

Rehabilitation Counselors

SOC: 21-1015 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$46,110

Median Salary

91,900

Employment

+1.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Master's degree

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 6.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■■ Work-Life Balance

8.0/10 - Excellent work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	4.0/10	Investigative	5.8/10
Artistic	7.0/10	Social	9.2/10
Enterprising	5.0/10	Conventional	5.8/10

■ Top Skills Required

Communication skills, Compassion, Critical-thinking skills, Interpersonal skills, Listening skills, Patience

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Rehabilitation Counselors are human services professionals who help individuals with **physical, mental, developmental, or emotional disabilities achieve greater independence and participation in work and daily life**. They provide counseling, guidance, and coordination of services to support clients' vocational, educational, and personal goals. Their work focuses on empowerment, accessibility, and long-term success.

This career is well suited for individuals who are empathetic, patient, and motivated to help others overcome barriers and build meaningful lives.

What Do Rehabilitation Counselors Do?

Rehabilitation counselors assess client needs and develop plans to support independence and employment.

Common responsibilities include:

- Evaluating clients' abilities, interests, and limitations
- Developing individualized rehabilitation or vocational plans
- Providing counseling related to adjustment, coping, and goal setting
- Coordinating services such as job training, education, or assistive technology
- Assisting clients with job placement and workplace accommodations
- Advocating for client needs with employers and service providers
- Monitoring progress and updating plans as needed

Areas of Focus and Specialization

Rehabilitation counselors may specialize in certain populations or services:

- Vocational Rehabilitation: Helping clients prepare for, find, and maintain employment.
- Disability Counseling: Supporting adjustment and independent living skills.
- Mental Health Rehabilitation: Assisting individuals with psychiatric disabilities.
- Substance Use Rehabilitation: Supporting recovery and reintegration.
- Transition Services: Helping students with disabilities move into adulthood.

Skills and Abilities Needed

Rehabilitation counselors combine counseling skills with advocacy and coordination.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Certification Pathway

Entering this field typically requires graduate-level education and credentials:

- Master's Degree (required): Rehabilitation counseling or a related counseling field
- Supervised Clinical Experience: Practicum or internship hours
- State Licensure or Certification: Required to practice
- Professional Certification (common): Rehabilitation counseling credentials
- Continuing Education: Required to maintain licensure

Where Do Rehabilitation Counselors Work?

Rehabilitation counselors are employed across healthcare, education, and community settings:

- State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies
- Hospitals and Rehabilitation Centers
- Community Mental Health Programs

- Nonprofit and Disability Service Organizations
- Schools and Postsecondary Institutions

Work settings may include offices, clinics, or community locations.

How Much Do Rehabilitation Counselors Earn?

Earnings vary by employer, location, and licensure:

- Entry-Level Counselors: Typically earn professional counseling salaries
- Experienced or Licensed Counselors: Often earn higher compensation
- Supervisory or Program Leaders: May earn more with leadership roles

Compensation often includes benefits and job stability in public-sector roles.

Is This Career Difficult?

Rehabilitation counseling can be emotionally demanding. Counselors support clients facing complex challenges related to disability, employment, and mental health. The challenge lies in balancing empathy with realistic planning, maintaining professional boundaries, and navigating service systems.

Who Should Consider Becoming a Rehabilitation Counselor?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Want to help people achieve independence and employment
- Communicate empathetically and clearly
- Value advocacy and social inclusion
- Are patient and resilient
- Want a purpose-driven counseling career

How to Prepare Early

- Study psychology, counseling, or social sciences
- Volunteer with disability or rehabilitation programs
- Learn about accessibility and assistive technology
- Develop communication and counseling skills
- Explore accredited rehabilitation counseling graduate programs

Rehabilitation counselors empower individuals to overcome barriers and pursue meaningful lives—transforming support, advocacy, and guidance into greater independence, opportunity, and inclusion for people with disabilities.