**From:** Elyse Springer, MA-CLP, LMFT, PMH-C
**To:** bopmail@DCA
**Cc:** [redacted]
**Subject:** Public Comment for August 14, 2026 Board Meeting – Perinatal Mental Health Education
**Date:** Friday, August 7, 2026 12:44:01 PM



On behalf of the California Chapter of Postpartum Support International (PSI-CA), please accept the following written public comment for the Board's August 14, 2026 meeting regarding a matter not currently on the agenda.

We respectfully request that the Board consider placing perinatal mental health education on a future agenda for discussion and possible action.

California psychologists routinely encounter individuals and families during pregnancy, postpartum, pregnancy and infant loss, infertility, and the transition to parenthood, regardless of whether they specialize in perinatal mental health. Yet psychologists can complete their foundational education and enter practice without basic training in recognizing or responding to perinatal mental health disorders.

The recent national attention surrounding the Lindsay Clancy case has brought postpartum psychosis and infanticide into public conversation. California has had numerous infanticide cases involving mothers and serious mental illness, including Sonia Hermosillo, Carol Coronado, Liliana Carrillo, Lucero Carrero, Cecilia Sharkey, and Sheryl Lynn Massip, among others. These cases have involved pleas or findings of insanity, with some mothers ultimately committed to psychiatric treatment. They are a stark reminder of why **clinicians need the foundational knowledge to recognize serious perinatal mental illness, understand relevant differential diagnoses, identify when symptoms require immediate psychiatric assessment, and facilitate appropriate intervention before a tragedy occurs**.

California has more than 400,000 births each year, and approximately one in three birthing parents report symptoms of anxiety or depression during the perinatal period. The impact extends to fathers and partners as well: when one parent is struggling with a perinatal mental health disorder, the other parent is at substantially increased risk of developing mental health symptoms of their own. At the same time, DHCS and other state agencies are building and operationalizing systems of perinatal care, including the Birthing Care Pathway. These systems

depend on a behavioral health workforce equipped to recognize perinatal mental health conditions across the family and respond or refer appropriately. Yet foundational training is currently non-existent.

The perinatal period is a distinct biopsychosocial stage. Clinicians need foundational knowledge of the presentations and differential considerations that can arise during this period, including depression, anxiety, OCD, trauma-related disorders, bipolar disorder and postpartum psychosis, as well as pregnancy and infant loss. Recognizing these conditions, knowing when additional assessment is necessary, and understanding when and where to refer are matters of basic clinical competency and patient and family safety.

PSI-CA is not asking that every psychologist become a perinatal mental health specialist. We are asking that psychologists have sufficient foundational knowledge to recognize what they may be seeing, understand when a presentation requires a higher level of assessment or care, and respond appropriately when a perinatal client walks through their door.

The California Board of Behavioral Sciences recently developed a Perinatal Mental Health Information Bulletin for LMFTs, LCSWs and LPCCs, which is now available directly from the BBS homepage. We respectfully encourage the Board of Psychology to consider how it can similarly address this gap through graduate education, continuing education, or other mechanisms within the Board's authority.

California is increasingly building systems intended to identify and respond to perinatal mental health needs. We believe ensuring that the clinicians working within those systems have foundational education in perinatal mental health is an essential part of that work.

PSI-CA welcomes the opportunity to provide subject-matter expertise, research, and additional information to support the Board's consideration of this issue.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elyse Springer, LMFT, PMH-C
*she/her/hers*
**PSI-CA Policy and Advocacy Co-Chair**
**Founding and Emeritus Board Member**
**California Chapter of Postpartum Support International**
*Call or text PSI's HelpLine*
*(leave message) 800.944.4773*
*Envia texto en Español: 971-203-7773*

**Potential Changes Needed for California to Implement the Integrated EPPP**

## 1. Regulatory Updates

- **Review eligibility requirements:** The Board would need to review its eligibility requirements to determine when candidates can take the integrated EPPP. ASPPB has indicated that the exam is intended to be taken after internship and before postdoctoral training at one of their Townhall meetings. If the Board chooses to align with this approach, regulatory changes will be required, and regulatory changes typically take two to three years to complete.

- **Transition period:** A transition plan may be needed for applicants who remain eligible for the current EPPP. The Board will need to determine both the grace period and the final cutoff date for accepting applications under the current exam structure. The timing may depend on how long ASPPB continues offering both exams to California candidates.

- **Regulatory package requirements:** The Board will need to update current regulations. It could be a Section 100 to clarify nonsubstantive changes or a full regulatory package. If the EPPP's name is changed to the integrated EPPP, then we would need to make Section 100 changes to reflect the new name. Depending on changes to the registration and eligibility for the integrated EPPP, we may need to update our regulations for initial applications.

## 2. ASPPB Contract

- **New contract:** Implementing the integrated EPPP will require a new contract with ASPPB. The Board's current contract expires on June 30, 2027, and future contract planning may need to remain flexible until ASPPB provides clearer implementation timelines. Changes to contract would need to be submitted to the Department prior to its expiration and its review process could take up to 60 days.

## 3. BreEZe System Updates

- **Online system changes:** The BreEZe system would require updates to incorporate the new exam and eligibility requirements. This may include modifying application questions, adjusting internal processing workflows, updating system configurations, and revising interfaces, depending on the final structure of the integrated EPPP.

**4. Review by the Office of Professional Examination Services (OPES)**

- **Pending evaluation:** OPES must review and evaluate components of the integrated EPPP to fulfill its statutory mandate for periodic examination evaluation. According to OPES, the Occupational Analysis (OA) of psychology practice in California is currently underway. Once the OA is completed, OPES will conduct the National Review during Fiscal Year 2026–2027, comparing the OA-derived description of California psychology practice with the content of the EPPP. This analysis will determine whether the EPPP adequately reflects California practice.

  The National Review requires a separate contract between OPES and the Board. OPES anticipates completing the National Review by the end of Fiscal Year 2026-2027, assuming ASPPB provides the necessary information to OPES on schedule. If timelines are met, implementation of the integrated EPPP could begin in Fiscal Year 2027-2028.

**5. License Verification/File Transfers Applications**

- **Increase in Workload:** There is a likelihood that we may see an increase in License Verification or File Transfer Applications. In the event this new exam causes a barrier to licensure, Psychological Associates may seek licensure in another state that may not have adopted the new examination requirements.

**6. Statutory Changes:**

- **Clean Up:** A review of statutes will be needed to see if any changes are needed, an example would be amendments to language surrounding exam eligibility.

**7. Outreach Activity:**

- The board will need to educate potential applicants of any changes to the licensure requirements. Various ways we provide outreach include advisories, listserv notices, newsletter articles, social media posts (Facebook, X, and LinkedIn), website updates, FAQ's, etc.

**From:** Tyler Burrows
**To:** bopmail@DCA
**Subject:** EPPP Public Comment
**Date:** Friday, August 7, 2026 11:06:08 AM



Dear California Board of Psychology,

I am writing to respectfully request that the California Board of Psychology consider extending the timeline during which individuals may take the existing Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP) before the new version of the examination is implemented.

I recognize the importance of the upcoming transition to the new EPPP and support efforts to ensure that the examination continues to reflect current standards and competencies in professional psychology. However, the transition creates significant challenges for individuals who have already invested substantial time, effort, and financial resources preparing for the existing examination.

Candidates who are currently preparing for the existing EPPP have made their plans based on the examination structure and content specifications that have been in place. A relatively short transition period may require these individuals to substantially change their preparation strategies, potentially requiring them to learn a new examination structure and different content specifications after having already committed considerable resources to preparing for the current examination.

An extension of the existing EPPP testing window would provide candidates with a reasonable opportunity to complete the examination for which they have already been preparing, while still allowing the Board to move forward with implementation of the new examination. Such an extension would also help minimize unnecessary financial and emotional burdens on candidates who may otherwise be required to begin their preparation again under a substantially different examination format.

I respectfully ask the Board to consider extending the deadline for taking the existing EPPP and providing candidates with additional time to complete the current examination before the new EPPP becomes mandatory. At a minimum, I hope the Board will consider a transition period lasting until 2030 that allows candidates who have already begun preparing for the existing examination a meaningful opportunity to take and pass it under the current examination specifications.

Thank you for considering this request and for your continued work on behalf of candidates and the psychology profession. I appreciate the Board's consideration of the impact this transition may have on individuals who are already in the examination

process.

Sincerely,

Tyler Burrows