

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1254

5 By: Representative L. Johnson
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7

For An Act To Be Entitled

8
9 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE A LICENSED PSYCHOLOGICAL
10 PRACTITIONER TO PRACTICE INDEPENDENTLY IN THIS STATE;
11 TO REMOVE THE INDEPENDENT PRACTICE PRIVILEGES FROM
12 PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

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16 TO AUTHORIZE A LICENSED PSYCHOLOGICAL
17 PRACTITIONER TO PRACTICE INDEPENDENTLY
18 IN THIS STATE; AND TO REMOVE THE
19 INDEPENDENT PRACTICE PRIVILEGES FROM
20 PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINERS.
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22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
23

24 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 17-97-102(a)(3), concerning the definition
25 of "psychological examiner" relating to the practice of psychology, is
26 amended to read as follows:

27 (3) "Psychological examiner" means a person who holds himself or
28 herself out to be a psychological examiner or renders to individuals or to
29 the public for remuneration of any service involving the practice of
30 psychology ~~either:~~

31 ~~(A) Independently interviewing or administering and~~
32 ~~interpreting tests of mental abilities, aptitudes, interests, and personality~~
33 ~~characteristics for the purposes of psychological evaluation to assist in the~~
34 ~~determination of diagnosis of mental health disorders or educational or~~
35 ~~vocational selection, guidance, or placement; or~~

36 ~~(B) Only~~ only under the supervision of a qualified



1 psychologist if the service is not listed in subdivision (a)(2)(A) of this
 2 section; and

3
 4 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 17-97-102(a), concerning definitions
 5 relating to the practice of psychology, is amended to add an additional
 6 subdivision to read as follows:

7 (5) "Licensed psychological practitioner" means a person who:

8 (A) Holds himself or herself out to be a licensed
 9 psychological practitioner; or

10 (B) Renders to individuals or to the public for
 11 remuneration of any service involving the practice of psychology
 12 independently interviewing or administering and interpreting tests of mental
 13 abilities, aptitudes, interests, and personality characteristics for the
 14 purposes of psychological evaluation to assist in the determination of:

15 (i) Diagnosis of mental health disorders; or

16 (ii) Educational or vocational selection, guidance,
 17 or placement.

18
 19 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 17-97-303 is amended to read as follows:
 20 17-97-303. Psychological examiners – Application – Qualifications.

21 (a) ~~Any~~ A person wishing to obtain the right to practice as a
 22 psychological examiner who has not heretofore been licensed to do so shall
 23 make application to the Arkansas Psychology Board through the Chair of the
 24 Arkansas Psychology Board upon a form and in the manner as shall be adopted
 25 and prescribed by the board and shall obtain from the board a license to do
 26 so.

27 (b)(1) A candidate for a license shall furnish the board with
 28 satisfactory evidence that he or she:

29 (A) Has a master's degree in psychology or a closely
 30 related field from an accredited educational institution recognized by the
 31 board as maintaining satisfactory standards;

32 (B) Is competent as a psychological examiner as shown by
 33 passing examinations, written or oral, or both, as the board deems necessary;

34 (C) Is not considered by the board to be engaged in
 35 unethical practice;

36 (D) Has applied for a criminal background check and has

1 not been found guilty of or pleaded guilty or nolo contendere to any of the
2 offenses listed in § 17-3-102; and

3 (E) Has not failed an examination given by the board
4 within the preceding six (6) months.

5 (2) At its discretion, the board may accept satisfactory
6 substitute training and experience in lieu of that prescribed in subdivision
7 (b)(1) of this section.

8 (c) The board shall apply through its rules the qualifications of
9 supervising psychologists and the restrictions and reporting requirements of
10 supervision so as to implement the intent of this chapter without restricting
11 the professional integrity of the psychological examiner and psychologist or
12 the ultimate responsibility of the supervising psychologist.

13 ~~(d)(1)(A) A psychological examiner licensed before December 31, 1997,~~
14 ~~shall be granted independent practice except in neuropsychological~~
15 ~~assessment, forensic psychological assessment, and projective personality~~
16 ~~assessment upon the board's receiving a letter requesting independent~~
17 ~~practice and a revised statement of intent.~~

18 ~~(B) No additional hours of clinical supervision shall be~~
19 ~~required for a license granted under subdivision (d)(1)(A) of this section.~~

20 ~~(2) A psychological examiner licensed after December 31, 1997,~~
21 ~~shall be privileged to practice independently except in neuropsychological~~
22 ~~assessment, forensic psychological assessment, and projective personality~~
23 ~~assessment, if the person:~~

24 ~~(A) Has completed a master's degree program in psychology;~~

25 ~~(B) Has completed three thousand (3,000) hours of approved~~
26 ~~clinical supervised training after making application for independent~~
27 ~~practice; and~~

28 ~~(C) Has filed a revised statement of intent with the board~~
29 ~~and has provided documentation of having received appropriate training and~~
30 ~~experience in those areas requested for independent practice.~~

31 ~~(3) A psychological examiner licensed after December 31, 2024,~~
32 ~~shall not be granted independent practice status if he or she submits an~~
33 ~~application to the board for independent practice.~~

34 (d) After December 31, 2026, a new psychological examiner license
35 shall not be issued.

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1 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code Title 17, Chapter 97, Subchapter 3, is
2 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

3 17-97-313. Licensed psychological practitioner – Application –
4 Qualifications – Compensation.

5 (a) A person wishing to practice as a licensed psychological
6 practitioner shall apply to the Arkansas Psychology Board through the Chair
7 of the Arkansas Psychology Board upon a form and in the manner as determined
8 by the board.

9 (b)(1) A candidate for a license shall furnish the board with
10 satisfactory evidence that he or she:

11 (A) Has completed:

12 (i) A sixty-hour master's degree in health services
13 psychology that is approved by the board and includes the following
14 coursework and training in:

15 (a) Discipline-specific knowledge such as
16 affective psychology, biological psychology, cognitive psychology,
17 developmental psychology, social aspects of behavior psychology,
18 psychometrics, and research methods;

19 (b) Profession-wide competencies such as
20 integration of science and practice, ethical and legal standards, individual
21 and cultural diversity, professional values and behavior, communication and
22 interpersonal skills, assessment, intervention, supervision, and consultation
23 and interprofessional skills;

24 (c) Eight hundred (800) hours of a practicum
25 or internship with a total of four hundred (400) direct client services; and

26 (d) At least one (1) year in a residence
27 program; and

28 (ii) Three thousand (3,000) hours of post-degree
29 clinical supervision approved by the board that includes:

30 (a) Two thousand two hundred (2,200) hours of
31 direct client service in the intended scope of practice;

32 (b) One (1) hour of supervision per ten (10)
33 hours of direct client service for the first one thousand (1,000) hours;

34 (c) One (1) hour of supervision per twenty
35 (20) hours of direct client service for the remaining hours; and

36 (d) One hundred (100) hours of didactic

1 learning in the intended scope of practice per year;

2 (B) Is competent as a licensed psychological practitioner
3 as shown by passing examinations, written or oral, or both, as the board
4 deems necessary;

5 (C) Is not considered by the board to be engaged in
6 unethical practice;

7 (D) Has applied for a criminal background check and has
8 not been found guilty of or pleaded guilty or nolo contendere to any of the
9 offenses listed in § 17-3-102; and

10 (E) Has not failed an examination given by the board
11 within the preceding six (6) months.

12 (2) At the board's discretion, the board may accept satisfactory
13 substitute training and experience in lieu of that prescribed in subdivision
14 (b)(1) of this section.

15 (3) A person who was previously licensed as a psychological
16 examiner and granted the privilege to practice independently by the board on
17 or before December 31, 2024, is not required to fulfill the requirements
18 under subdivision (b)(1) of this section to be licensed under this section.

19 (c)(1) A licensed psychological practitioner may practice
20 independently except in neuropsychological assessment, forensic psychological
21 assessment, and projective personality assessment.

22 (2) A licensed psychological practitioner may practice
23 independently in the following areas, consistent with his or her coursework,
24 training, and supervised experience during internship and post-degree
25 supervision:

26 (A) Providing evidence-based therapeutic interventions for
27 individuals, families, or groups to improve mental health and wellness;

28 (B) Diagnosing, treating, and managing mental and
29 emotional disorders or developmental and intellectual disabilities;

30 (C) Conducting evidence-based screening, interviewing,
31 testing, and assessment consistent with training of psychoeducational,
32 cognitive, personality characteristics, intelligence, achievement,
33 vocational, aptitude, and outcome management;

34 (D) Providing psychoeducational evaluation, planning,
35 therapy, and remediation services;

36 (E) Consulting and collaborating with other healthcare

1 professionals in which the focus is on patient or family diagnoses and
2 treatment planning; and

3 (F) Supervising provisionally licensed master's level
4 clinicians in the areas listed in subdivisions (c)(2)(A) - (E) of this
5 section.

6 (d) The board may issue a provisional license to a person who has
7 completed the requirements in subdivisions (b)(1)(A)(i) and (b)(1)(B)-(E) of
8 this section to ensure that the person obtains the appropriate approved post-
9 degree clinical supervised training as required under subdivision
10 (b)(1)(A)(ii) of this section.

11 (e) For services provided, a licensed psychological practitioner shall
12 receive compensation from:

13 (1) Medicare;

14 (2) The Arkansas Medicaid Program;

15 (3) A private insurance policy or plan;

16 (4) A health benefit plan; or

17 (5) A healthcare provider or healthcare professional.

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