



LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF PSYCHOLOGISTS

4334 S. Sherwood Forest Boulevard, #C-150
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70816

Voice: (225)295-8410
Fax: (225)295-8412
Email: admin.lsbep@la.gov
Website: lsbep.org

WEEKLY WEDNESDAY UPDATE #2

April 1, 2020

Dear Licensee,

The LSBEP officers and administration recognize the rapid changes occurring in your lives and practices. Therefore, this agency will continue sending weekly updates every Wednesday for the duration of the COVID19 emergency. This update is the second in this "Weekly Wednesday" series; refer to the LSBEP website for archived weekly updates and other communication from the board. Additionally, please note that we are aware that due to rapid changes in information and interpretation of various directives from state and local officials, information may vary over time. Please ensure you are referencing the most updated information when making decisions about their practice.

As previously noted, should news impacting your practice require more immediate attention, additional updates may be necessary. Koren Boggs, Ph.D., Chair; Amy Henke, Psy.D., Vice Chair; and Jaime Monic, Executive Director have been meeting daily via telephone or Zoom to discuss developments in regulation and resources you need to remain compliant in your practice while putting the health and welfare of your patients first. Our goal is to keep you informed, but not overwhelm your email!

For our second Weekly Wednesday Update, we would like to advise you of the following:

1. The [LDH order \(sent 03/21/20\)](#) provides that licensees move to a telehealth platform **where possible and when the same standard of care can be met**. We are aware that language provided in our first weekly update may have implied that telehealth was required. We regret this confusion in our haste to bring you information quickly, and appreciate your patience as we navigate directives from the state level that impact all healthcare providers .
2. We have been advised that the Order as written was to provide options for the extreme circumstances where telehealth may not be plausible. The Order seeks to outline provisions that will ensure that the health and safety of psychologists and their respective clients are not compromised. We have been advised that LDH has no objection to the wording used in our [Clarifying Email \(sent 03/22/20\)](#).

3. A variety of questions have been asked related to individual licensees' clinical practice, specifically regarding the definition of "same standard of care" that must be met when moving to a telehealth modality. It may be the case, and it is likely that to some degree, the care provided via telehealth is different from in-person care. That does not mean the standard of care is compromised. Examples may include adjustment of treatment goals to suit the current context or postponement/telehealth modification of non-emergent assessment/evaluation. The decision to provide in-person services must be justified by a careful and serious assessment of all associated risks and benefits. The associated risks are not exclusive to the provider or the patient/client alone. The Order specifically requires that consequences to the healthcare system be considered in this decision-making process. Providers should ask themselves if the services they plan on providing in-person are worth the risk to themselves, their clients, and the community at large. There are situations where this may be the case, and as is our obligation at any point in time, psychologists must provide justification for their clinical decision-making.
4. There have been inquiries received concerning best practice infection control for licensees who continue to meet with patients/clients in person. While this is an important factor to consider when weighing the need to provide in-person services, the Board cannot provide medical guidance or pre-approve any medical precautions a licensee may take when seeing patients/clients.
5. We want to reiterate information from our [Clarifying Email \(sent 03/22/20\)](#) when making decisions about your practice.
6. For those supervising post-doctoral trainees, Pearson VUE has closed their testing centers until 04/16/20. ASPPB has posted a [link to some FAQ's](#) regarding the rescheduling process. This link will also be posted on the LSBEP home page.

LSBEP again thanks Louisiana Psychologists for stepping up to the challenges in applying technology to deliver psychological services to their patients and clients safely, while respecting the health and well-being of their patients/clients, the people with whom they work, themselves, as well as the individuals who have no other choice but to be exposed to COVID19. Our Ethical Standards are established for the welfare and protection of the individuals and groups with whom psychologists work. Therefore, our charge is to think of others before ourselves and to consider all risks when determining how to provide vital care to our clients and patients. Emergency Orders and Proclamations from Federal, State and Local Governments impose stricter but necessary restrictions and guidelines impacting the delivery of psychological services for the time being. History will remember our actions or inactions at this time. Let us remember why we all chose this profession and be on the side of history that aligns with the health and well-being of all people.

Sincerely,

LSBEP Executive Committee

Koren Boggs, Ph.D., Chair

Amy Henke, Psy.D., Vice Chair

Jaime T. Monic, Executive Director