



## Michigan Psychological Association

The Michigan Psychological Association membership represents the interests of psychologists and the mental health needs of the public by maintaining the highest standards of psychology through the promotion of professional excellence, leadership, scholarship, advocacy, and training.

December 14, 2020

Michigan Board of Psychology  
c/o LARA – Bureau of Professional Licensing  
[BPL-BoardSupport@michigan.gov](mailto:BPL-BoardSupport@michigan.gov)

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 APSPP 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 work force. 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](http://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>

Sincerely,



Joy Wolfe Ensor, PhD  
President



Antú Segal, PsyD  
President-Elect

*La Vone Swanson*  
LaVone Swanson  
Executive Director