

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANT REGISTRATION

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q Who can employ a psychological assistant?**

**A** A psychological assistant can be employed by a licensed psychologist, Board-certified psychiatrist, medical or psychological corporation, a psychology clinic, or a Short-Doyle (Bronzan-McCorquodale) contract clinic. [Business and Professions (B&P) Code section 2913 (d)]

**Q Can a psychological assistant be supervised by someone other than a licensed psychologist or Board-certified psychiatrist?**

**A** No. Only licensed psychologists and Board-certified psychiatrists can serve as the primary supervisor of a psychological assistant. [California Code of Regulations (CCR) section 1391.5 (a)]

**Q Can a Marriage and Family Therapist, licensed Clinical Social Worker, or other licensed mental health care professionals serve as delegated supervisor to a psychological assistant?**

**A** No. Other licensed mental health care professionals cannot be the primary supervisor or provide delegated supervision to a psychological assistant. [CCR section 1391.5 (c)]

**Q Must the primary supervisor complete a six-hour course in supervision?**

**A** Yes. A licensed psychologist must complete a six-hour course in supervision every two years to qualify to supervise a psychological assistant. A Board-certified psychiatrist is not required to take this course. [CCR section 1387.1 (b)]

**Q Who is responsible for submitting the Application to Employ a Psychological Assistant to the Board?**

**A** The employer of the psychological assistant. However, the designated primary supervisor and the applicant must also complete parts of the application. The following is a link to the application: [http://www.psychology.ca.gov/forms\\_pubs/psychassis\\_app.pdf](http://www.psychology.ca.gov/forms_pubs/psychassis_app.pdf).

*continued on next page*

**Q If a psychological assistant's employer is a qualifying corporation or clinic and the psychological assistant is changing primary supervisors within that corporation or clinic, can the employer just notify the Board of this change?**

**A** No. The employer must submit a new application to the Board when there is a change in supervisors. This will generate a new psychological assistant registration. [CCR section 1391.1 (a)]

**Q Is a supervision agreement form required?**

**A** Only if it's the intention of the psychological assistant to count the hours worked as a psychological assistant toward the psychology licensing requirements. If this is the case, the primary supervisor and psychological assistant must complete the supervision agreement form and plan for supervised experience prior to the commencement of the supervision. If the psychological assistant is registered to a licensed psychologist as the employer and/or in a private practice setting, the agreement and plan must be submitted to the Board for prior approval. [CCR section 1387 (b)(10) and 1387 (b)(11)]

**Q Whose responsibility is it to notify patients prior to the rendering of psychological services by a psychological assistant that the assistant is unlicensed and is under the direction and supervision of a licensed psychologist?**

**A** The primary supervisor shall inform each client or patient, prior to the rendering of services by the psychological assistant that the assistant is unlicensed and is under the direction and supervision of the supervisor. [CCR section 1391.6 (b)]

**Q Is a psychological assistant who is accruing hours of supervised professional experience required to keep a written log to document the hours of supervised experience?**

**A** Yes. All supervisees must maintain a written, weekly log of all hours of supervised professional experience gained toward licensure. [CCR section 1387.5]

**Q May a psychological assistant rent office space from his/her supervisor?**

**A** No. Psychological assistants shall not rent, lease, sublease, or lease-purchase office space from the supervisor, employer, or any entity for the purposes of functioning as a psychological assistant. (CCR section 1391.8 (c))

**Q A psychological assistant registration expires one year after issuance. When does the registration become delinquent?**

**A** The day after it expires, if it is not renewed by the expiration date. However, psychological assistant registrations can be renewed without a delinquency fee, if renewed within 30 days after its expiration date. [CCR section 1391.12 (b)]

**Q When do the registrations become void and canceled if not renewed?**

**A** A registration that is not renewed within 60 days after its expiration date shall become void and a new application for registration shall be submitted by the employer. [CCR section 1391.12 (e)]

*continued on next page*

**Q Is a psychological assistant allowed to practice while his/her registration is delinquent?**

**A** No. Practicing with an expired or delinquent registration is the illegal, unlicensed practice of psychology. The psychological assistant no longer holds a current and valid registration once the registration has expired and has not been renewed by the employer. [CCR section 1391.12 (c)]

**Q How long is a supervisor given to notify the Board in writing that a psychological assistant registration has been terminated?**

**A** The supervisor/employer must notify the Board in writing within 30 days after termination of employment of a psychological assistant. [CCR section 1391.11]

**Q What is the fee for the psychological assistant application fee, and who is required to pay the fee?**

**A** The application fee for registration as a psychological assistant is \$40. This fee must be paid by the employer/supervisor. [CCR section 1392.1 (a)]

**Q Does the primary supervisor have to be employed in the same setting that the psychological assistant is employed?**

**A** A psychological assistant must be under the direction and supervision of a licensed psychologist or Board-certified psychiatrist who is employed in the same setting in which the psychological assistant is employed. [CCR section 1391.5 (a)]

**Q What percentage of time must the supervisor be available when the psychological assistant is rendering professional services?**

**A** The supervisor must be available to the assistant 100 percent of the time the assistant is rendering professional services. The availability can be in person, by phone, by pager, or by other appropriate technology. [CCR section 1391.6 (c)]

**Q What is the minimum amount of direct, individual, face-to-face supervision that must be provided by the supervisor to psychological assistants in order for the hours of supervised professional experience to count toward licensure?**

**A** The supervisor must provide a minimum of one hour per week of direct, individual, face-to-face supervision to the psychological assistant. However, the psychological assistant must be provided with supervision for 10 percent of the total time worked each week in order for the hours to meet the licensing requirements. [CCR sections 1387 (b)(4) and 1391.5 (b)]

**Q Is it legal for a psychological assistant to begin rendering psychological services prior to notification by the Board that a registration has been approved?**

**A** No. The unlicensed/unregistered practice of psychology is illegal.

*continued on next page*

**Q Is it acceptable to supervise a psychological assistant who is a current or former patient?**

**A** No. Primary supervisors shall not supervise a psychological assistant who is, or has been, a psychotherapy client of the supervisor. [CCR section 1387.1 (k)]

**Q What is the maximum number of hours of supervised professional experience that a psychological assistant can earn each week that can be credited toward the licensure requirements?**

**A** A maximum of 44 hours per week can be credited toward meeting the supervised professional experience requirements. This includes the required 10 percent supervision. [CCR section 1387 (b)(5)]

**Q Can a psychological assistant earn hours of supervised professional experience under the supervision of a family member or business associate?**

**A** No. Primary supervisors shall have no familial, intimate, business, or other relationship with the trainee that would compromise the supervisor's effectiveness, and/or that would violate the Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct of the American Psychological Association. [CCR section 1387.1 (j)]

**Q Can a supervisor charge psychological assistants a fee for supervision?**

**A** No. No supervisor or employer of a psychological assistant may charge a fee or otherwise require monetary payment in consideration for the employment or supervision of a psychological assistant. The supervisor or employer must supply all provisions necessary to function as a psychological assistant.

**Q What is the maximum number of psychological assistants that can be registered to a psychologist at any given time? How many can be registered to a Board-certified psychiatrist?**

**A** No psychologist can register, employ, or supervise more than three psychological assistants at any given time. No Board-certified psychiatrist can register, employ, or supervise more than one psychological assistant at any given time. [B&P Code section 2913(d)]

**Q What kind of information must be reported to the Board on an annual basis by the supervisor of a psychological assistant?**

**A** Every supervisor of a psychological assistant must submit to the Board a report, on or before the expiration of the registration, for the preceding calendar year showing: 1) the nature of the limited psychological functions performed by the psychological assistant, 2) evidence of employment, 3) the location, type, extent and amount of supervision, and 4) a certification that the limited psychological functions are within the scope of the psychological assistant's education and training. This information is reported on the registration renewal form. [CCR section 1391.10]

**Q Can a psychological assistant advertise or have his or her own website?**

**A** No. Psychological assistants are employees and are not licensed to practice independently. Therefore, they cannot advertise independently. The employer/supervisor can choose to list the psychological assistant on their advertisements and/or websites as long as it is clear that the person is registered as a psychological assistant, his or her registration number is listed, and the name and license number of the supervisor is listed.