

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 171  
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE S171-PCS45371-DC-4

Short Title: Modernize Reg/Master's Level Psychologists.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 26, 2025

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO REDUCE THE UNNECESSARY REGULATORY BURDEN ON MASTER'S  
3 LEVEL PSYCHOLOGISTS AND TO INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY MENTAL  
4 HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR NORTH CAROLINIANS.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 SECTION 1. G.S. 90-270.139 reads as rewritten:

7 "§ 90-270.139. Application; examination; supervision; provisional and temporary licenses.

8 ...

9 (e) Except as provided in subsection (e1) of this section:

10 (1) A licensed psychological associate shall be supervised by a qualified licensed  
11 psychologist, or ~~other~~ qualified ~~professionals~~, licensed psychological  
12 associate in accordance with Board rules specifying the format, setting,  
13 content, time frame, amounts of supervision, qualifications of supervisors,  
14 disclosure of supervisory relationships, the organization of the supervised  
15 experience, and the nature of the responsibility assumed by the supervisor.

16 (2) A licensed psychological associate who provides health services shall be  
17 supervised, ~~for those activities requiring supervision,~~ supervised by a  
18 qualified licensed psychologist holding health services provider certification  
19 or by ~~other a qualified professionals~~ licensed psychological associate under  
20 the overall direction of a qualified licensed psychologist holding health  
21 services provider certification, in accordance with Board rules.

22 (3) ~~Except as provided below, supervision,~~ Supervision, including the supervision  
23 of health services, is required ~~only~~ when a licensed psychological associate  
24 engages in: ~~assessment of personality functioning; neuropsychological~~  
25 ~~evaluation; psychotherapy, counseling, and other interventions with clinical~~  
26 ~~populations for the purpose of preventing or eliminating symptomatic,~~  
27 ~~maladaptive, or undesired behavior; and, the use of intrusive, punitive, or~~  
28 ~~experimental procedures, techniques, or measures. The Board shall adopt~~  
29 ~~rules implementing and defining this provision, and as the practice of~~  
30 ~~psychology evolves, may identify additional activities requiring supervision~~  
31 ~~in order to maintain acceptable standards of practice in the practice of~~  
32 psychology in accordance with Board rules.

33 (e1) The Board shall approve any licensed psychological associate to engage in  
34 independent practice, without supervision by a qualified licensed psychologist or qualified  
35 licensed psychological associate, if the licensed psychological associate meets all of the  
36 following requirements:



\* S 1 7 1 - P C S 4 5 3 7 1 - D C - 4 \*

- 1           (1)   Has 4,000 hours of post-licensure experience in the delivery of psychological  
2           services under the supervision of one or more qualified licensed psychologists  
3           or qualified licensed psychological associates within a time period of at least  
4           24 consecutive months and less than 60 consecutive months.  
5           (2)   Documents that all performance ratings for the 4,000 hours of post-licensure  
6           experience required by subdivision (1) of this subsection have been average  
7           or above average.  
8           (3)   Submits an application for independent practice with proof of the 4,000 hours  
9           of post-licensure experience required by subdivision (1) of this subsection.

10       ...."

11       **SECTION 2.** G.S. 90-270.145 reads as rewritten:

12       **"§ 90-270.145. Licensure; examination; foreign graduates.**

13       ...

14       (b)   Licensed Psychological Associate. –

15       ...

- 16       (3)   No licensed psychological associate shall engage in the practice of  
17       neuropsychology or forensic psychology without first demonstrating  
18       specialized education and training to practice in those areas as the Board may  
19       determine by rule. In considering whether the licensed psychological associate  
20       has sufficient specialized education and training to engage in the practice of  
21       neuropsychology or forensic psychology, the Board may consider the licensed  
22       psychological associate's graduate level course work, continuing education,  
23       supervised training experience, or any other factors the Board deems  
24       appropriate. For purposes of this subdivision, "neuropsychology" is defined  
25       as "the branch of science that studies the physiological processes of the  
26       nervous system and relates them to behavior and cognition" and "forensic  
27       psychology" is defined as "the application of psychological principles and  
28       techniques to situations that are involved in the civil and criminal legal  
29       systems, including, but not limited to, psychological assessments and expert  
30       testimony."

31       ...."

32       **SECTION 3.** G.S. 90-270.153 reads as rewritten:

33       **"§ 90-270.153. Provision of health services; certification as health services provider.**

34       (a)   Health services, as defined in G.S. 90-270.136(4) and G.S. 90-270.136(8), may be  
35       provided by qualified licensed psychological associates, qualified licensed psychologists holding  
36       provisional, temporary, or permanent licenses, or qualified applicants. ~~Qualified~~ ~~Except as~~  
37       provided in subsection (h) of this section, qualified licensed psychological associates, qualified  
38       licensed psychologists holding provisional or temporary licenses, or qualified applicants may  
39       provide health services only under supervision as specified in the duly adopted rules of the Board.

40       ...

41       (h)   A licensed psychological associate who possesses a certification as a health services  
42       provider psychological associate in accordance with subsection (c) of this section may provide  
43       health services without supervision upon meeting the requirements in G.S. 90-270.139(e1).

44       (i)   Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (h) of this section, a licensed  
45       psychological associate who was licensed before June 30, 2013, who can demonstrate, in  
46       accordance with Board rules, that he or she has been engaged in the provision of health services  
47       psychology under supervision for 4,000 hours within a time period of at least 24 consecutive  
48       months and less than 60 consecutive months shall meet the requirements for certification as a  
49       health services provider psychological associate."

50       **SECTION 4.** G.S. 90-270.140 reads as rewritten:

51       **"§ 90-270.140. Psychology Board; appointment; term of office; composition.**

1 For the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Article, there is created a North Carolina  
2 Psychology Board, which shall consist of seven members appointed by the Governor. At all times  
3 three members shall be licensed psychologists, two members shall be licensed psychological  
4 associates, and two members shall be members of the public who are not licensed under this  
5 Article. The Governor shall give due consideration to the adequate representation of the various  
6 fields and areas of practice of psychology and to adequate representation from various geographic  
7 regions in the State. Terms of office shall be three years. All terms of service on the Board expire  
8 June 30 in appropriate years. As the term of a psychologist member expires, or as a vacancy of a  
9 psychologist member occurs for any other reason, the Board, the North Carolina Psychological  
10 Association, or its successor, shall, and the North Carolina Association of Professional  
11 Psychologists, or its successor, shall form a nominating committee and, having sought the advice  
12 of the chairs of the graduate departments of psychology in the State, nominees from licensees for  
13 each vacancy, shall submit to the Governor a list of the names of three eligible persons. From  
14 this list the Governor shall make the appointment for a full term, or for the remainder of the  
15 unexpired term, if any. Each Board member shall serve until his or her successor has been  
16 appointed. As the term of a member expires, or if one should become vacant for any reason, the  
17 Governor shall appoint a new member within 60 days of the vacancy's occurring. No member,  
18 either public or licensed under this Article, shall serve more than three complete consecutive  
19 terms."

20 **SECTION 5.** This act is effective October 1, 2025.