

Psychologist

■ Job Description

Psychologists are trained in the study of human behavior. They may work in many settings and be involved in teaching, research, and applied psychology. Psychologists help people understand, accept, and/or change their behavior. They have been trained to use tests and interviews as diagnostic and assessment techniques to determine an individual's personality strengths and weaknesses, attitudes, and interests. The psychologist uses different therapeutic methods to assist the client in changing behavior, and may also counsel family members and other therapeutic personnel on how to best work with the client.

The following are very general job descriptions for psychologists who most typically work in health care settings:

The *clinical psychologist* usually works with more severely disturbed and chronic patients, who are often institutionalized and may be on mood-controlling drugs. The clinical psychologist uses psychotherapy and client management techniques to achieve changes in behavior and thinking.

The *counseling psychologist* tends to deal with clients who have less severe, short-term, or situational emotional problems. Typically, these clients are living at home and working, but are unhappy about some aspect of their lives such as their marriages, jobs, life goals, or relationships. The counseling psychologist helps clients with reality problems and with planning for the future.

The *child psychologist* specializes in the development problems of children. The child psychologist deals with the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and learning problems.

The *industrial/organizational psychologist* works in a business or industrial setting or consults with persons in those settings.

■ Job Settings

Hospitals, correctional institutions, group homes, social service agencies, educational institutions,

community mental health centers, rehabilitation institutions, clinics, and private practice. About 41 percent of psychologists are self-employed.

■ Projected Need

The number of jobs for psychologists is expected to grow about as fast as average through the year 2010. The outlook varies by employer. The number of jobs for psychologists at hospitals is expected to decline. This is because hospitals are treating fewer psychiatric patients. However, schools and social service agencies will need more psychologists. Consulting companies will also hire more psychologists to conduct research.

Individuals with a doctoral degree from a leading university should have the best opportunities. Those who have a master's degree in school or industrial-organizational psychology should also have many job prospects. Those who have only a bachelor's degree will find it difficult to find a job directly related to psychology. Some may assist with research or patient rehabilitation.

In Illinois, there were about 7,640 people employed in this medium-sized occupation in 2000.

■ Salaries

Nationally, the median wage for clinical, counseling, and educational psychologists is \$24.24 per hour. Half of these psychologists earn between \$18.11 and \$31.50 per hour.

In Illinois, median wage is \$21.68 per hour. Median wages for selected cities are given below.

City	Median Hourly Wage
Bloomington	\$20.76
Champaign-Urbana	\$16.38
Chicago	\$22.11
Decatur	\$17.07
Kankakee	\$17.22
Peoria-Pekin	\$19.38
City	Median Hourly Wage
Rockford	\$22.18
Springfield	\$19.92
St. Louis	\$25.37

■ Related Careers

In training and work-related tasks, the most similar occupations are medical/psychiatric social worker, chemical dependency counselor, and psychiatrist (a physician with graduate training). Other careers dealing with the client's psychological adjustment are those in the rehabilitative therapies, speech/language pathology, and audiology.

■ Related Educational Programs

The programs of study listed below are the recommended areas of study to pursue for this occupation. Clicking on these will lead to files that show in-state and national schools that offer these programs.

The following link(s) will take you to CIS for more information. CIS requires an ID and password that can be obtained at <http://cis.ilworkinfo.com/loginhelp/>. You must log into CIS prior to clicking on the links below.

[Clinical Psychology](#)

[Community Psychology](#)

[Counseling Psychology](#)

[Developmental and Child Psychology](#)

[Industrial and Organizational Psychology](#)

[Psychology, General](#)

[School Psychology](#)

■ Credentials

Graduate programs at universities may or may not be approved by the American Psychological Association. All states require psychologists in independent practice or those who offer any type of patient care to meet certification or licensing requirements, and pass a national exam.

■ Advanced Training

A psychologist with a PhD may enter positions involving research, education, or administration.

■ Resources

American Psychological Association
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 800.374.2721

E-mail: education@apa.org

<http://www.apa.org>

Click on "Students" then on "Considering a Career in Psychology?"

The association makes available various scholarships and fellowships to graduate and doctoral students of psychology.

National Association of School Psychologists

4340 East West Highway, Suite 402

Bethesda, MD 20814

Phone: 301.657.0270

E-mail: nasp@naspweb.org

<http://www.nasponline.org/index2.html>

Select "NASP & School Psychology" then "What is a School Psychologist?"

The NASP-ERT Minority Scholarship Program awards at least one \$5,000 scholarship each year to a graduate student of school psychology.