



Secretary Carol Aichele

# PENNSYLVANIA STATE BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY



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December 2012

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*Due to the many inquiries received by the State Board of Psychology (Board), the Board adopted the following guideline regarding the requirements for Provision of Psychological Services Regardless of Delivery Method at its July 24, 2012 meeting.*

*State Board of Psychology*

*Guideline Regarding Requirements for Provision of Psychological Services Regardless of Delivery Method*

*Adopted July 24, 2012*

## Guideline of the State Board of Psychology Requirements for Provision of Psychological Services Regardless of Delivery Method

Licensees have been questioning whether they are permitted to provide services (including evaluation, treatment, supervision, education) through delivery methods other than in-person face-to-face. Neither the Professional Psychologists Practice Act nor the State Board of Psychology's regulations, including the Board's Code of Ethics, limit the delivery method used by licensees. Rather, they delineate standards that must be applied prior to/during the provision of service regardless of the delivery method. The determination as to whether a particular delivery method is appropriate for a particular client/patient/supervisee requires a case-by-case analysis. Nonetheless, the following standards apply regardless of the delivery method:

- Respect for the dignity of persons
- Responsible caring
- Integrity in relationships
- Responsibility to society
- Responsibility to do no harm
- Competence in both the practice area(s) and the delivery method
- Responsibility to remain current with regard to the research/literature in the field
- Appropriate choice of treatment, including treatment modality, based on a thorough assessment of client situation and need. Decisions about choice of treatment, and treatment modality, reflect the highest appropriate standard of care.
- Responsibility to obtain knowing consent including but not limited to:
  - Discussion of the assessment and intervention approaches and modalities to be used, and the pros and cons of such approaches, delivered via modalities.
  - Discussion regarding the maintenance of records (security, retention, access)
  - Discussion regarding confidentiality and duty to report

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- Confirmation of the client’s consent
- Honesty and integrity in relationships
- Privacy, security and confidentiality
- Record maintenance and storage
- Planning for services in the event of an emergency, including how to contact the psychologist and alternative services available to the patient/client
- Boundaries
- Conflict of interest
- Sensitivities to cultural, regional, and local issues
- Protection for vulnerable persons
- Procedures in place for:

- General service provision
- Fee arrangement
- Emergency services/coverage
- Records (maintenance, access, retention, security)
- Transfer of services
- Client verification
- Security
- Technology maintenance plan
- Outcome evaluation plan

Note: If psychological services are provided and/or received in a state other than Pennsylvania, the licensure authority in that jurisdiction should be contacted regarding licensure requirements and practice limitations.