

AN ACT

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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Columbia
Official Code*

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To amend the District of Columbia Health Occupations Revision Act of 1985 to amend the definition of the practice of psychology, to require the Board of Psychology to regulate psychology associates, and to provide for registration of psychology associates.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Practice of Psychology Amendment Act of 2009”.

Sec. 2. The District of Columbia Health Occupations Revision Act of 1985, effective March 25, 1986 (D.C. Law 6-99; D.C. Official Code § 3-1201.01 *et seq.*), is amended as follows:

(a) The table of contents is amended by adding a new section designation to Title IX to read as follows:

“Sec. 906. Psychology associate.”

(b) Section 102(16) (D.C. Official Code § 3-1201.02(16)) is amended as follows:

(1) Subparagraph (A) is amended to read as follows:

“(A)(i) “Practice of psychology” means the development and application, with or without compensation, of scientific concepts, theories, methods, techniques, procedures, and principles of psychology to aid in the understanding, measuring, explaining, predicting, preventing, fostering, and treating of abilities, disabilities, attributes, or behaviors that are:

“(I) Principally cognitive, such as aptitudes, perceptions, attitudes, or intelligence;

“(II) Affective, such as happiness, anger, or depression; or

“(III) Behavioral, such as physical abuse.

“(ii) The term “practice of psychology” includes:

“(I) Coaching, consulting, counseling, and various types of therapy, such as behavior therapy, group therapy, hypnotherapy, psychotherapy, and marriage, couples, and family therapy;

“(II) Intellectual, personality, behavioral, educational, neuropsychological, and psycho-physiological testing; and

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“(III) Professional activities, such as research, teaching, training, interviewing, assessment, evaluation, pharmacology, and biofeedback.”.

(2) Subparagraph (B)(i) is amended to read as follows:

“(i) An individual bearing the title of psychologist in the employ of an academic institution, research organization, or laboratory, if the psychology-based activities or services offered are within the scope of employment, are consistent with his or her professional training and experience, and provided within the confines of employment.”.

(c) Section 211(b) (D.C. Official Code § 3-1202.11(b)) is amended by striking the phrase “psychology” and inserting the phrase “psychology and the practice by psychology associates” in its place.

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(d) Section 504(o)(2) (D.C. Official Code § 3-1205.04(o)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

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“(2) Completed at least 2 years of experience acceptable to the Board, at least one year of which must be postdoctoral experience.”.

(e) A new section 906 is added to read as follows:

“Sec. 906. Psychology associate.

“(a) A person who is engaged as a psychology associate in the District shall register with the Mayor, renew the registration as required by rule, and pay the required registration fee established by the Mayor.

“(b) A person registered to practice as a psychology associate may provide psychological services and activities while under the direct supervision of a psychiatrist, or a licensed psychologist with a doctoral degree in psychology.

“(c) A psychology associate shall have graduated from an accredited college or university with at least a Master’s degree based on a program of studies primarily focusing on psychology, or a program judged by the Board to be substantially equivalent in subject matter and extent of training to a master’s or doctoral degree in psychology.

“(d) The Mayor, pursuant to Title I of the District of Columbia Administrative Procedure Act, approved October 21, 1968 (82 Stat. 1204; D.C. Official Code § 2-501 *et seq.*), shall issue rules further setting forth the education and experience needed to qualify as a psychology associate.”.

Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(3)).

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Sec. 4. Effective date.

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of Congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.

Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia

Mayor
District of Columbia