



Steve Sisolak
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA
BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINERS
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February 3, 2019

Dear Governor Sisolak:

As the President of the Nevada Board of Psychological Examiners, I am writing in response to concerns that were raised in a recent article in the Elko Daily (February 1, 2019) regarding delays in licensure for mental health professionals. I and my fellow Board members take very seriously the mental health crisis that Nevada faces. Indeed, the most recent report by Mental Health America ranks Nevada 51st in access to quality mental health care despite a great need for it¹. The state's mental health crisis is a complicated and multi-faceted problem but The Board of Psychological Examiners has made it our priority to play our part in solving it. We have worked diligently over several years to ensure that our Board's policies and procedures do not represent an obstacle to licensure for Psychologists. To that end, I would like to provide you with information regarding the steps and strides the Board has taken to increase access to mental health services and expedite Psychologist licensure for qualified applicants in Nevada.

- In close collaboration with the doctoral psychology training programs at UNLV and UNR, the Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium, and the state Medicaid office, we advanced legislation (e.g. SB162 in 2017) and revised our regulations in order to register pre-doctoral psychological trainees and interns so that their supervised services may be reimbursed. We are on track for full implementation by this summer. We are one of the first states to register psychology trainees and interns and have become a model for other states who wish to increase access to quality services and qualified providers in this manner.
- With the support and resources of our national association, The Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB), we are expediting licensure and increasing licensure mobility.
 - In 2012, we became one of the first states to participate in ASPPB's Psychology Licensure Universal System (PLUS), a national credentials data bank and on-line application portal.
 - We participate in ASPPB's mobility programs and services:
 - We accept the Certificate of Professional Qualification in Psychology and the Interjurisdictional Practice Certificate

¹ <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/download-2019-state-mental-health-america-report>

- We rely on and accept services of the The ASPPB Credentials Bank®: A Credentials Verification and Storage Program – where credentials are primary source verified, electronically stored and ready to use for licensure applications by ASPPB staff
 - Workforce analysis and minimum data set services
 - Online Disciplinary Data System
 - Personalized licensure assistance by a *Nevada-dedicated representative* at ASPPB’s central office
 - In 2017, we worked closely with legislators to pass AB429 allowing Nevada to join PSYPACT, a Compact designed to advance inter-jurisdictional practice of Psychologists and increase availability of and access to Psychologists’ services, to Nevada. Passage of the compact placed Nevada (along with our neighbors Arizona and Utah) on the leading edge of increasing its citizens’ access to mental and behavioral healthcare (particularly for our very sorely underserved remote and rural areas).
 - We access the EPPP, psychology’s national licensing examination, developed and administered by ASPPB
- Beginning in 2015, we increased the number of opportunities for applicants to take our State ethics, law and practice examination from three times per year to six times per year, north and south, with an expanded examination window from 1 to 5 days, at a local testing center, where applicants can schedule the exam at their convenience.
 - Once applications are complete, applicants may sit for the state examination well within the 45 days required by law to bring them to licensure.
 - We offer full licensure by endorsement to applicants licensed in good standing in another jurisdiction *immediately upon application completion*.
 - We developed online services for licensure renewal and will expand this service to license application fees in 2019.
 - We revised our regulations (approved in 2016) to increase paths for equivalency review for applicants coming from non-accredited programs from one to three. Our application tracking and equivalency review committee meets monthly to process applications expeditiously.

Taken together the aforementioned policies, procedures, and collaborations have been associated with a steady increase in the number of Psychologists in Nevada: from 388, in 2012 to 485 currently licensed Psychologists, 18 through endorsement in 2018. In the first month of 2019, we have already licensed 4 through endorsement.

In sum, the Board of Psychological Examiners cares about the mental and behavioral health of our clients, patients, and communities. The Board understands the risks associated with Psychological practice and we work to hold our profession accountable to the public by establishing education, training and practice standards and providing our licensees with the guidance needed to practice according to the law, professional ethics, and clinical best practices. The Board is guided by the values of efficiency, transparency, fairness, and equity in service of the public’s interest.

And, we work to create “right touch” regulation balancing several priorities:



Thank you for your attention to the mental health needs of Nevada. I hope that you find in The Board of Psychological Examiners a partner who shares your vision to improve the mental and behavioral health of Nevada's citizens. Please do not hesitate to contact me or our Executive Director, Morgan Gleich, if we can provide additional information or support your administration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle G. Paul, Ph.D.".

Michelle G. Paul, Ph.D.
Board President
Board of Psychological Examiners