

HB 488 – REVISION OF PSYCHOLOGY LICENSING LAW – 2010 GA

Sponsored by Representative Scott Brinkman

Psychologists have been recognized in Kentucky statute since 1948, the third-oldest psychology licensing law in the nation! Proposed changes in the current law (KRS 319):

- The primary change is in moving forward the point at which doctoral-level psychologists can be fully licensed, while maintaining the same high level of requirements for education and supervised experience. This will make it easier for agencies like the Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) and the Departments of Corrections and Juvenile Justice to hire doctoral-level psychologists, addressing the shortage of professional psychologists in the public sector.
- This change also allows students who have completed their education and clinical internship to be hired and to have the capacity to earn money to pay back student loans at an earlier point in time. The American Psychological Association (APA) formally recommended that states make this change in the sequence of licensure. Three states – including Ohio – have already implemented this change; SB 175 would make Kentucky competitive in recruiting and retaining psychologists in the Commonwealth.
- The scope of practice of psychologists will include the term “psychological testing”, while the definition in statute remains unchanged. The practice of school psychologists and school guidance counselors remains unchanged. These professionals will continue to be under the jurisdiction of the Education Professional Standards Board, not the Board of Psychology. The bill also does not affect the practice of Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors or Licensed Professional Counseling Associates, as these professionals are under the jurisdiction of the Kentucky Board of Licensed Professional Counselors.
- There is clarification of the exemption of other professions in using symptomatic and behavioral assessments and interpretations of psychological testing. This language has the agreement of all of the professional groups affected.
- The continuing education (CE) requirement is raised for the first time since it was set in 1986 – from the current requirement of 30 CEs per 3-year renewal period – to a requirement of 39 CEs per 3-year period. This increase is less than was proposed in the 2008 legislation as a result of input from KPA members who supported an increase with additional flexibility. The new level is more consistent with requirements for other mental health professions in Kentucky (average CE requirement: 16.1 hrs/yr). CE is a requirement of licensure for psychologists in 48 of 60 states and provinces. Of these, 42 have a higher requirement than ours (average CE requirement: 19.94 hrs/yr). The increased requirement will not go into effect until July 1, 2012, to give ample notification and to allow the licensure board time to implement regulations allowing greater flexibility in earning CE’s through distance learning and home study.
- The use of the Interjurisdictional Practice Certificate (IPC) developed by the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards is authorized, giving greater uniformity to credentialing of psychologists temporarily practicing in Kentucky.
- This bill also puts more specificity into the content of the examination for licensure and allows the Board to define in regulation how the examination will be conducted for both doctorally-trained psychologists and Master’s-trained psychological practitioners.