

MPA Master's Committee Frequently Asked Questions

The MPA Master's Committee is grateful for all the emails and posts from the LLP community as we work toward our common goal of achieving independent practice for Michigan LLPs. We hear you! Because of the volume of emails, we have compiled this FAQ page to address the most frequently voiced concerns.

Please continue to write to the Master's Committee at masterscommittee@michiganpsychologicalassociation.org, and to visit this page for updates as this process moves forward.

Supervision

Q. Has supervision been brought up at all? I have to go for supervision to a psychologist-LP who has only been practicing for a few years. They don't have the experience that I have. Supervision is unfair and needs to be addressed.

A. Yes! The Master's Committee's top priority is to put forth a new or amended licensing law that eliminates the current requirement for career-long supervision and grants LLPs independent practice.

Title

Q. I am a master's limited **psychologist**, not a master's degree psychology practitioner. I didn't waste years in school and thousands of dollars to pass a doctoral exam to have my title stripped by an agency that is supposed to support me and others in my position...[The word] "Psychologist" needs to remain in the title and there isn't an argument out there that changes my stance.

A. The issue of title has been contentious for decades, with different constituencies pulling in different directions. The Master's Committee and MPA Board have determined that the best path forward is to join the APA Work Group on Scope and Title, which will be promulgating a uniform national title. Jeff Toepler, MA, LLP (past chair of the MPA Master's Committee) has a seat at that important table.

Meanwhile, the Master's Committee is centering independent practice as the top priority because of the urgent need to grow the psychology workforce at a time when the need is critical and the current licensing situation is driving LLPs and TLLPs out of the field. This is not to say that the title is unimportant (we are working with APA for a reason), but we have to be prepared to make hard choices if we run into headwinds.

Q. Where did the term "Health Service Psychology" come from?

A. Health Service Psychology (HSP) is a phrase that APA uses as an umbrella term for clinical, counseling and school psychology. They refer to HSP in the national accreditation standards that they recently promulgated for master's degree programs in these three areas of our profession.

The EPPP

Q. I did not see mentioned one of the biggest obstacles and discrepancies for master's level psychologists: the EPPP. We must learn everything a PhD or PsyD would learn in a 5 year doctoral program, plus maybe a year or two of residency, so that we can still be called a "limited" licensed psychologist so we can practice SUPERVISED for the rest of our careers.

A. The Master's Committee and MPA Board share your concern about the EPPP. In December 2020, MPA leadership sent this letter to the Michigan Board of Psychology:

To the Board of Psychology:

During this time of pandemic, Michigan Psychological Association has followed with interest the difficulties that psychology licensure applicants have experienced with the EPPP. We appreciate the flexibility that LARA offered by extending application deadlines for those candidates who were impacted by Pearson's cancellation of the spring examination.

After the test centers reopened at reduced capacity, we learned of applicants who could not schedule their exams in a timely manner at testing centers reasonably close to home. We understood that for some candidates, their own medical conditions (or those of their family members) made it inadvisable for them to sit in a testing center among strangers for 4.5 hours to take a high-stakes examination. We expressed our concern to ABSPP and to APA that this situation so tested the limits of standard administration that it jeopardized the validity of the results. We were disappointed to learn that APSP had ruled out any option for offering remote testing and proctoring. Now some TLLPs have lost their licenses and their employment as a result of these barriers to sitting for the exam in a timely and safe manner.

Underlying these immediate concerns is mounting evidence that the EPPP is culturally biased and that the use of this particular examination nationwide is contributing to the de-diversification of the mental health workforce. In Michigan, this is particularly problematic because our state ranks among the worst in the country on measures of adequate access to mental health services.

Michigan Psychological Association endorses the statement recently sent to you by the Society for the Advancement of Psychotherapy (Division 29 of the American Psychological Association), which is attached below. We hope that you will

engage with state and national leaders to examine inequities in the EPPP and to explore alternatives that will maintain rigorous standards for licensure while also supporting access to high quality and culturally competent care.

The Society for the Advancement of Psychotherapy (American Psychological Association Division 29) recognizes mental health disparities as directly attributable to lack of access to mental health care, an insufficiently diverse health care workforce, and need for linguistically and culturally competent care (SAMHSA, 2018). As an organization whose mission is to make the benefits of psychotherapy available to all, we reject methods and processes that serve to create or sustain barriers to enter the professional psychology workforce on the basis of race/ethnicity or linguistic biases. We recognize the Examination for the Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP) as a source of diversity constriction (Sharpless, 2019a; 2019b). We call for (1) planned obsolescence of the current examination, and (2) adherence by ASPPB to measure development guidelines for the evaluation of linguistically and culturally diverse peoples (International Test Commission, 2018) as they work towards creation of a new exam (colloquially referred to as “Part 2”).

Further Reading:

Callahan, J. L., Bell, D. J., Davila, J., Johnson, S. L., Strauman, T. J., & Yee, C. M. (2020). The Enhanced Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology: A Viable Approach? *American Psychologist*, 75, 52-65. doi: 10.1037/amp0000586

Callahan, J. L., Bell, D. J., Davila, J., Johnson, S. L., Strauman, T. J., & Yee, C. M. (in press). Inviting ASPPB to address systemic bias and racism: Reply to Turner,

Hunsley, and Rodolfa. American Psychologist. doi:
10.1037/amp0000801

International Test Commission. (2018). ITC Guidelines for the Large-Scale Assessment of Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Populations. Lincoln, NE: BUROS Center for Testing. www.InTestCom.org/page/31

Sharpless, B.A. (2019a). Are demographic variables associated with performance on the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP)? The Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied, 153(2), 161-172. doi: 10.1080/00223980.2018.1504739

Sharpless, B. A. (2019b). Pass rates on the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP) according to demographic variables: A partial replication. Training and Education in Professional Psychology. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1037/tep0000301

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

Administration (SAMHSA) (2018). Health Disparities.

Retrieved from: <https://www.samhsa.gov/behavioral-health-equity>

MPA continues to engage the Board of Psychology around this and other issues pertaining to LLPs and TLLPs.

Commerce

Q. There's no reason why social workers and counselors can bill where LLPs are prohibited.

A. The Master's Committee has compiled extensive data (including about billing, the cost of supervision, and other issues) to document the severe economic impact that the current licensing law has on Michigan LLPs. We are sharing this information at both the state (MPA) and national (APA) levels in an ongoing effort to move toward independent practice for LLPs. The committee's top priority of eliminating career-

long supervision will hopefully lift many of the restrictions placed on LLPs with insurance companies, paneling, and other employment opportunities.

The Master's Committee

Q. Who are the members of the Master's Committee? How do we know that they understand us and represent our interests and those of our clients?

A. There are currently eight members of the Master's Committee, including seven LLPs and one LP. The members have diverse backgrounds in public and private sector work. All share a commitment to equity and diversity in the profession and to improving clients' access to high-quality and culturally competent care. The committee chair (currently Rachel Hagerty, MA, LLP) is a voting member of the MPA Board.

Motivations

Q. There seems to be a collective stance that the LPs want LLPs to just disappear...It is my firm belief that there will never be a time when the doctoral level psychologists in Michigan will allow equity for our professionals...MPA and the APA have never been an advocate for us and the clients we serve.

A. There is a long contentious history of division between LPs and LLPs, so it is understandable that these beliefs persist. As you can see in this [newsletter](#) article, MPA is actively engaged in the effort to achieve equity for LLPs. There is room in the profession for all of us; there is need in our communities for all of us.

The proof will be in new legislation. The Master's Committee, together with APA (which is reviewing laws nationwide), is studying the current Michigan licensing law in order to inform proposed revisions. We will

continue our communication with all stakeholders (our LLP community and our state and national leadership) and anticipate that we will put forward a new bill in the upcoming legislative cycle.

Watch what we do, not what we say.