



Licensure Handbook:
A Guide to Getting Licensed in Virginia as
a Clinical Psychologist

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Steps for Psychology Licensure:
A 12 Step Process

REMEMBER TO KEEP COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS

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1. In consultation with your Director of Clinical Training (DoT) from your graduate program, review Virginia's Verification of Pre-Doctoral Supervised Practicum Hours form to see if you have the required 1500 hours.
http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/Psychology/psychology_forms.htm
2. Apply for licensure (Forms 1, 4, 6, \$200, and official transcript). Additionally, submit the Practicum form (see step 1) and/or register your post-doc (Form 2; \$50) if you will not have all 1500 hours from practicums.
3. Receive an email from the Board stating that your application has been reviewed and you are eligible to take the EPPP. With this, you will receive an email stating that The Board has uploaded your information to the Pearson VUE testing center website. If you also registered a post-doc, this letter will state the effective date when your post-doc hours officially start counting.
4. You have three months verify your account on the Pearson VUE website, which will then generate an "Authorization to Test letter"
5. Purchase/collect EPPP study materials and practice exams, and start studying for the EPPP
6. Pay the \$687.50 EPPP fee which then starts a 90-day window in which to complete the exam
7. Schedule the exam at a Pearson VUE testing site (<http://pearsonvue.com/asppb/locate>).
8. Take the EPPP (You may feel like a truck ran over your brain. This is normal.) You will have the result before you leave the testing center!
9. Pass the EPPP! Celebrate!
10. If you had to register your post-doc, mail in your supervision verification (Form 3) to the Board once your 1500 hours are completed. Note: when you are asked the "start date" on this form, provide the date that your post-doc was officially registered (see step 3).
11. Receive your license in the mail or look it up online. Celebrate again!
(https://secure01.virginiainteractive.org/dhp/cgi-bin/search_publicdb.cgi)
12. Complete the banking of your credentials with the NR or the ASPPB.

Post-Doctoral Hours Requirements

1. Virginia post-doc hours requirements
 - a. *Hours*: A minimum of 1,500 hours; either full-time for one year or part-time not to exceed three years.
 - b. *Supervision*: A minimum of one hour a week of individual supervision. In Virginia, you are allowed to substitute a second required hour of individual supervision with two hours of group supervision...however, lots of states require two hours of individual supervision so it is probably smart to stick with two hours of individual supervision for the sake of licensure mobility.
 - c. As of June 2012, all or part of these hours can be met in pre-doctoral practicum that includes:
 - i. At least ¼ time spent face-to-face with clients
 - ii. At least ½ time spent in face-to-face and “service related” (e.g., notes/reports & consultation)
 - iii. A minimum of 1 hour of individual supervision for every 8 hours of face-to-face and “service related” hours
2. Other states’ post-doc hours requirements (also see the ASPPB Handbook on Licensing and Certification Requirements and Herman & Sharer, 2013)
 - a. *Hours*: Most states require one year of supervised post-doc experience, with an increasing number of states removing the post-doctoral hours requirement.
 - b. *Supervision*: 3 states require more than two hours/week of individual supervision.
 - i. CA – 10% of work time per week (about 4 hours/week)
 - ii. CT – 3 hours per week
 - iii. DE – 1 hour of supervision per 10 hours of clinical (4 hours/week)

EPPP

3. Where to start
 - a. The most recent copy of the ASPPB (Association for State and Provinces Psychology Board) Information for EPPP candidates can be found here: (<http://www.asppb.net/infoforcandidates>). This is a great place to start in terms of understanding the EPPP process.
4. The test
 - a. 225 multiple-choice items, of which 175 are scored and 50 are unscored items. Each item has four possible responses.
 - b. You will have 4 hours and 15 minutes for the exam.
 - c. Passing in Virginia is a standard score of 500, which works out to a percentage score of approximately 70% depending on how easy or difficult that particular

edition of the exam is. This means that in order to pass you need to get about 123 correct out of the 175 scored items.

- d. Of note, data is collected about the passage rates across the various graduate programs. The strongest predictors of EPPP scores are higher average GRE scores, higher internship match rates, and lower percentages of minorities in the program (Sharpless, & Barber, 2013).
 - e. Eight content areas on the exam (*starting in August 2014, all content will be tailored to the DSM-5*)
 - i. Ethical/legal/professional issues (15%)
 - ii. Assessment and diagnosis (14%)
 - iii. Treatment, intervention, prevention, and supervision (14%)
 - iv. Cognitive-affective bases of behavior (13%)
 - v. Biological bases of behavior (12%)
 - vi. Social and cultural bases of behavior (12%)
 - vii. Growth and lifespan development (12%)
 - viii. Research methods and statistics (8%)
5. Studying for the exam (steps A to H)
- a. Figure out your baseline
 - i. If you get a great score vs. a poor score on the practice test, that can inform your decisions on:
 - 1. How much time to spend studying
 - 2. What content areas you need to focus on
 - 3. Perhaps even what method to use for studying
 - ii. Free practice test breaks down your percentage score by content area: <http://www.academicreview.com/sampleexams/login.asp>
 - b. Figure out how much time you will need to devote to studying
 - i. depends on...
 - 1. What your baseline is
 - 2. How quickly you learn
 - ii. Here are the results of a survey where $n > 4000$

TABLE 4.4
Estimated Time Spent Preparing for the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology

| Preparation | <i>n</i> | Percent | Mean scaled score |
|--------------------|----------|---------|-------------------|
| None | 4 | 0.1 | 361.00 |
| Less than 50 hours | 112 | 2.6 | 446.65 |
| 50–99 hours | 555 | 13.1 | 520.75 |
| 100–199 hours | 1,119 | 26.3 | 560.51 |
| 200 or more hours | 1,733 | 40.8 | 561.84 |
| No response | 726 | 17.1 | 538.33 |

Source: Vaughn, T. (2006). *Psychology licensure and certification: What students need to know*. Washington, DC: APA.

- c. Figure out which content areas will need your focus
 - i. depends on...

1. Your scores in the 8 content areas on the practice test (*a low percentage score for stats (8% of test) is better than a low percentage score for ethics (15% of test)*)
 2. Whether you have ever studied I/O Psych before (*perhaps the only section where you will study concepts you have never heard of before*)
- ii. My approach: pick something to skip. I skipped the I/O section because I thought it was a better investment of my time to study things that I already knew and refresh myself on those, than to start from scratch with new material
- d. Figure out what study strategies will work for you
- i. If you are planning on studying instead of just winging it then you are ahead of the curve
 - ii. You have been in school for a long time...what do you know works for you for studying for exams?
 - iii. Here are the results of a survey where $n > 4000$

TABLE 4.3

Primary Method of Preparation for the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology

| Method | <i>n</i> | Percent | Mean scaled score |
|--|----------|---------|-------------------|
| ASPPB items from previous examinations | 181 | 4.3 | 518.43 |
| ASPPB practice examination | 301 | 7.1 | 513.68 |
| Commercially sponsored workshop or materials | 2,024 | 47.6 | 574.54 |
| Individual study | 606 | 14.3 | 537.88 |
| Informal group sessions | 120 | 2.8 | 569.39 |
| Professionally sponsored workshop or materials | 544 | 12.8 | 519.90 |
| None | 10 | 0.2 | 424.10 |
| No response | 463 | 10.9 | 517.35 |

Note. ASPPB = Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards.

Source: Vaughn, T. (2006). *Psychology licensure and certification: What students need to know*. Washington, DC: APA.

- v. Studying options include:
1. Sample exams
 2. Reading materials
 3. Audio tapes
 4. Attendance at virtual and in-person workshops
 5. Flashcards (including flashcard apps)
- e. Figure out which company to use
- i. Academic Review <http://www.academicreview.com/introduction.asp>
 - ii. AATBS <http://www.aatbs.com/packages.asp?license=1&lnum=1>
 - iii. PsychPrep <http://psychprep.com/Pages/EPPP/index.htm>
 - iv. Where to buy 2nd-hand materials...
 1. Ebay
 2. Amazon

3. EPPP yahoo group http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/eppp_prep
- f. Study!
 - i. If there is anyone for you to study with, then figure out how best to use each other in this process
 - ii. Take practice tests as you go along...do not save them all up for the end
 - iii. For the practice tests, read the explanation for the right answer, even on items you answered correctly
 - iv. Remember that “it’s illegal but it’s still ethical” is never the correct answer choice for an ethics question
 - g. Schedule the exam
 - i. There are six Pearson VUE testing centers in Virginia
 1. Alexandria
 2. Vienna
 3. Glen Allen and Henrico (Richmond suburbs)
 4. Lynchburg
 5. Roanoke
 - h. The day of the test
 - i. Remember to bring two forms of ID
 - ii. You can take breaks when you wish but the clock keeps on running
 - iii. You can bring foam earplugs or use the site’s airport style headphones
 - iv. Your score is calculated based on the total number of correct responses -- so guess even if you think you do not know the answer
 - v. You can “mark” questions to come back to later. You can use this as a way to help categorize questions into three different categories, items that you know you got right, items that you narrowed down to two choices, and items that you either could only narrow down to three choices or four choices. After completing the items you can count up the number of items in each of the three categories to help figure out how likely it was that you passed.

Banking Your Credentials

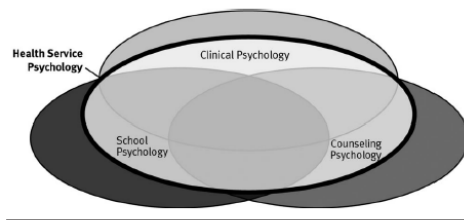
6. “Banking credentials” means having a central organization hold your documented proof of your graduate training, pre-doc internship, post-doc residency, EPPP scores. This is helpful for “licensure mobility”...meaning that if you want to get licensed in a different state years from now, instead of hunting down your former training directors, etc. you have an automatic “in” for licensure. Added benefit, banking your credentials can streamline the process for getting approved by healthcare panels. Two organizations currently provide credential banking.

- a. The National Registry of Health Service Providers in Psychology (NR) (http://www.nationalregister.org/postdoc_trainees.html)
 - i. There is a discount to applying to the NR as a post-doc. It costs a total of \$300 to be reviewed at each stage and listed in the NR registry. There are National Psychologist Trainee Register Credentialing Scholarships which cover all these costs if you apply as a post-doc.
 - ii. 36 states currently provide waivers of documentation for those listed on the NR.
 - iii. Annual renewal fees are \$160 for the first three years after licensure and \$180 after that.
- b. The Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards Credentials Bank (<http://www.asppb.net/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3524>)
 - i. There is a \$300 application fee to the ASPPB credentials bank. There are no scholarships available but if you apply as a post-doc you can pay \$25 a year towards your application include all of your training is completed.
 - ii. After five years with an active licensure, you can apply for the Certificate of Professional Qualification in Psychology CPQ (see below).
 - iii. 34 states currently provide waivers of documentation for those holding a CPQ.
 - iv. Annual renewal fee of \$50.

Health Service Psychologists

7. What does this mean?
 - a. “Reflects the reality that most of the accredited doctoral education and training currently conducted in professional psychology is for health care services, including those for prevention, early intervention, treatment, and rehabilitation.” (HSPEC, 2013, p. 414)
 - b. HSP is intended to be a term which encompasses the following domains:

Figure 1
The Domain of Health Service Psychology in Doctoral Education and Training in Professional Psychology



Source: Health service psychology education collaborative. (2013). Professional psychology in health care services: A blueprint for education and training. *American Psychologist*, 68, 411-426.

8. How will this be used?
 - a. APA, as part of the HSP movement, is *considering* “a change in the timing of the Examination for Professional Practice of Psychology should be considered so that it would be offered during doctoral training.” (HSPEC, 2013, p. 414)
 - b. It is unclear yet how this will be used going forward, but it may become part of the licensure process as APA looks to standardize licensure processes across states.

Continuing Education (CE)

9. In order to continue your licensure, you will need to complete 14 hours a year of Virginia Board of Psychology-approved CE hours.
(http://www.dhp.state.va.us/psychology/psychology_forms.htm#ce)
 - a. At least 6 of these hours have to be earned in face-to-face or real-time interactive educational experiences.
 - b. At least 1.5 of these hours must be in ethics courses.
 - c. Up to 4 hours can be in specific educational experiences such as publication of an article or book, or presentation of a continuing education program. These four hours cannot be counted towards the face-to-face requirement.
10. You must keep your documentation for 4 years, and provide it to the Board if you are audited

Board Certification

11. Board certification with the American Board of Professional Psychology (<http://www.abpp.org>) is increasingly required or expected in many settings, especially hospitals.
 - a. Much like banking your credentials with one of the organizations mentioned on the previous page, being ABPP certified provides a fast-track to licensure in 35 states.
 - b. The requirements and cost for Board certification vary by which area you are applying for, with some areas requiring multiple years practicing with a license before applying, while other areas expect that individuals will be applying for Board certification straight out of their post-doc (Nezu, Finch, & Simon, 2009)
 - c. Furthermore, current post-docs are eligible to start the board certification process now through the ABPP Early Entry Program. This will end up saving you \$100 in the cost of applying for Board certification.
 - d. Below are the various specialty areas currently available for board certification:

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology Clinical Health Psychology Clinical Neuropsychology Clinical Psychology Cognitive & Behavioral Psychology Counseling Psychology Couple & Family Psychology</p> | <p>Forensic Psychology Group Psychology Organizational & Consulting Psychology Police & Public Safety Psychology Psychoanalysis in Psychology Rehabilitation Psychology School Psychology</p> |
|--|---|

Appendix A
Summary of Financial Investment

| | |
|--|------------|
| Application for licensure to the VA Board of Psychology | \$200 |
| Registration of post-doctoral supervision to the VA Board of Psychology (optional) | \$50 |
| EPPP fee to the ASPPB | \$600 |
| Testing administration fee to Pearson VUE | \$87.50 |
| Banking fee (if you go with National Registry and get the scholarship) | \$0 |
| EPPP Preparation Materials | \$0 to ∞ |
| <hr/> | |
| TOTAL | \$887 to ∞ |

Appendix B
Cover Letter for Registration of Post-Doc

Name

Address

(XXX) XXX-XXXX

email@gmail.com

Date

VIRGINIA BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY

Department of Health Professions

9960 Maryland Drive, Suite 300

Richmond, VA 23233-1463

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find the following documents for registration of my residency and application for licensure by examination by the Virginia Board of Psychology:

- Completed and notarized application (Form 1) with fee
- Post-degree Supervision Registration (Form 2) with fee – *One/Two* form(s) enclosed
- Internship Verification (Form 4) in an unopened envelope with the name of the individual signing the form over the seal.
- Areas of Graduate Study (Form 6)
- An official transcript in an unopened envelope with the Registrar's stamp over the seal
- Fee payment (check # *xxxx*)

Sincerely,

Name

Enclosures

Appendix C References/Resources

Articles

- Health service psychology education collaborative. (2013). Professional psychology in health care services: A blueprint for education and training. *American Psychologist*, 68, 411-426. doi: 10.1037/a0033265
- Herman, M., & Sharer, N. (2013). Trying to summarize state licensure laws for psychologists: Burial by grains of salt. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 7, 123-133. doi: 10.1037/a0031636
- Sharpless, B. A., & Barber, J. P. (2013). Predictors of program performance on the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP). *Professional psychology: Research and practice*, 44, 208-217. doi: 10.1037/a0031689

Books

- Nezu, C. M., Finch, A. J., & Simon, N. P. (Eds). (2009). *Becoming board certified by the American Board of Professional Psychology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (Covers topics of why to get board certified, choosing an area, and preparation for exams)
- Vaughn, T. (2006). *Psychology licensure and certification: What students need to know*. Washington, DC: APA. (Covers topics of EPPP, hours, banking credentials, and board certification)

Virginia-Specific

- Virginia Board of Psychology http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/Psychology/psychology_forms.htm
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(804) 367-4697, deborah.harris@dhp.virginia.gov
- Laws Governing the Practice of Psychology (Code of Virginia, Title 54.1, Chapter 36)
<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+TOC540100000360000000000000>
- Regulations Governing the Practice of Psychology (Virginia Administrative Code, Title 18, Agency 125, Chapter 20) <http://leg1.state.va.us/000/reg/TOC18125.HTM#C0020>

Websites

- APA Site on Post-Docs (<http://www.apa.org/education/grad/post-fellow.aspx>)
- American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) (<http://www.abpp.org>)
- Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) (<http://www.asppb.net>)
- EPPP Yahoo Group (http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/eppp_prep)
- National Registry of Health Service Providers (NR) (<http://www.nationalregister.org>)
- Pearson VUE Testing Company (<http://www.pearsonvue.com/asppb/>)