

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.B. 699  
By: Coleman (Barrientos)  
Health & Human Services  
4-28-97  
Engrossed

### **DIGEST**

Currently, many mental health disciplines are adjusting their educational or supervision hours to establish more equivalence between disciplines. Initially, licensed professional counselors (LPCs) had a much higher continuing education requirement that justified lower educational and supervision requirements. Recent changes to Texas Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors rules have reduced the number of required continuing education units for counselors. Additionally, managed care companies have begun denying LPCs access to provider panels because they do not meet the national standards set by the National Board of Certified Counselors. H.B. 699 increases the number of required supervised hours for licensure as a professional counselor in an effort to provide parity with other disciplines, increase opportunities for consideration for third party payments, and offer greater protections for the public via more highly trained practitioners.

### **PURPOSE**

As proposed, H.B. 699 establishes the requirements for licensing as a professional counselor.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Section 10, Article 4512g, V.T.C.S. (Licensed Professional Counselor Act), to provide that a person is a qualified applicant if the person has completed 36, rather than 24, months or 3,000, rather than 2,000, hours of supervised experience working in a counseling setting. Makes a conforming change.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 1997.  
Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.