

CHAPTER 490, FLORIDA STATUTES
PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES
(Sections 490.001-490.009)
2017

490.001 Short title.—This chapter may be cited as the “Psychological Services Act.”

History.—ss. 1, 3, ch. 81-235; ss. 1, 3, ch. 83-265; ss. 18, 19, ch. 87-252; s. 36, ch. 88-392; ss. 12, 13, ch. 89-70; s. 10, ch. 90-192; s. 4, ch. 91-429.

490.002 Intent.—The Legislature finds that as society becomes increasingly complex, emotional survival is equal in importance to physical survival. Therefore, in order to preserve the health, safety, and welfare of the public, the Legislature must provide privileged communication for members of the public or those acting on their behalf to encourage needed or desired psychological services to be sought out. The Legislature further finds that, since such psychological services assist the public primarily with emotional survival, which in turn affects physical and psychophysical survival, the practice of psychology and school psychology by unqualified persons presents a danger to public health, safety, and welfare.

History.—ss. 1, 3, ch. 81-235; ss. 1, 3, ch. 83-265; ss. 1, 18, 19, ch. 87-252; s. 36, ch. 88-392; ss. 12, 13, ch. 89-70; s. 10, ch. 90-192; s. 4, ch. 91-429.

490.003 Definitions.—As used in this chapter:

(1) “Board” means the Board of Psychology.

(2) “Department” means the Department of Health.

(3)(a) Prior to July 1, 1999, “doctoral-level psychological education” and “doctoral degree in psychology” mean a Psy.D., an Ed.D. in psychology, or a Ph.D. in psychology from:

1. An educational institution which, at the time the applicant was enrolled and graduated, had institutional accreditation from an agency recognized and approved by the United States Department of Education or was recognized as a member in good standing with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada; and

2. A psychology program within that educational institution which, at the time the applicant was enrolled and graduated, had programmatic accreditation from an accrediting agency recognized and approved by the United States Department of Education or was comparable to such programs.

(b) Effective July 1, 1999, “doctoral-level psychological education” and “doctoral degree in psychology” mean a Psy.D., an Ed.D. in psychology, or a Ph.D. in psychology from:

1. An educational institution which, at the time the applicant was enrolled and graduated, had institutional accreditation from an agency recognized and approved by the United States Department of Education or was recognized as a member in good standing with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada; and

2. A psychology program within that educational institution which, at the time the applicant was enrolled and graduated, had programmatic accreditation from an agency recognized and approved by the United States Department of Education.

(4) “Practice of psychology” means the observations, description, evaluation, interpretation, and modification of human behavior, by the use of scientific and applied psychological principles, methods, and procedures, for the purpose of describing, preventing, alleviating, or eliminating symptomatic, maladaptive, or undesired behavior and of enhancing interpersonal behavioral health and mental or psychological health. The ethical practice of psychology includes, but is not limited to, psychological testing and the evaluation or assessment of personal characteristics such as intelligence, personality, abilities, interests, aptitudes, and neuropsychological functioning, including evaluation of mental competency to manage one’s affairs and to participate in legal proceedings; counseling, psychoanalysis, all forms of psychotherapy, sex therapy, hypnosis, biofeedback, and behavioral analysis and therapy; psychoeducational evaluation, therapy, remediation, and consultation; and use of psychological methods to diagnose and treat mental, nervous, psychological, marital, or emotional disorders, illness, or disability, alcoholism and substance abuse, and disorders of habit or conduct, as well as the psychological aspects of physical illness, accident, injury, or disability, including neuropsychological evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, etiology, and treatment.

(a) Psychological services may be rendered to individuals, couples, families, groups, and the public without regard to place of service.

(b) The use of specific modalities within the practice of psychology is restricted to psychologists appropriately trained in the use of such modalities.

(c) The practice of psychology shall be construed within the meaning of this definition without regard to whether payment is requested or received for services rendered.

(5) "Practice of school psychology" means the rendering or offering to render to an individual, a group, an organization, a government agency, or the public any of the following services:

(a) Assessment, which includes psychoeducational, developmental, and vocational assessment; evaluation and interpretation of intelligence, aptitudes, interests, academic achievement, adjustment, and motivations, or any other attributes, in individuals or groups, that relate to learning, educational, or adjustment needs.

(b) Counseling, which includes short-term situation-oriented professional interaction with children, parents, or other adults for amelioration or prevention of learning and adjustment problems. Counseling services relative to the practice of school psychology include verbal interaction, interviewing, behavior techniques, developmental and vocational intervention, environmental management, and group processes.

(c) Consultation, which includes psychoeducational, developmental, and vocational assistance or direct educational services to schools, agencies, organizations, families, or individuals related to learning problems and adjustments to those problems.

(d) Development of programs, which includes designing, implementing, or evaluating educationally and psychologically sound learning environments; acting as a catalyst for teacher involvement in adaptations and innovations; and facilitating the psychoeducational development of individual families or groups.

(6) "Provisional psychologist licensee" means a person provisionally licensed under this chapter to provide psychological services under supervision.

(7) "Psychologist" means a person licensed pursuant to s. 490.005(1), s. 490.006, or the provision identified as s. 490.013(2) in s. 1, chapter 81-235, Laws of Florida.

(8) "School psychologist" means a person licensed pursuant to s. 490.005(2), s. 490.006, or the provision identified as s. 490.013(1) in s. 1, chapter 81-235, Laws of Florida.

History.—ss. 1, 3, ch. 81-235; ss. 1, 3, ch. 83-265; ss. 2, 18, 19, ch. 87-252; s. 36, ch. 88-392; ss. 2, 12, 13, ch. 89-70; s. 10, ch. 90-192; s. 4, ch. 91-429; s. 190, ch. 94-218; s. 3, ch. 95-279; s. 2, ch. 97-198; s. 194, ch. 97-264.

490.004 Board of Psychology.—

(1) There is created within the department the Board of Psychology, composed of seven members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.

(2) Five members of the board must be psychologists licensed pursuant to this chapter in good standing in this state. The remaining two members must be citizens of the state who are not and have never been licensed psychologists and who are in no way connected with the practice of psychology. At least one member of the board must be 60 years of age or older.

(3) Members shall be appointed for terms of 4 years and shall serve until their successors are appointed.

(4) The board shall adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement the provisions of this chapter.

(5) All applicable provisions of chapter 456 relating to activities of regulatory boards shall apply to the board.

(6) The board shall maintain its official headquarters in the City of Tallahassee.

History.—ss. 1, 3, ch. 81-235; ss. 1, 3, ch. 83-265; s. 25, ch. 87-172; ss. 3, 18, 19, ch. 87-252; s. 36, ch. 88-392; ss. 12, 13, ch. 89-70; s. 10, ch. 90-192; s. 4, ch. 91-429; s. 191, ch. 94-218; s. 4, ch. 95-279; s. 148, ch. 98-166; s. 162, ch. 98-200; s. 207, ch. 2000-160.

490.005 Licensure by examination.—

(1) Any person desiring to be licensed as a psychologist shall apply to the department to take the licensure examination. The department shall license each applicant who the board certifies has:

(a) Completed the application form and remitted a nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$500 and an examination fee set by the board sufficient to cover the actual per applicant cost to the department for development, purchase, and administration of the examination, but not to exceed \$500.

(b) Submitted proof satisfactory to the board that the applicant has:

1. Received doctoral-level psychological education, as defined in s. 490.003(3);

2. Received the equivalent of a doctoral-level psychological education, as defined in s. 490.003(3), from a program at a school or university located outside the United States of America and Canada, which was officially recognized by the government of the country in which it is located as an institution or program to

train students to practice professional psychology. The burden of establishing that the requirements of this provision have been met shall be upon the applicant;

3. Received and submitted to the board, prior to July 1, 1999, certification of an augmented doctoral-level psychological education from the program director of a doctoral-level psychology program accredited by a programmatic agency recognized and approved by the United States Department of Education; or

4. Received and submitted to the board, prior to August 31, 2001, certification of a doctoral-level program that at the time the applicant was enrolled and graduated maintained a standard of education and training comparable to the standard of training of programs accredited by a programmatic agency recognized and approved by the United States Department of Education. Such certification of comparability shall be provided by the program director of a doctoral-level psychology program accredited by a programmatic agency recognized and approved by the United States Department of Education.

(c) Had at least 2 years or 4,000 hours of experience in the field of psychology in association with or under the supervision of a licensed psychologist meeting the academic and experience requirements of this chapter or the equivalent as determined by the board. The experience requirement may be met by work performed on or off the premises of the supervising psychologist if the off-premises work is not the independent, private practice rendering of psychological services that does not have a psychologist as a member of the group actually rendering psychological services on the premises.

(d) Passed the examination. However, an applicant who has obtained a passing score, as established by the board by rule, on the psychology licensure examination designated by the board as the national licensure examination need only pass the Florida law and rules portion of the examination.

(2) Any person desiring to be licensed as a school psychologist shall apply to the department to take the licensure examination. The department shall license each applicant who the department certifies has:

(a) Satisfactorily completed the application form and submitted a nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$250 and an examination fee sufficient to cover the per applicant cost to the department for development, purchase, and administration of the examination, but not to exceed \$250 as set by department rule.

(b) Submitted satisfactory proof to the department that the applicant:

1. Has received a doctorate, specialist, or equivalent degree from a program primarily psychological in nature and has completed 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours of graduate study, in areas related to school psychology as defined by rule of the department, from a college or university which at the time the applicant was enrolled and graduated was accredited by an accrediting agency recognized and approved by the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation or an institution which is publicly recognized as a member in good standing with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

2. Has had a minimum of 3 years of experience in school psychology, 2 years of which must be supervised by an individual who is a licensed school psychologist or who has otherwise qualified as a school psychologist supervisor, by education and experience, as set forth by rule of the department. A doctoral internship may be applied toward the supervision requirement.

3. Has passed an examination provided by the department.

(3)(a) The board shall close the application file of any applicant who fails to pass the psychology licensure examination and the Florida law and rules portion of the examination or who fails to submit evidence of completion of the postdoctoral, supervised experience within a timeframe no longer than 24 months.

(b) The board shall implement a procedure by which an applicant may apply for an extension beyond the required timeframe.

(c) An individual who completes the required postdoctoral training residency may continue to practice under supervision if she or he does so in a manner prescribed by the board by rule, has a current application on file, and no final order of denial has been issued.

History.—ss. 1, 3, ch. 81-235; ss. 1, 3, ch. 83-265; s. 91, ch. 83-329; ss. 4, 18, 19, ch. 87-252; s. 36, ch. 88-205; s. 36, ch. 88-392; ss. 3, 12, 13, ch. 89-70; s. 10, ch. 90-192; s. 4, ch. 91-429; s. 109, ch. 92-149; s. 30, ch. 94-310; s. 5, ch. 95-279; s. 3, ch. 97-198; s. 195, ch. 97-264; s. 302, ch. 98-166; s. 162, ch. 99-397; s. 1, ch. 2008-125.

490.0051 Provisional licensure; requirements.—

(1) The department shall issue a provisional psychology license to each applicant who the board certifies has:

(a) Completed the application form and remitted a nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$250, as set by board rule.

(b) Earned a doctoral degree in psychology as defined in s. 490.003(3).

(c) Met any additional requirements established by board rule.

(2) A provisional licensee must work under the supervision of a licensed psychologist until the provisional licensee is in receipt of a license or a letter from the department stating that he or she is licensed as a psychologist.

(3) A provisional license expires 24 months after the date it is issued and may not be renewed or reissued.

History.—s. 4, ch. 97-198; s. 196, ch. 97-264.

490.006 Licensure by endorsement.—

(1) The department shall license a person as a psychologist or school psychologist who, upon applying to the department and remitting the appropriate fee, demonstrates to the department or, in the case of psychologists, to the board that the applicant:

(a) Holds a valid license or certificate in another state to practice psychology or school psychology, as applicable, provided that, when the applicant secured such license or certificate, the requirements were substantially equivalent to or more stringent than those set forth in this chapter at that time; and, if no Florida law existed at that time, then the requirements in the other state must have been substantially equivalent to or more stringent than those set forth in this chapter at the present time;

(b) Is a diplomate in good standing with the American Board of Professional Psychology, Inc.; or

(c) Possesses a doctoral degree in psychology as described in s. 490.003 and has at least 20 years of experience as a licensed psychologist in any jurisdiction or territory of the United States within 25 years preceding the date of application.

(2) In addition to meeting the requirements for licensure set forth in subsection (1), an applicant must pass that portion of the psychology or school psychology licensure examinations pertaining to the laws and rules related to the practice of psychology or school psychology in this state before the department may issue a license to the applicant.

(3) The department shall not issue a license by endorsement to any applicant who is under investigation in this or another jurisdiction for an act which would constitute a violation of this chapter until such time as the investigation is complete, at which time the provisions of s. 490.009 shall apply.

History.—ss. 1, 3, ch. 81-235; ss. 1, 3, ch. 83-265; ss. 5, 18, 19, ch. 87-252; s. 36, ch. 88-392; ss. 4, 12, 13, ch. 89-70; s. 10, ch. 90-192; s. 4, ch. 91-429; s. 6, ch. 95-279; s. 163, ch. 99-397.

490.007 Renewal of license.—

(1) The department or, in the case of psychologists, the board shall prescribe by rule a method for the biennial renewal of a license at a fee set by rule, not to exceed \$500.

(2) Each applicant for renewal shall present satisfactory evidence that, in the period since the license was issued, the applicant has completed continuing education requirements set by rule of the department or, in the case of psychologists, by rule of the board. Not more than 25 hours of continuing education per year shall be required.

History.—ss. 1, 3, ch. 81-235; s. 102, ch. 83-218; ss. 1, 3, ch. 83-265; s. 116, ch. 83-329; ss. 6, 18, 19, ch. 87-252; s. 36, ch. 88-392; ss. 12, 13, ch. 89-70; s. 10, ch. 90-192; s. 4, ch. 91-429; s. 110, ch. 92-149; s. 286, ch. 94-119.

490.0085 Continuing education; approval of providers, programs, and courses; proof of completion.—

(1) Continuing education providers, programs, and courses shall be approved by the department or, in the case of psychologists, the board.

(2) The department or, in the case of psychologists, the board has the authority to set a fee not to exceed \$500 for each applicant who applies for or renews provider status. Such fees shall be deposited into the Medical Quality Assurance Trust Fund.

(3) Proof of completion of the required number of hours of continuing education shall be submitted to the department in the manner and time specified by rule and on forms provided by the department.

(4) The department or, in the case of psychologists, the board shall adopt rules and guidelines to administer and enforce the provisions of this section.

History.—ss. 1, 2, ch. 84-168; ss. 18, 19, ch. 87-252; s. 36, ch. 88-392; ss. 12, 13, ch. 89-70; s. 10, ch. 90-192; s. 4, ch. 91-429; s. 111, ch. 92-149; s. 7, ch. 95-279; s. 164, ch. 99-397.

490.009 Discipline.—

(1) The following acts constitute grounds for denial of a license or disciplinary action, as specified in s. 456.072(2):

- (a) Attempting to obtain, obtaining, or renewing a license under this chapter by bribery or fraudulent misrepresentation or through an error of the board or department.
- (b) Having a license to practice a comparable profession revoked, suspended, or otherwise acted against, including the denial of certification or licensure by another state, territory, or country.
- (c) Being convicted or found guilty, regardless of adjudication, of a crime in any jurisdiction which directly relates to the practice of his or her profession or the ability to practice his or her profession. A plea of nolo contendere creates a rebuttable presumption of guilt of the underlying criminal charges. However, the board shall allow the person who is the subject of the disciplinary proceeding to present any evidence relevant to the underlying charges and circumstances surrounding the plea.
- (d) False, deceptive, or misleading advertising or obtaining a fee or other thing of value on the representation that beneficial results from any treatment will be guaranteed.
- (e) Advertising, practicing, or attempting to practice under a name other than one's own.
- (f) Maintaining a professional association with any person who the applicant or licensee knows, or has reason to believe, is in violation of this chapter or of a rule of the department or, in the case of psychologists, of the department or the board.
- (g) Knowingly aiding, assisting, procuring, or advising any nonlicensed person to hold himself or herself out as licensed under this chapter.
- (h) Failing to perform any statutory or legal obligation placed upon a person licensed under this chapter.
- (i) Willfully making or filing a false report or record; failing to file a report or record required by state or federal law; willfully impeding or obstructing the filing of a report or record; or inducing another person to make or file a false report or record or to impede or obstruct the filing of a report or record. Such report or record includes only a report or record which requires the signature of a person licensed under this chapter.
- (j) Paying a kickback, rebate, bonus, or other remuneration for receiving a patient or client, or receiving a kickback, rebate, bonus, or other remuneration for referring a patient or client to another provider of mental health care services or to a provider of health care services or goods; referring a patient or client to oneself for services on a fee-paid basis when those services are already being paid for by some other public or private entity; or entering into a reciprocal referral agreement.
- (k) Committing any act upon a patient or client which would constitute sexual battery or which would constitute sexual misconduct as defined in s. 490.0111.
- (l) Making misleading, deceptive, untrue, or fraudulent representations in the practice of any profession licensed under this chapter.
- (m) Soliciting patients or clients personally, or through an agent, through the use of fraud, intimidation, undue influence, or a form of overreaching or vexatious conduct.
- (n) Failing to make available to a patient or client, upon written request, copies of test results, reports, or documents in the possession or under the control of the licensee which have been prepared for and paid for by the patient or client.
- (o) Failing to respond within 30 days to a written communication from the department concerning any investigation by the department or to make available any relevant records with respect to any investigation about the licensee's conduct or background.
- (p) Being unable to practice the profession for which he or she is licensed under this chapter with reasonable skill or competence as a result of any mental or physical condition or by reason of illness; drunkenness; or excessive use of drugs, narcotics, chemicals, or any other substance. In enforcing this paragraph, upon a finding by the State Surgeon General, the State Surgeon General's designee, or the board that probable cause exists to believe that the licensee is unable to practice the profession because of the reasons stated in this paragraph, the department shall have the authority to compel a licensee to submit to a mental or physical examination by psychologists or physicians designated by the department or board. If the licensee refuses to comply with the department's order, the department may file a petition for enforcement in the circuit court of the circuit in which the licensee resides or does business. The licensee shall not be named or identified by initials in the petition or in any other public court records or documents, and the enforcement proceedings shall be closed to the public. The department shall be entitled to the summary procedure provided in s. 51.011. A licensee affected under this paragraph shall be afforded an opportunity at reasonable intervals to demonstrate that he or she can resume the competent practice for which he or she is licensed with reasonable skill and safety to patients.
- (q) Performing any treatment or prescribing any therapy which, by the prevailing standards of the mental health professions in the community, would constitute experimentation on human subjects, without first obtaining full, informed, and written consent.

- (r) Failing to meet the minimum standards of performance in professional activities when measured against generally prevailing peer performance, including the undertaking of activities for which the licensee is not qualified by training or experience.
 - (s) Delegating professional responsibilities to a person whom the licensee knows or has reason to know is not qualified by training or experience to perform such responsibilities.
 - (t) Violating a rule relating to the regulation of the profession or a lawful order of the department previously entered in a disciplinary hearing.
 - (u) Failing to maintain in confidence a communication made by a patient or client in the context of such services, except as provided in s. 490.0147.
 - (v) Making public statements which are derived from test data, client contacts, or behavioral research and which identify or damage research subjects or clients.
 - (w) Violating any provision of this chapter or chapter 456, or any rules adopted pursuant thereto.
- (2) The department, or in the case of psychologists, the board, may enter an order denying licensure or imposing any of the penalties in s. 456.072(2) against any applicant for licensure or licensee who is found guilty of violating any provision of subsection (1) of this section or who is found guilty of violating any provision of s. 456.072(1).

History.—ss. 1, 3, ch. 81-235; s. 35, ch. 83-215; ss. 1, 3, ch. 83-265; s. 9, ch. 84-203; ss. 8, 18, 19, ch. 87-252; s. 36, ch. 88-392; ss. 6, 12, 13, ch. 89-70; s. 10, ch. 90-192; s. 4, ch. 91-429; s. 112, ch. 92-149; s. 8, ch. 95-279; s. 228, ch. 96-410; s. 1135, ch. 97-103; s. 6, ch. 97-198; s. 198, ch. 97-264; s. 150, ch. 98-166; s. 209, ch. 2000-160; s. 52, ch. 2001-277; s. 27, ch. 2005-240; s. 102, ch. 2008-6.