



ALASKA PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Advancing Psychology as a Science, Profession, and Means of Promoting Human Welfare

P.O. Box 241292 • Anchorage, Alaska 99524-1292

September 13, 2006

The Board of Psychologist and Psychological Associate Examiners
c/o Jun Maiquis, Regulations Specialist
Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
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Esteemed colleagues and members of The Board of Psychologist and Psychological Associate Examiners:

We the Board of Directors of the Alaska Psychological Association (AK-PA) unanimously voted and agreed at our monthly meeting on September 11, 2006 to the following:

- 1) We share The Board of Psychologist and Psychological Associate Examiners concerns about the current state of supervision of professional experience for obtaining licensure as a Psychologist or Psychological Associate.
- 2) We recognize and support The Board of Psychologist and Psychological Associate Examiners intentions of improving the practice of psychology and psychotherapy in the state of Alaska so as to provide the best possible service to the consumers of Alaska.
- 3) We agree that changes need to be made to alleviate these concerns and further the goal of improving the practice of psychology and psychotherapy in the state of Alaska for the benefit of all Alaskans.

However, we the Board of Directors of the Alaska Psychological Association further unanimously voted and agreed to the following:

- 1) We respectfully disagree with and oppose the proposed changes in the regulations of The Board of Psychologist and Psychological Associate Examiners currently pending.
- 2) We believe that the proposed changes in the regulations will not adequately address the concerns about the current state of supervision of professional experience.
- 3) We believe that the proposed changes in the regulations will not improve the practice of psychology and psychotherapy in the state of Alaska and will ultimately be to the detriment of the people of Alaska.
- 4) We believe that the proposed changes in the regulations do not take into account the difficulties of providing and receiving supervision in the varied and often remote locations in Alaska.
- 5) We believe that the proposed changes in the regulations are restrictive, will impose undue hardships on those of us who practice psychology and psychotherapy in Alaska and on those who receive our services, and will have unforeseen negative consequences.

6) We believe that defining “supervised experience” as only being possible by the supervisor’s physical presence is a step backward that does not take into account the technological advances that make distance learning, distance treatment, and even distance supervision not only possibilities but practical necessities in urban, rural, and remote locations in this state.

7) We respectfully draw the board’s attention to Gerald Koocher's presidential address given at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, New Orleans, LA, August 11, 2006 in which he stated "The practical value of electronically mediated...clinical supervision [has] been well documented." He references Wood J.A.V., Miller, T.W., & Hargrove, D.S. (2005). Clinical Supervision in Rural Settings: A Telehealth Model. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 36, 173-179.

8) We believe the proposed regulations are not in keeping with current nationwide standards. We respectfully draw the board’s attention to an informal survey by the Alaska Psychological Association’s Board of licensing regulations in other states. Obtained results indicate that on-sight supervision as currently proposed is not typically required by other states.

9) We believe that this issue requires further inquiry, investigation, and discussion before any action is taken or decision made.

We the Board of Directors of the Alaska Psychological Association propose that The Board of Psychologist and Psychological Associate Examiners:

1) Postpone a decision on the proposed regulation changes.

2) Initiate a series of discussions around the state to address the utilization of technology to make supervision accessible state-wide and best practices in supervision, in order to support the growth of psychology across future generations of psychologists and psychological associates in the interest of providing the best possible service to the people of Alaska.

Therefore, we the Board of Directors of the Alaska Psychological Association cordially invite The Board of Psychologist and Psychological Associate Examiners to be our honored guests at the Alaska Psychological Association’s annual meeting in Anchorage on October 14th, 2006 (an invitation with details will follow) in order to begin discussion and dialogue that will move us toward our respective, and mutually compatible, goals of protecting the consumers of Alaska and advancing psychology as a science, a profession, and a means for promoting human welfare in Alaska.

The Board of Directors of the Alaska Psychological Association wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the Board of Psychologist and Psychological Associate Examiners for their service to the state of Alaska, their dedication, and their interest in this matter, as well as for their attention to the concerns here-in expressed.

Yours truly,

Ellen Cole, Ph.D.
President, AK-PA

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Alaska Psychological Association: Philip Baker, Ed.D., Jennifer Beathe, Psy.D., Denise Dillard, Ph.D., Katie Fallin, M.S., Karen Ferguson, Ph.D., F. Kenneth Freedman, M.A., Pamela Hays, Ph.D., Robert Lane, Ph.D., Allen Levy, M.S., Christine Sam, M.S., Patricia Sandberg, Ph.D., Ann Stockman, M.S.W., Ph.D., Peter Strisik, Ph.D., Joel Wieman, Ph.D., and David Wilcox, Ph.D. [Note: Martin Atrops, Ph.D. and David Sandberg, Ph.D. were not present for the discussion and voting.]