

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 171

Short Title: Modernize Reg/Master's Level Psychologists. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Burgin (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

February 26, 2025

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO REDUCE THE UNNECESSARY REGULATORY BURDEN ON MASTER'S  
3 LEVEL PSYCHOLOGISTS AND TO INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY MENTAL  
4 HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR NORTH CAROLINIANS.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 SECTION 1. G.S. 90-270.139 reads as rewritten:

7 "§ 90-270.139. Application; examination; supervision; provisional and temporary licenses.

8 ...

9 (e) ~~A~~ Except as provided in subsection (e1) of this section:

10 (1) ~~A~~ licensed psychological associate shall be supervised by a qualified licensed  
11 psychologist, or other qualified professionals, in accordance with Board rules  
12 specifying the format, setting, content, time frame, amounts of supervision,  
13 qualifications of supervisors, disclosure of supervisory relationships, the  
14 organization of the supervised experience, and the nature of the responsibility  
15 assumed by the supervisor.

16 (2) A licensed psychological associate who provides health services shall be  
17 supervised, ~~for those activities requiring supervision,~~ supervised by a  
18 qualified licensed psychologist holding health services provider certification  
19 or by other qualified professionals under the overall direction of a qualified  
20 licensed psychologist holding health services provider certification, in  
21 accordance with Board rules.

22 (3) ~~Except as provided below, supervision,~~ Supervision, including the supervision  
23 of health services, is required only when a licensed psychological associate  
24 engages in: ~~assessment of personality functioning; neuropsychological~~  
25 ~~evaluation; psychotherapy, counseling, and other interventions with clinical~~  
26 ~~populations for the purpose of preventing or eliminating symptomatic,~~  
27 ~~maladaptive, or undesired behavior; and, the use of intrusive, punitive, or~~  
28 ~~experimental procedures, techniques, or measures. The Board shall adopt~~  
29 ~~rules implementing and defining this provision, and as in~~ the practice of  
30 psychology evolves, may identify additional activities requiring supervision  
31 ~~in order to maintain acceptable standards of practice psychology.~~

32 (e1) A licensed psychological associate is not subject to supervision by a qualified licensed  
33 psychologist and may engage in independent practice if the licensed psychological associate  
34 meets all of the following requirements:

35 (1) Has 3,000 hours of postgraduate degree experience in the delivery of  
36 psychological services under the supervision of one or more qualified licensed



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1 psychologists within a time period of at least 24 consecutive months and less  
2 than 60 consecutive months.

3 (2) Submits an application for independent practice with proof of the required  
4 supervision experience in subdivision (1) of this subsection.

5 (e2) The Board shall approve a licensed psychological associate to engage in independent  
6 practice if the licensed psychological associate meets the requirements of subsection (e1) of this  
7 section.

8 ...."

9 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 90-270.153 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

10 "(h) A licensed psychological associate who does not possess a certification as a health  
11 services provider psychological associate may, upon completion of the requirements specified in  
12 G.S. 90-270.139(e1), be granted certification as a health services provider psychological  
13 associate upon submission of the application fee in accordance with G.S. 90-270.151(b)(9)."

14 **SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 90-270.140 reads as rewritten:

15 **"§ 90-270.140. Psychology Board; appointment; term of office; composition.**

16 (a) For the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Article, there is created a North  
17 Carolina Psychology Board, which shall consist of seven members appointed by the Governor.

18 (b) At all times three members shall be licensed psychologists, two members shall be  
19 licensed psychological associates, and two members shall be members of the public who are not  
20 licensed under this Article. The Governor shall give due consideration to the adequate  
21 representation of the various fields and areas of practice of psychology and to adequate  
22 representation from various geographic regions in the State.

23 (c) Terms of office shall be three years. All terms of service on the Board expire June 30  
24 in appropriate years. Each Board member shall serve until his or her successor has been  
25 appointed. As the term of a member expires, or if one should become vacant for any reason, the  
26 Governor shall appoint a new member within 60 days of the vacancy's occurring.

27 (d) As the term of a psychologist member expires, or as a vacancy of a psychologist  
28 member occurs for any other reason, the ~~North Carolina Psychological Association, or its~~  
29 ~~successor, shall, having sought the advice of the chairs of the graduate departments of psychology~~  
30 ~~in the State, for Board shall solicit applications for membership from all licensees of the Board;~~  
31 ~~from the applications, the Board shall submit the names of the applicants qualified in accordance~~  
32 ~~with G.S. 90-270.139 to all licensees for a vote. For each vacancy, the Board shall submit to the~~  
33 ~~Governor a list of the names of three eligible persons- applicants receiving the most votes from~~  
34 ~~the licensees. From this list the Governor shall make the appointment for a full term, or for the~~  
35 ~~remainder of the unexpired term, if any. Each Board member shall serve until his or her successor~~  
36 ~~has been appointed. As the term of a member expires, or if one should become vacant for any~~  
37 ~~reason, the Governor shall appoint a new member within 60 days of the vacancy's occurring.~~

38 (e) No member, either public or licensed under this Article, shall serve more than three  
39 complete consecutive terms."

40 **SECTION 3.(b)** This section becomes effective October 1, 2025, and applies to  
41 vacancies existing on or after that date.

42 **SECTION 4.** Except as otherwise provided, this act becomes effective October 1,  
43 2025.