



# Georgia Psychological Association

PSYCHOLOGY WORKFORCE  
BHIRC Workforce and System Development  
Subcommittee  
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Director of  
Professional Affairs

# What is GPA?

The Georgia Psychological Association (GPA) is a professional organization of psychologists representing approximately 900 members. The mission of our 75-year-old association is to advance the profession of Psychology in Georgia. We maintain a strong network with the American Psychological Association, the largest organization of psychologists in the world. In serving the public, psychologists treat to enhance mental health with reference to psychological science. Empirically supported treatments and valid and reliable research of human behavior are the cornerstones of our profession.

# PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

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- Detail GA Psychology Workforce and the Systems where we work and what we do
- Identify problems/challenges/issues where they exist with these systems
- Recommend specific remedies and or information needed to improve access to care



## Defining the Profession

1. Diversity of subfields across multiple settings
2. Clinical, Counseling or more generally the Applied subfields fill roles in
  - Treatment/Counseling of varying degrees of behavioral health
  - Testing/Assessment
  - Consultation
  - Research (clinical/behavioral)
  - Teaching/Training
  - Consultation
  - Administration

# Training for Service Delivery

- Entry level is doctoral degree (PhD or PsyD) plus postdoctoral training
  - Common core of coursework
  - Practicum – Internship- Postdoc
  - Specializations (Clinical; Child; School; Neuropsychology; Forensic; Health)
  - Research based thesis and dissertation
  - Comprehensive Examination/oral and written

# Georgia Specifics

(Students stay and practice where they trained...)

- **Five Doctoral Institutions/Nine Programs**

- Emory; GA State; UGA; Mercer; GA Southern
- Clinical; Counseling; School; Industrial/Organizational (I/O)

- NC (9); FL (17); AL (5); SC (2)

- **11 Internship Programs**

- University Counseling Centers (6)
- Healthcare (3.5)
- VA (1.5)

- NC (19); FL (38); AL (5); SC (4)

# American Psychological Association Accredited Postdoctoral Programs in GA

- Counseling Center – 2
- VA – 1
- Healthcare – 1
  
- ALL training programs, internships and formal postdocs are in Atlanta metro except GA Southern PsyD program and the Augusta internship
- GA Rules do not require **APA-accredited** postdoctoral training for licensure

# Licensure

- Education: Doctorate in applied psychology from an APA\* accredited program
  - Includes a 12-month APA-approved Internship
  - Typically 5-7 years post undergraduate degree
- Experience: 1500 hours postdoctoral under supervision
- Examinations:
  - 2-part national exam (EPPP Parts 1 and 2);
  - State jurisprudence exam
  - State oral exam





# How Does GA Licensing Differ?

- GA licensure requirements comparable to other states with exception of state oral exam and EPPP Part 2
- Some states have master's level license and/or intermediate license

# GA Psychologist Stats

- 2519 Licensed in GA
- Licensure process eased by ability to bank credentials with the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB)
  - International Headquarters in Tyrone, GA
  - Allows for easily accessible databank of information needed for license across all states
  - Utilized by the Psychology BOE in GA and other states
  - Biggest issue for GA licensure is NOT having credentials banked with ASPPB
  - Expedited process in place for military related personnel
- Staff for Psychology BOE covers SEVEN Boards plus pending ABA Board

# Data Collection Limitations

- Challenges to obtaining accurate additional information on Psychology Workforce availability
  - GPA Limited to what we can get from our members' self-report per State statute
  - No access to State Psychology BOE data on licensees
  - Therefore we don't have accurate data on:
    - Who (demographics; specialties)
    - What (mostly private practice/ many don't accept third party insurance)
    - Where (few in rural areas)
- GPA supports the data collection efforts as proposed by the current legislation and offers it full support to this initiative.

# Solutions: PSYPACT

- Interstate Compact that allows for practice of telehealth and temporary practice in other compact states.
- GA active since 2019
- Current GA enrollees: 333
- Total Enrollees:6,472
- Current States: 33 enacted and 32 effective

# Solutions: Medicaid Reimbursement for Psychology Interns and Postdocs

- Billing for services provided by psychology doctoral interns and postdoctoral residents is not allowed by Medicaid (or private insurance) in Georgia.
  - These providers have extensive training that equips them to deliver high quality services.
  - Georgia Medicaid rules only allow for reimbursement of psychological services provided by a licensed psychologist (see Section 601.1 in Part II – Policies and Procedures for Psychological Services).
  - There are no provisions for enrollment of, or direct payment to, auxiliary personnel. The only exception is reimbursement to a psychologist provider for evaluation and testing services provided under their supervision by up to three salaried employees (see Section 805).

# Rationale for Inclusion of this Cohort

- Psychology doctoral interns are advanced students in applied psychology doctoral programs who are engaged in a year-long, full-time training experience. They typically have completed all (i.e., 4–5 years) of their doctoral training except for their dissertation.
- Psychology postdoctoral residents have completed their doctoral degrees in applied psychology and are engaged in full-time training focused on specialization and accruing hours for licensure.
- Currently in Georgia there are 4 intern programs and 1 postdoc program that have a vested interest in this type of change to Medicaid rules.

**GOAL:** Change the Georgia Medicaid rules to allow licensed psychologists who are Medicaid providers to bill for services delivered by doctoral psychology interns and postdoctoral residents under their supervision.

- If these providers' services were reimbursed, it would positively impact the provision of mental health services in Georgia by:
  - immediately expanding the number of providers available to Medicaid members
  - allowing existing intern and postdoc programs to increase the number of positions over time
  - incentivizing other organizations to create new intern and postdoc programs over time
  - expanding the workforce training pipeline

# EXAMPLES FROM OTHER STATES

Alabama – Covers allied mental health professionals' services if under the supervising psychologist.

Colorado – Covers non-licensed mental health providers' services if ordered by a licensed psychologist.

Minnesota – Covers qualified clinical trainees' services if under supervision.

Nevada – Covers non-licensed mental health providers' services if registered with their licensing board.

Oklahoma – Covers interns and postdocs' services if under board approved supervision for licensure.

Ohio – Covers interns' services if the supervising psychologist has patient contact and oversight of records.

South Carolina – Covers non-licensed mental health professionals' services in CMH if under a CMH provider.

Texas – Covers interns and postdocs' services if under the supervising psychologist.



# OTHER ISSUES

- Models for Service Delivery: Integrated Care Models
- Reimbursement Hurdles
- Relationships with Insurance Carriers Unrelated to Reimbursement
- Dr. Shannon Mullen

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