

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2016 8:04:33 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2016 11:34 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Agency: TEXAS STATE BOARD EXAMINERS PSYCHOLOGISTS

First Name: Paul

Last Name: Andrews

Title: Psychologist

Organization you are affiliated with: Texas Psychological Association

Email:

City: Tyler

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed:

Testimony provided to Sunset Commission by LSSP persons indicated they have only .5 seat on licensure board. Section 501.051 of the licensing act specifies that at least one member must practice as LSSP; currently 3 of the 9 members of the licensure board have LSSP credential.

Testimony by LPA's indicated that they must "pay" a supervisor in order to work. Actually, by statute (licensing act, section 501.351) Licensed Psychological Associates may engage in the delegated practice of psychology under supervision. LPA's (similar to physician assistance or paralegals) function as an employee, never as an independent practitioner. LPA's can be hired by psychologists (or school districts or hospitals if there is a psychologist to delegate duties to them) but are not legally able to practice without supervision except in exempt settings (and may not refer to themselves as psychologists) and are never legally able to practice independently with this license. And it is definitely NOT true that LPA's can do anything that a licensed psychologist can do. There are exams (Competency to Stand Trial, child custody evaluations, disability evaluations, law enforcement evaluations) that LPA's cannot do either by statute or agency regulations.

Thank you for the opportunity to address these issues.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: None--only wanting to respond to testimony that was offered

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree

Paul Andrews, Ph.D.

Tyler, Texas

Sunset Commission Report Hearing RE: Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists

First, let me say thank you to each of you and your staff members who have spent so much time and effort into this review process on behalf of our state government. Such a thorough review process I think is useful even though sometimes distressing. And I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this committee as part of your deliberation.

I respectfully disagree with some of the recommendations that have been proposed in the report regarding Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists.

Issue #1: Oral Exam: This exam is important as a measure of competency for unsupervised practice by persons who heretofore have always functioned under the supervision of a licensed psychologist. It differs from other exams and requirements for licensure as it's focus is not on knowledge but on ability to apply knowledge to practice situations. Relatively few applicants ultimately fail this exam because it comes at the end of many years of preparation and skill testing, but the public would not be well served were those applicants sent out to independent practice without further attention to competency issues.

Issue #2: Post Doctoral Training Year: This year of training differs from the internship year and GREATLY differs from practicum experiences obtained while in graduate school. It is important for professional development to retain this important piece in the preparation for independent licensure. Frankly, I find it unnerving that persons outside the profession, however well intentioned, are proposing what standards of preparation and training should entail. We in the profession of psychology are committed to training. I am part of an adjunct faculty for University of Texas at Tyler and supervise students at the practicum level; I am part of the faculty at University of Texas Health Sciences Center Tyler and supervise and teach interns and will be supervising and teaching a post doctoral fellow next year. I am familiar with the differences at each level of training. The level of competence that is necessary for practice independently in a manner that is sound and that protects the public is best achieved through a model that includes a post doctoral year of training. I was originally licensed in a state that did not require this year of post doctoral training (Kentucky) but voluntarily sought out continued supervision and consultation for more than a year after becoming licensed there because I recognized the need for such additional supervision and consultation in my work. I can assure you that additional fifteen months had significant effect on my skills and abilities.

Far from restricting practice, the post doctoral year opens up areas of practice primarily for underserved areas and populations. We have reimbursement mechanisms that allow post doctoral fellows to bill for services, and we often find that post doctoral fellows are able to work in new settings that heretofore did not employ a psychologist so that new jobs are created.

Paul Andrews, Ph.D.

Tyler, Texas

Issue # 4: Maintaining an independent board of licensure is critical for the knowledgeable regulation of the practice of psychology. Psychology is a diverse field. There are fifteen areas of specialization that have recognized Boards within the American Board of Professional Psychology, the recognized credentialing organization for the practice of psychology. The work of psychologists ranges from human factors research with NASA to neuropsychological evaluations in hospital and specialty clinics to school psychology involving complex state and federal guidelines and regulations to forensic evaluations at the interface of mental health and statutory and case law to police and military psychology to mental health counseling for life adjustment to intense work with chronically and severely mentally ill patients to evaluating patients for medical procedures and transplants. Understanding the complexities of practice is critical to being able to make effective rules that have minimal unintended consequences and to evaluate and judiciously respond to complaints against licensees. I was part of a task force that worked for almost three years overhauling supervision rules for TSBEP and can vouch for the complexities involved in trying to write rules for this profession. A generic board would have neither the time nor expertise to effectively generate, refine, and apply rules of practice for this profession.

Issue #5: It is integral to the practice of psychology to be able to assess and diagnose conditions that we treat. The task of diagnosing mental illness and other conditions is critical for planning interventions and treatment. Psychologists are called upon by physicians, educators, mental health providers, private individuals, parents, and courts (by statute) to provide diagnoses for persons being evaluated and/or treated. Psychologists have by far and away created and refined the best assessment methods and instruments for mental health diagnoses. It is essential that the practice of psychology maintains the ability to diagnose mental health conditions and brain disease (e.g. dementia).

Thank you again for the opportunity to address you on these matters.