferred in Illinois
Counseling Psychology		
Masters	22.82	6%
Marriage and Family Therapy/Counseling		
Masters	0.58	1%
School Psychology		
Masters	4.42	15%
Post Master's Cert.	3.96	16%
Social Work		
Bachelors	17.46	4%

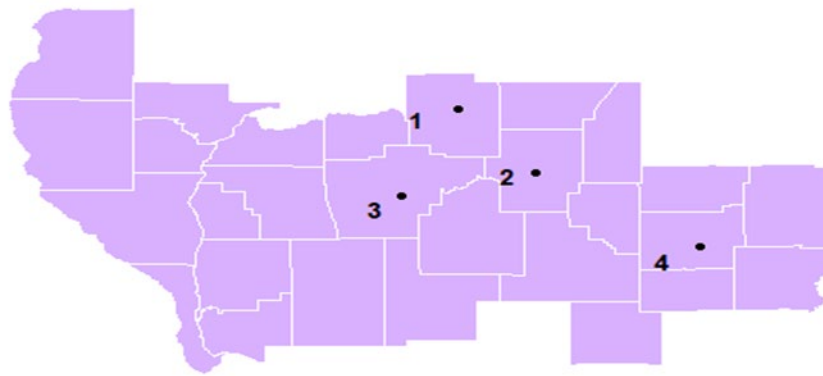
Region 4 did not produce degrees in Clinical Psychology; Clinical Counseling; and Applied Psychology; Other, Clinical/Medical Social Work; Developmental and Child Psychology; Mental Health Counseling/Counselor; and Occupational Therapy/Therapist.

Data Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education from years 2019-2023

General Observations

- Limited representation in Psychology and Social Work
 - The Central Region (4) has a very low number of Psychology and Social Work degrees conferred compared to other regions.
- No Presence in Other Key Fields
 - There were no OT degrees conferred in the region. Data is not available for MFT programs in the region.

Map 6: Region 4 Behavioral Health Degree Programs



	Institution
1	Lincoln Christian University
2	Millikin University
3	University of Illinois Springfield
4	Eastern Illinois University

Region 5: Southern

The Southern Region (5) conferred 75 clinically license eligible psychology degrees, 461 clinically license eligible social work degrees and 488 non-clinically license eligible social work degrees. SIU Carbondale (SIUC) has established a new Occupational Therapy program, which conferred degrees for its inaugural class in May of 2025. MFT program data is not available for this region.

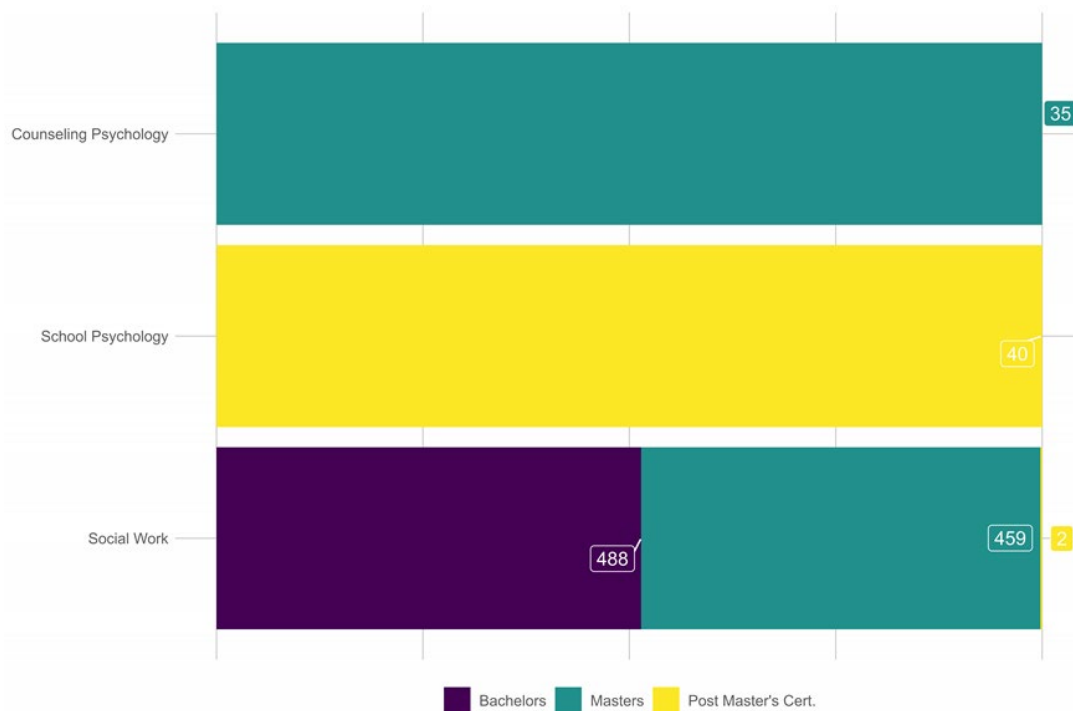
Key Observations and Conclusions

1. Strong Output in Social Work Degrees
 - Region 5 conferred a significant number of social work degrees—a combined total of 949, including 461 clinically license eligible (MSW) degrees. This indicates a strong foundation in social work education despite the region’s generally lower overall behavioral health workforce.
2. Psychiatric Residency Programs and Child & Adolescent Fellowship programs are absent in this region.
3. Limited Psychology Degree Production
 - The region awarded only 75 clinically license eligible psychology degrees, suggesting a limited pipeline of psychologists trained in the region. This figure is low compared to other regions and aligns with broader regional shortages in the psychology workforce.
4. Notable Share in School Psychology Certification
 - Region 5 accounted for 19% of the state's Post-Master’s Certificates in School Psychology, a meaningful contribution relative to its size. This may reflect niche strengths within certain university programs (e.g., SIU Carbondale).
5. Absence or Gaps in Key Fields
 - The region did not confer any degrees in OT during the reporting period, though SIU Carbondale's new OT program, which graduated its first cohort in 2025. Data on MFT programs remains unavailable, which makes it difficult to evaluate training capacity in that field.

Strategic Implications

- Room for Growth in Counseling and Psychology
 - Counseling psychology master's degrees represent just 1% of the statewide total, showing limited educational capacity in this area. Expansion of master’s-level programs in counseling and psychology could support local workforce development.
- Reliance on Bachelor's-Level Training
 - Like Region 3 and 4, Region 5 conferred a large share of bachelor’s-level social work degrees (488). While valuable, these degrees do not meet the criteria for clinical licensure, underscoring the need to strengthen graduate pathways.
- Absence of Psychiatry Programs and Fellowships
 - Limits educational opportunities for clinical rotations in the region.

Table 19: Region 5 Behavioral Health Degrees Conferred



Data Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education, 2019-2023 Degrees Conferred Region 5

Table 20: Region 5 Percentage of Degrees Conferred

	Per 100k	% of total degrees conferred in Illinois
Counseling Psychology		
Masters	3.05	1%
School Psychology		
Post Master's Cert.	3.48	19%
Social Work		
Bachelors	42.47	12%
Masters	39.94	5%
Post Master's Cert.	0.17	1%

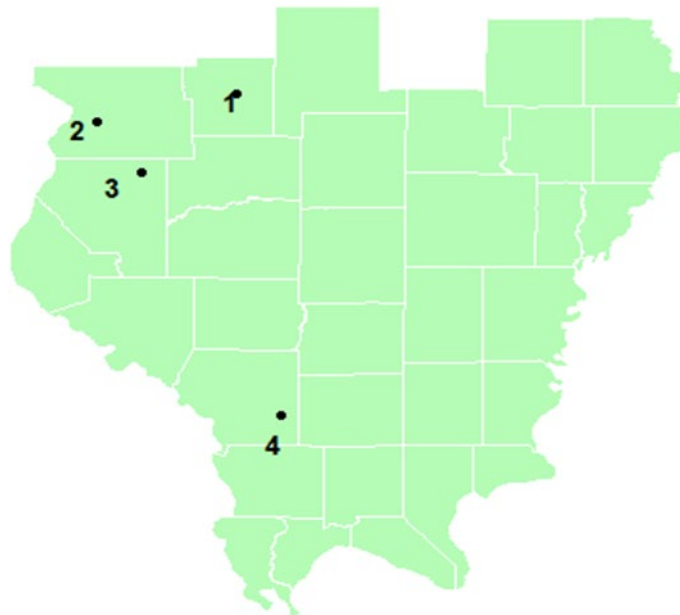
Region 5 did not produce degrees in Clinical Psychology; Clinical Counseling; and Applied Psychology; Other, Clinical/Medical Social Work; Developmental and Child Psychology; Mental Health Counseling/Counselor; and Occupational Therapy/Therapist.

Data Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education from years 2019-2023

General Observations

- Moderate Presence in Psychology and Social Work
 - The Southern Region (5) has a low percentage of the State's degrees conferred in Psychology and Social Work.
- Lack of Educational Programs in Certain Fields
 - In the Southern Region (5) there were no OT degrees conferred and access to MFT program information is not available.

Map 7: Region 5 Behavioral Health Degree programs



	Institution
1	Greenville University
2	Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
3	McKendree University
4	Southern Illinois University Carbondale

REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Key Findings

1. Data from the Illinois Board of Higher Education from 2019-2023, conferred 4,935 license eligible psychology degrees, 617 license eligible counseling degrees, 9,226 license eligible social work degrees, 377 licenses eligible MFT degrees, 1,274 license eligible degrees in occupational therapy, and 139 license eligible psychiatric mental health nursing certifications.
2. Southern Illinois (5) is the only region without Psychiatry residency and child & adolescent fellowship programs, which limits educational opportunities for clinical rotations in the region.
3. The number of Psychology license eligible degrees conferred in Central (4) and Southern (5) Illinois are lower than other regions of the state. Only Psychologists who have completed an internship as part of their doctoral degree can graduate. After graduating with their doctoral degree, Psychologists must complete a post-doctoral program before they can be independently licensed. SIUC is the only post-doctoral program outside of the Cook County Region.
4. The number of Social Work license eligible degrees conferred in the Central Region (4) are the lowest of all regions.
5. Only Cook County and the North Central Regions (1 and 2) confer degrees in MFT and OT. SIUC has started a new OT program in Region 5, and conferred seven license eligible degrees for its inaugural class in May of 2025.
6. A shortage of MFT programs in downstate Illinois (regions 3, 4, and 5) may reflect an absence of educational offerings, but may also be part of other degree programs not using the MFT degree title. Further exploration is needed.
7. The lack of OT degrees conferred in North Central, Central and Southern Illinois (3, 4, and 5) demonstrates limited access to educational programs needed to address the regional workforce shortage.
8. In all behavioral health professions assessed for this report, the low number of providers in the North Central, Central and Southern Illinois Regions (3, 4, and 5) may be a result of the low number of degrees conferred in these regions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. An expansion of Master's level Counseling, Social Work, and Marriage and Family Therapy Degree programs is needed in all regions of the State.
2. An expansion of Social Work programs may be needed in the North Central, Central, and Southern Regions (3, 4, and 5).
3. Psychiatry residency and child & adolescent fellowship programs in Region 5 (Southern Illinois) would enhance training opportunities for Psychiatrists and improve access to psychiatric care in the Region.
4. An expansion of doctoral Psychology education and clinical training programs (accredited internships and post-doctoral training programs) in the Central and Southern Regions (4 and 5) would enhance learning opportunities and improve access to psychological services in Central and Southern Illinois.
5. An expansion of CRSS and CADC certification programs are needed in Cook County and in the Northern Region (1 and 2).

Additional Data and Further Study Needed

1. Institutions of higher education vary in the manner in which degree programs are located within departments. Some degree programs prepare learners for a clinical practice pathway while others include non-clinical pathway preparation (teaching, research, public health, etc.). Further data collection and analysis are needed to identify programs primarily focused on clinical practice preparation.
2. Some counseling and therapy programs are housed within departments that may not be considered behavioral health such as education, rehabilitative services, etc. More in-depth data collection and inquiry is needed to accurately identify counseling and therapy programs, such as MFT degree titles that may not be represented in this report.
3. The demand for clinical behavioral health services in each region is unknown at this time. The Center will collect and assess demand data for behavioral health services in FY26. Demand for services will more clearly define the need of the behavioral health workforce professions and educational capacity needed in each region.
4. This report does not include post graduate internship and preceptor information nor does it include pre-doctoral psychology internship information.
5. PMHNP and PA professions are not included in the FY2025 workforce report. The Center intends to add these professions for data tracking and reporting.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

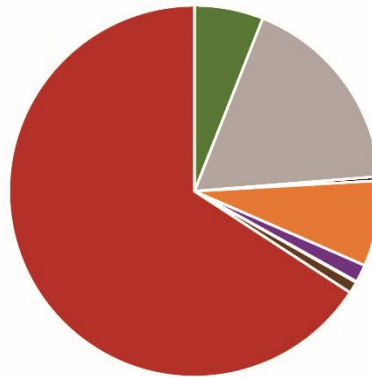
Workforce Demographics



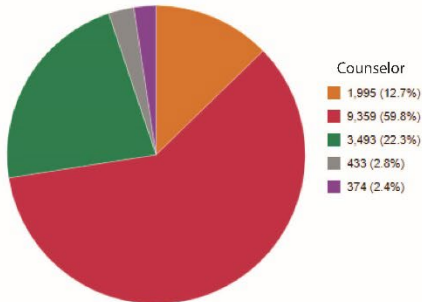
Workforce Demographic Estimates

Race/Ethnicity Demographics of Active Psychiatrists

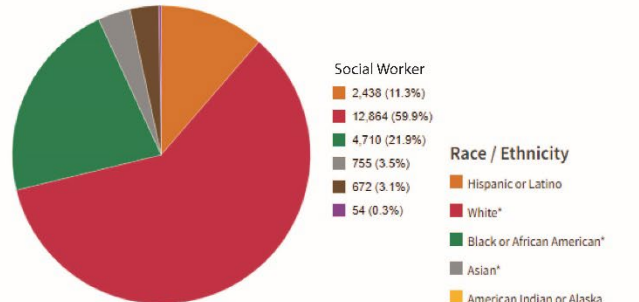
- Black/African-American: 1904
- Asian: 5628
- American Indian/Alaska Native: 113
- Hispanic: 2366
- Multiple Race- Non Hispanic: 491
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 26
- Other Race: 322
- White: 20891



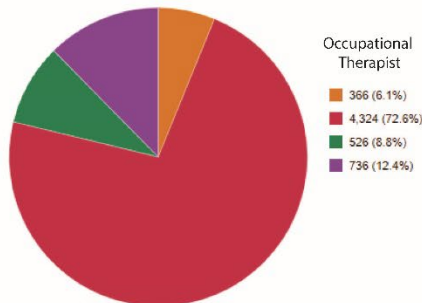
Illinois (15,654)



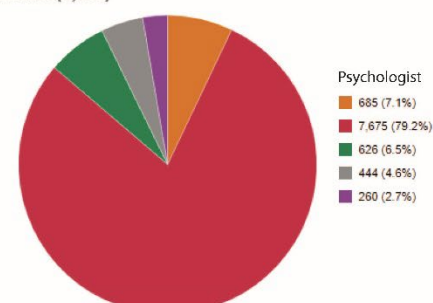
Illinois (21,493)



Illinois (5,952)



Illinois (9,690)



- Race / Ethnicity**
- Hispanic or Latino
 - White*
 - Black or African American*
 - Asian*
 - American Indian or Alaska Native*
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander*
 - Other or Multiple Races*
 - Not Available

* Non-Hispanic

**Not available (NA) indicates the data are suppressed, zero, or not available in the dashboard.



HRSA
Health Resources & Services Administration

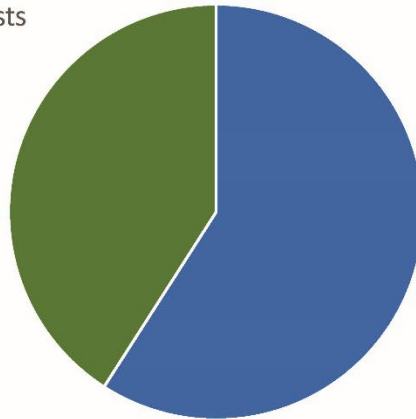
Area Health Resources Files



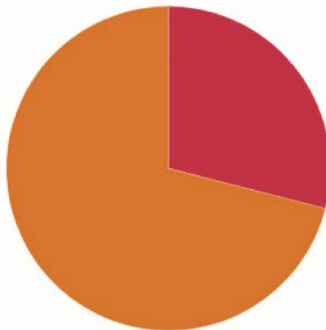
Workforce Demographic Estimates

Active Psychiatrists
by Sex

■ Male: 22690
■ Female: 15711

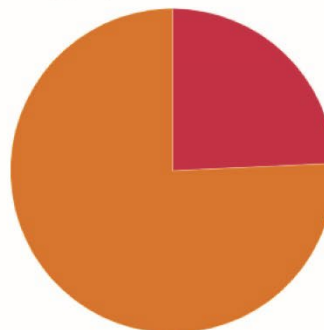


Illinois (15,654)



Counselor
■ 4,537 (29.0%)
■ 11,117 (71.0%)
■ 0 (0.0%)

Illinois (9,690)

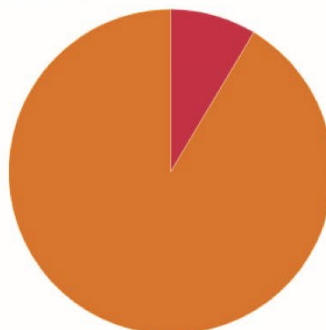


Psychologist
■ 2,353 (24.3%)
■ 7,337 (75.7%)
■ 0 (0.0%)

Sex

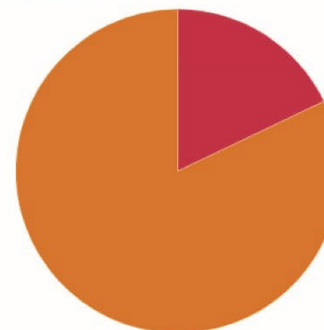
■ Male
■ Female
■ Not Available

Illinois (5,952)



Occupational
Therapist
■ 510 (8.6%)
■ 5,442 (91.4%)
■ 0 (0.0%)

Illinois (21,493)



Social Worker
■ 3,846 (17.9%)
■ 17,647 (82.1%)
■ 0 (0.0%)

**Not available (NA) indicates the data are suppressed, zero, or not available in the dashboard.



Area Health Resources Files

Appendix B

Degree Conferral Data from the Illinois Board of Higher Education (2019–2023)

- Occupation Report for Clinical and Counseling Psychologists



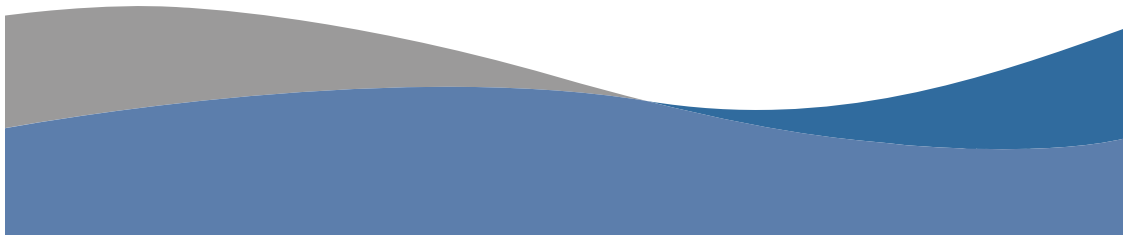
Occupation Report

Clinical and Counseling Psychologists

Illinois



Illinois Board of Higher Education
Provided by:
Jennifer B. Barnett
Associate Director of Workforce Analytics



- Occupation Report for Marriage and Family Therapists



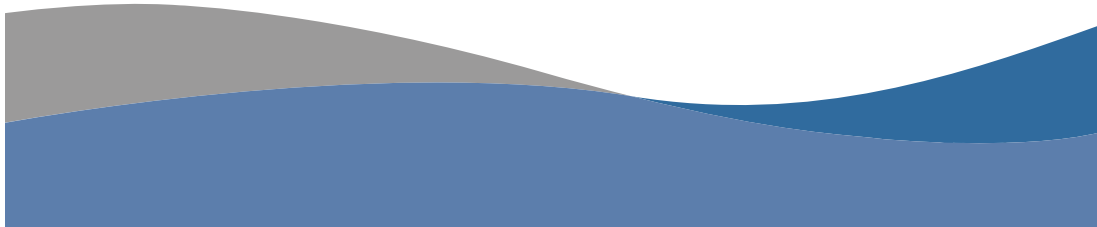
Occupation Report

Marriage and Family Therapists

Illinois



Illinois Board of Higher Education
Provided by:
Jennifer B. Barnett
Associate Director of Workforce Analytics



- Occupation Report for Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors



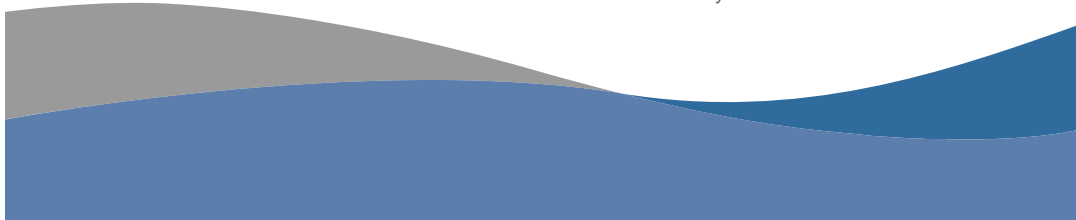
Occupation Report

Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors

Illinois



Illinois Board of Higher Education
Provided by:
Jennifer B. Barnett
Associate Director of Workforce Analytics



- Occupation Report for Child, Family, and School Social Workers



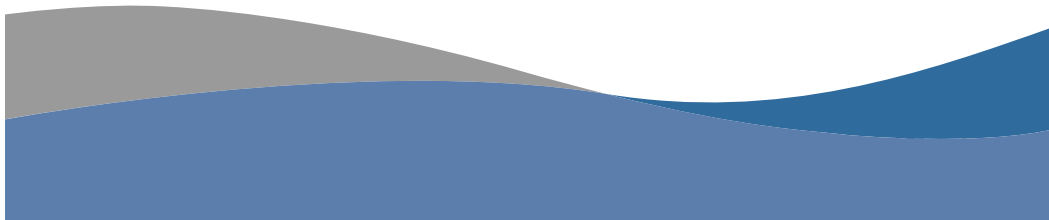
Occupation Report

Child, Family, and School Social Workers

Illinois



Illinois Board of Higher Education
Provided by:
Jennifer B. Barnett
Associate Director of Workforce Analytics



- Occupation Report for Healthcare Social Workers



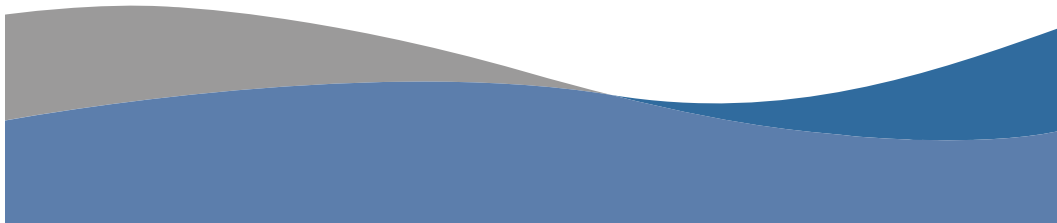
Occupation Report

Healthcare Social Workers

Illinois



Illinois Board of Higher Education
Provided by:
Jennifer B. Barnett
Associate Director of Workforce Analytics



- Occupation Report for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers



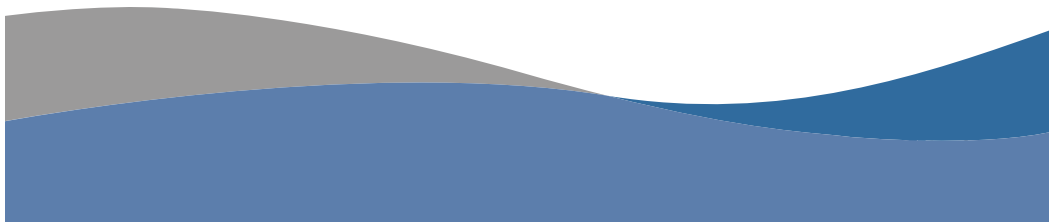
Occupation Report

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers

Illinois



Illinois Board of Higher Education
Provided by:
Jennifer B. Barnett
Associate Director of Workforce Analytics



- Occupation Report for Occupational Therapists



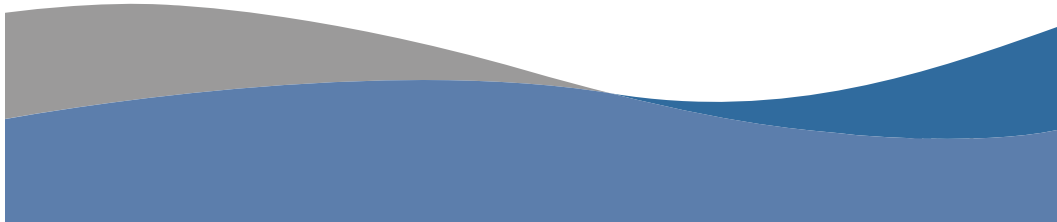
Occupation Report

Occupational Therapists

Illinois



Illinois Board of Higher Education
Provided by:
Jennifer B. Barnett
Associate Director of Workforce Analytics



- Occupation Report for Psychiatrists



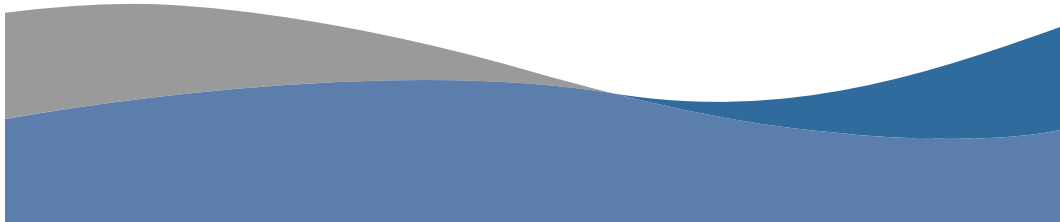
Occupation Report

Psychiatrists

Illinois



Illinois Board of Higher Education
Provided by:
Jennifer B. Barnett
Associate Director of Workforce Analytics



- Occupation Report for Registered Nurses



Occupation Report

Registered Nurses

Illinois



Illinois Board of Higher Education
Provided by:
Jennifer B. Barnett
Associate Director of Workforce Analytics

