

Fact and Fiction in the Practice of Psychology

There is much misunderstanding about what Licensed Psychological Associates do and for what we are asking. The Texas Psychological Association (TPA) often has misrepresented the credentials of Licensed Psychological Associates. **The chart below is based on factual, verifiable information. We hope it will set the record straight.**

Fiction	Fact
You must have a PhD to practice psychology. Psychology is a doctoral-level profession.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychological Associates have practiced psychology for almost forty years in Texas -- and have done so successfully. The Psychology Act [Sec. 501.002 of the Occupations Code] gives Psychological Associates the right “to engage in the practice of psychology” including the full range of psychological services. They have practiced in the large state agencies, providing public mental health services. It is only in private practice that “minimal” supervision by a Licensed Psychologist has been required.
There are plenty of Licensed Psychologists to provide all the psychological services needed across the state.	<p>In February, 2006, the Texas Dept. of State Health Services, in conjunction with the Health Professions Resource Center released a report <i>Highlights: The Supply of Mental Health Professionals in Texas</i>[†] This report notes: Although there has been a 14% increase in the total number of licensees in Psychology since 1999, many areas - such as the rural, West Texas, South Texas, and the Panhandle areas - have shortages based on supply ratios.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2005, 112 counties had no psychologists. About 50% of all Licensed Psychologists live in <u>four</u> counties. Between 1999 and 2005, the supply ratios for 81 counties declined and 15 lost <u>all</u> of their psychologists; these changes were almost equally split between rural and urban counties.
Licensed Psychological Associates want to take the jobs of Licensed Psychologists.	Licensed Psychological Associates want the right to work and to keep the jobs they have held in the past. The “minimal” supervision requirement has prevented Psychological Associates from keeping their jobs in the state agencies and in-private practice because they cannot be reimbursed by Medicaid and other third-parties . Licensed Psychological Associates are <i>not</i> asking for favors; they are asking for a level playing field on which to compete for jobs
Allowing Psychological Associates to practice without supervision will be a danger to the public.	Sanctions against Licensed Psychologists outnumber those against Psychological Associates about 15 to 1. While there are significantly more Licensed Psychologists than Psychological Associates, the ratio of sanctions is far larger than could be accounted for by comparing the numbers of licensees alone.

[†]*Highlights: The Supply of Mental Health Professionals in Texas* is available at www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/hprc/MHhigh05.pdf

Fact and Fiction in the Practice of Psychology continued

Fiction	Fact
<p>If Psychological Associates want to practice independently, they may have appropriate training for licensure as Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT) or Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors (LCDC).</p>	<p>It is true that Licensed Psychological Associates have Masters degrees, as do many Licensed Professional Counselors and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, whose boards credential practitioners for independent practice at the Masters and Doctoral level under a single license. Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors may be licensed for independent practice with only a Bachelors degree. Yet, all Licensed Psychological Associates are trained in assessment and in the evidence-based practices of the science of Psychology which cannot be said of <i>any</i> other mental health field.</p>
<p>The Texas Psychological Association has said in the past that there are 12 universities in Texas with Doctoral programs in Psychology and that is plenty to train all the psychologists needed, and- The faculty teaching at <u>only</u> the 12 Doctoral programs in Psychology are Licensed Psychologists.</p>	<p>There are about 30 terminal Masters programs in Psychology in universities across the state. Yet, they are not being fully utilized because their graduates often cannot find employment in the field of psychology.</p> <p>University professors who do not practice psychology are exempt from the licensure requirement. Many professors in university Psychology programs are Licensed Psychologists. This is equally true of professors in both Masters and Doctoral programs.</p>
<p>The American Psychological Association is the only association that accredits Psychology programs</p>	<p>Masters Programs in Psychology may be accredited by the Masters in Psychology Accreditation Council (MPAC). The Council of Applied Masters Programs in Psychology (CAMPP) sets standards for the curriculum in Masters in Psychology programs.</p>
<p>Licensed Psychological Associates have “variable” graduate study.</p>	<p>The Texas Association of Psychological Associates has asked the State Board of Examiners of Psychologists to set standards for hours of coursework and supervised experience.</p> <p><i>This will leave the Licensed Psychologists as the only licensees of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists with “variable” and unspecified requirements for core coursework.</i></p>
<p>Only Licensed Psychologists have post-graduate internships.</p>	<p>The Texas Association of Psychological Associates has asked the State Board of Examiners of Psychologists to formalize a 2-year internship, in addition to a practicum, as part of the requirements to practice as a Licensed Psychological Associate.</p>
<p>Only Licensed Psychologists must pass the <i>Examination for Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP)</i> and the Jurisprudence Exam at levels deemed appropriate by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists.</p>	<p>Licensed Psychological Associates must pass the <i>Examination for Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP)</i> and the Jurisprudence Exam at levels deemed appropriate by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. These <u>same</u> examinations are given to both Licensed Psychologists and Licensed Psychological Associates.</p>
<p>Licensed Psychological Associates are asking to be called Licensed Psychologists, and it will confuse the public.</p>	<p>Licensed Psychological Associates are asking to be called Licensed Psychological Associates, what masters-degreed psychologists have been called in Texas for over 30 years.</p>