

Arizona Board of Psychologist Examiners Five-Year Strategic Plan

(September 1, 2016)

Mission

To protect the health, safety, and welfare of Arizona citizens by regulating the professions of psychology and behavior analysis

Agency Description

The State Board of Psychologist Examiners licenses and regulates professionals to practice in the fields of psychology and behavior analysis. The Board accepts complaints against licensees, investigates allegations, and administratively adjudicates complaints.

Strategic Issues and Strategies

Issue 1: The only forms of payment accepted by the agency are cash, money order, or check.

Description: The agency receives payment from licensees and members of the public for services such as applications for licensure, initial license fees, public records requests, and license verifications. A.R.S. § 32-2067 authorizes the agency to establish fees and penalties. Today's marketplace increasingly operates through the use of electronic payments, and the general public has come to expect the option to use credit and debit cards to pay for services. Currently, the agency is only able to accept payment by cash, check, or money order, which may create inconvenience for some licensees as well as members of the public wishing to conduct business with the agency. The agency is implementing a system to allow for payments to be made by debit or credit card.

Solutions: In the FY2015 budget, the agency was authorized an increase in appropriation to establish a payment system in order to accept online payment by debit/credit cards in addition to the current payment methods accepted by the agency. The agency is currently developing and testing this system.

Issue 2: The agency is unable to offer online applications for licensure.

Description: Currently, all applications for licensure are available for downloading on the agency website. However, applications may not be completed online and must be printed, completed and sent to the agency. The agency would like to offer applicants the option to apply for licensure through the agency website. Establishing an online application would increase convenience and efficiency for all applicants. Due to budget limitations, the agency has postponed the necessary system development that would be required to implement such a feature on the website.

Solutions: In the FY2015 budget, the agency was authorized an increase in appropriation to begin development of an online application for license renewal. The agency is currently developing the online renewal application which will be available for the 2017 renewal cycle. The next step will be to develop an online application for initial licensure for both psychologists and behavior analysts. In addition, the national ASPPB (Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards) has developed an online universal application for initial licensure that the Board is currently exploring.

Issue 3: Providing psychological services via telepractice has been an ongoing discussion at both the state and national levels for several years. Guidelines for providing psychological services via telepractice within Arizona as well as across state lines have not been established.

Description: Effective January 1, 2015, insurers are required to provide health care coverage for services provided through telemedicine in rural regions if those services would otherwise be covered if provided in person. Services include those for mental health disorders that may be provided by psychologists. Effective January 1, 2018, this coverage will no longer be limited to rural regions only, but will expand to include services provided in Arizona. A.R.S. 32-2061(14) defines telepractice and A.R.S. 32-203(A)(12) authorizes the Board to make rules for telepractice.

Solutions: Final rules for telepractice have been submitted by the agency to the Governor's Regulatory Review Council for consideration. The national ASPPB (Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards) has developed a compact for telepractice (PSYPACT) whereby interested states may participate in an agreement across states. Arizona was the first state to pass legislation, which was signed into law by Governor Ducey, on May 9, 2016, to participate in the PSYPACT. Once a total of seven states have adopted the compact, implementation will begin.

Resource Assumptions

	FY2019 Estimate	FY2020 Estimate	FY2021 Estimate
Full-Time Equivalent Positions	4.0	4.0	4.0
General Fund	0	0	0
Other Appropriated Funds	475,400	475,400	475,400
Non-Appropriated Funds	0	0	0
Federal Funds	0	0	0