
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 1243 Session of
2026

INTRODUCED BY YAW, PENNYCUICK, VOGEL, BAKER, CULVER, ARGALL,
KANE, HUTCHINSON AND CAPPELLETTI, MARCH 23, 2026

REFERRED TO CONSUMER PROTECTION AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE,
MARCH 23, 2026

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 23, 1972 (P.L.136, No.52), entitled
2 "An act relating to the practice of psychology, providing for
3 licensing of psychologists, making certain acts illegal and
4 providing penalties," further providing for definitions, for
5 State Board of Psychology and for powers of the board;
6 providing for prescription certificate, for prescribing and
7 administrative practices and for controlled substances; and
8 further providing for refusal, suspension or revocation of
9 license, for reporting of multiple licensure and for
10 penalties and injunctions against unlawful practice.

11 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
12 hereby enacts as follows:

13 Section 1. The definition of "practice of psychology" in
14 section 2 of the act of March 23, 1972 (P.L.136, No.52), known
15 as the Professional Psychologists Practice Act, is amended and
16 the section is amended by adding definitions to read:

17 Section 2. Definitions.--As used in this act:

18 * * *

19 "Collaborative relationship" means a cooperative working
20 relationship between a prescribing psychologist and the
21 patient's primary care provider in the provision of patient

1 care, including cooperation in the management and delivery of
2 physical and mental health care to ensure optimal patient care.

3 * * *

4 "Controlled substance" means a controlled substance as
5 defined in section 2(b) of the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L.233,
6 No.64), known as "The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and
7 Cosmetic Act."

8 "Drug" means a drug as defined in section 2(b) of "The
9 Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act."

10 * * *

11 "Practice of psychology" [means offering to render or
12 rendering to individuals, corporations, institutions,
13 governmental agencies, or the public for remuneration any
14 service involving the following:

15 (i) The application of established principles of learning,
16 motivation, perception, thinking, and emotional relationships to
17 problems of personality evaluation, group relations, and
18 behavior adjustment. The application of said principles
19 includes, but is not restricted to, counseling and the use of
20 psychological methods with persons or groups with adjustment
21 problems in the areas of work, family, school, and personal
22 relationships; measuring and testing of personality,
23 intelligence, aptitudes, and emotions, and offering services as
24 a psychological consultant. Psychologists with appropriate
25 education, training and experience may diagnose and use
26 psychological methods in the treatment of a mental, emotional or
27 nervous illness or disability; alcoholism and other substance
28 abuse; disorders of habit or conduct; psychological aspects of
29 physical illness, accident, injury or disability; and
30 psychoeducational evaluation, therapy, remediation and

1 consultation.

2 (ii) (a) "Measuring and testing," consisting of the
3 psychological assessment and evaluation of abilities, attitudes,
4 aptitudes, achievements, adjustments, motives, personality
5 dynamics and/or other psychological attributes of individuals,
6 or groups of individuals by means of standardized measurements
7 or other methods, techniques or procedures recognized by the
8 science and profession of psychology, (b) "psychological
9 methods," consisting of the application of principles of
10 learning and motivation in an interpersonal situation with the
11 objectives of modification of perception and adjustment, and
12 requiring highly developed skills in the disciplines,
13 techniques, and methods of altering through learning processes,
14 attitudes, feelings, values, self-concept, personal goals and
15 adaptive patterns, (c) "psychological consulting," consisting of
16 interpreting or reporting upon scientific fact or theory in
17 psychology, rendering expert psychological opinion,
18 psychological evaluation, or engaging in applied psychological
19 research.] means rendering or offering to render, to

20 individuals, corporations, institutions, governmental agencies
21 or the public, for remuneration, a service involving any of the
22 following:

23 (1) The application of established principles of learning,
24 motivation, perception, thinking and emotional relationships to
25 problems of personality evaluation, group relations and behavior
26 adjustment. The application of the established principles
27 includes:

28 (i) Counseling and the use of psychological methods with
29 persons or groups with adjustment problems in the areas of work,
30 family, school and personal relationships.

1 (ii) Measuring and testing personality, intelligence,
2 aptitudes and emotions and offering services as a psychological
3 consultant.

4 (2) Measuring and testing, consisting of the psychological
5 assessment and evaluation of abilities, attitudes, aptitudes,
6 achievements, adjustments, motives, personality dynamics or
7 other psychological attributes of individuals or groups of
8 individuals by means of standardized measurements or other
9 methods, techniques or procedures recognized by the science and
10 profession of psychology.

11 (3) Psychological methods, consisting of the application of
12 principles of learning and motivation in an interpersonal
13 situation with the objectives of modification of perception and
14 adjustment, and requiring highly developed skills in the
15 disciplines, techniques and methods of altering through learning
16 processes, attitudes, feelings, values, self-concept, personal
17 goals and adaptive patterns.

18 (4) Psychological consulting, consisting of interpreting or
19 reporting upon scientific fact or theory in psychology,
20 rendering expert psychological opinion, psychological evaluation
21 or engaging in applied psychological research.

22 "Prescribing psychologist" means a psychologist licensed in
23 this Commonwealth who holds a current valid prescription
24 certificate.

25 "Prescription" means a written or oral order for a drug,
26 laboratory test, medicine, device or treatment, including a
27 controlled substance.

28 "Prescription certificate" means a document issued by the
29 board that permits the holder to prescribe a drug or controlled
30 substance in accordance with section 6.1.

1 "Prescriptive authority" means, pertaining only to a
2 prescribing psychologist, the authority to prescribe,
3 administer, manage, discontinue or distribute, without charge,
4 psychotropic medication. The term includes the authority of a
5 prescribing psychologist to check a patient's pulse, blood
6 pressure and temperature and order bloodwork.

7 "Primary care provider" means a primary care provider as
8 defined in section 2102 of the act of May 17, 1921 (P.L.682,
9 No.284), known as "The Insurance Company Law of 1921."

10 "Psychopharmacology clinical practical experience" means a
11 period of supervised clinical training and practice in which
12 clinical diagnoses and interventions employing medication are
13 learned and which are conducted and supervised as part of the
14 training program.

15 "Psychotropic medication" means a drug or controlled
16 substance that is used for mental health disorders and substance
17 abuse disorders, including an antidepressant, anti-anxiety
18 medication, stimulant, antipsychotic, mood stabilizer, opioid
19 antagonist or opioid partial agonist for the treatment of drug
20 addiction or prevention of relapse of drug addiction, or both.

21 "Telemedicine" means as follows:

22 (1) The delivery of health care services to a patient by a
23 health care provider who is at a different location through
24 synchronous interactions, asynchronous interactions or remote
25 patient monitoring that meet the requirements of any of the
26 following:

27 (i) The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
28 of 1996 (Public Law 104-191, 110 Stat. 1936).

29 (ii) The Health Information Technology for Economic and
30 Clinical Health Act (Public Law 111-5, 123 Stat. 226-279 and

1 467-497).

2 (iii) Other applicable Federal or State law regarding the
3 privacy and security of electronic transmission of health
4 information.

5 (2) The term does not include:

6 (i) The provision of health care services solely through the
7 use of voicemail, facsimile, email or instant messaging or a
8 combination thereof.

9 (ii) A provider-to-provider consultation.

10 Section 2. Sections 3.1(a) and 3.2 of the act are amended to
11 read:

12 Section 3.1. State Board of Psychology.--(a) The State
13 Board of Psychology shall consist of [~~nine~~] 11 members who are
14 citizens of the United States and who have been residents of
15 this Commonwealth for a three-year period. [~~Eight~~] Ten members
16 are to be appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent
17 of a majority of the members elected to the Senate, and the
18 Commissioner of Professional and Occupational Affairs shall
19 serve as the [~~ninth~~] eleventh member of the board. Two members
20 shall be appointed as representatives of the public at large.
21 [~~Six~~] Eight members shall be appointed who shall hold current
22 valid licenses to practice psychology in this Commonwealth and
23 shall be broadly representative of the practice areas of
24 psychology, and at least two members shall be prescribing
25 psychologists.

26 * * *

27 Section 3.2. Powers of the Board.--The board shall have the
28 following powers and duties:

29 (1) To pass upon the qualifications and fitness of
30 applicants for licenses and reciprocal licenses; and to adopt

1 and revise rules and regulations requiring applicants to pass
2 examinations relating to their qualifications as a prerequisite
3 to the issuance of license.

4 (2) To adopt and, from time to time, revise such rules and
5 regulations and policies not inconsistent with the law as may be
6 necessary to carry into effect the provisions of this act. Such
7 rules and regulations shall include, but not be limited to,
8 standards for professional practice and a code of ethics for
9 psychologists in the State.

10 (3) To examine for, deny, approve, issue, revoke, suspend,
11 restrict, limit and renew the licenses of psychologist
12 applicants and prescribing psychologists pursuant to this act
13 and to conduct hearings in connection therewith.

14 (4) To conduct hearings upon complaints concerning
15 violations of the provisions of and the rules and regulations
16 adopted pursuant to this act and cause the prosecution, impose
17 civil penalties and enjoin any such violations.

18 (5) To employ, with the approval of the Commissioner of
19 Professional and Occupational Affairs, a professional
20 credentials evaluator to review applications.

21 (6) To waive examination and grant a license in cases deemed
22 exceptional by the board and in accordance with board
23 regulations.

24 (7) To keep a list of prescribing psychologists containing
25 the following information:

26 (i) The name of the psychologist.

27 (ii) The psychologist's identification number assigned by
28 the board.

29 (iii) The psychologist's Drug Enforcement Agency number.

30 (iv) The effective date that a prescribing psychologist

1 obtained prescriptive authority.

2 Section 3. The act is amended by adding sections to read:

3 Section 6.1. Prescription Certificate.--(a) To qualify for
4 a prescription certificate, a psychologist shall hold a current
5 valid license in this Commonwealth and meet the minimum
6 requirements as prescribed by the board. At a minimum, the
7 requirements shall include:

8 (1) A current valid doctoral level license to practice
9 psychology in this Commonwealth.

10 (2) A master's degree in clinical psychopharmacology from an
11 accredited institution of higher education accredited by the
12 American Psychological Association or that is approved by the
13 board as meeting the necessary requirements in accordance with
14 the following:

15 (i) The accredited institution of higher education that
16 offers the master's degree shall determine the prerequisites for
17 the biomedical education which are sufficient to ensure the
18 necessary knowledge and skills to prescribe drugs and controlled
19 substances in a safe manner.

20 (ii) The psychologist must have completed an organized
21 sequence of study in an organized program offering intensive
22 didactic education, including the following coursework and core
23 areas of instruction:

24 (A) Basic science.

25 (B) Functional neurosciences.

26 (C) Physical examination.

27 (D) Interpretation of laboratory tests.

28 (E) Pathological basis of disease.

29 (F) Clinical medicine.

30 (G) Clinical neurotherapeutics.

1 (H) Systems of care.

2 (I) Pharmacology.

3 (J) Clinical pharmacology.

4 (K) Psychopharmacology.

5 (L) Psychopharmacology research.

6 (M) Professional ethical and legal issues.

7 (iii) The didactic portion of the education under this
8 clause shall consist of an appropriate number of hours to ensure
9 acquisition of the necessary knowledge and skills to prescribe
10 in a safe and effective manner.

11 (3) Completing a psychopharmacology clinical practical
12 experience, as determined by the training program, which shall
13 consist of:

14 (i) An eighty-hour practicum in observational clinical
15 assessment and pathophysiology under the supervision of a
16 licensed physician or prescribing psychologist.

17 (ii) A supervised practicum of at least four hundred hours
18 treating at least one hundred patients with mental health
19 disorders, under the supervision of a licensed physician or
20 prescribing psychologist with one-to-one supervision provided
21 either face-to-face, telephonically or by video conference.

22 (4) Passing a national certification examination developed
23 by a nationally recognized body and approved by the board.

24 (5) Possessing professional liability insurance that covers
25 the prescribing of psychotropic medication.

26 (6) Paying all appropriate fees in the amount determined by
27 the board.

28 (7) Meeting any other standards or requirements deemed
29 necessary by the board.

30 (b) A prescribing psychologist from another state or

1 jurisdiction, or who has training from the United States
2 Department of Defense demonstration project or other similar
3 program developed and operated by any branch of the armed forces
4 of the United States, may apply for a prescription certificate
5 in this Commonwealth if the board deems the education and
6 psychopharmacology clinical practical experience equivalent to
7 the requirements of this section. The board may, at its
8 discretion, require the applicant to complete supplemental
9 education or psychopharmacology clinical practical experience,
10 or both.

11 (c) The board shall prescribe by regulation the procedures
12 for renewing a prescription certificate. Each prescribing
13 psychologist shall complete a minimum of an additional sixteen
14 hours of continuing medical education or continuing education
15 per renewal period relevant to the practice of a prescribing
16 psychologist. The continuing education credits are in addition
17 to credits required to renew a psychologist license.

18 Section 6.2. Prescribing and Administrative Practices.--(a)
19 A prescribing psychologist may:

20 (1) Prescribe psychotropic medication through the use of
21 telemedicine.

22 (2) Prescribe and administer psychotropic medication,
23 including the ordering and review of laboratory tests in
24 conjunction with the prescription, for the treatment and
25 management of mental disorders and substance abuse disorders.

26 (b) (1) When prescribing psychotropic medication to a
27 patient, the prescribing psychologist shall maintain an ongoing
28 collaborative relationship with the primary care provider who
29 oversees the patient's general medical care to ensure that:

30 (i) Necessary medical examinations are conducted.

1 (ii) The psychotropic medication is appropriate for the
2 patient's medical condition.

3 (iii) Significant changes in the patient's medical or
4 psychological conditions are discussed and monitored.

5 (2) The ongoing collaborative relationship under clause (1)
6 shall be maintained in accordance with guidelines approved by
7 the board, which shall optimize patient care. The guidelines
8 shall ensure that the prescribing psychologist and the primary
9 care provider coordinate and collaborate on the care of the
10 patient to provide optimal care.

11 (c) A prescribing psychologist of a patient shall obtain a
12 release of information from the patient or the patient's legal
13 guardian authorizing the prescribing psychologist to contact the
14 patient's primary care provider, as required by law. If the
15 legal guardian of a patient under fourteen years of age refuses
16 to sign a release of information for the patient's primary care
17 provider who oversees the patient, the prescribing psychologist
18 shall:

19 (1) Inform the patient's legal guardian that the prescribing
20 psychologist cannot treat the patient pharmacologically without
21 an ongoing collaborative relationship with the patient's primary
22 care provider.

23 (2) Refer the patient to the primary care provider.

24 (d) A prescribing psychologist may not issue a prescription
25 unless the prescribing psychologist holds a current valid
26 certificate for prescriptive authority. A prescribing
27 psychologist may not prescribe a narcotic, except an opioid
28 antagonist or opioid partial agonist approved by the United
29 States Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of drug
30 addiction or the prevention of relapse of drug addiction, or

1 both.

2 (e) Each prescription issued by a prescribing psychologist
3 shall:

4 (1) Comply with all applicable Federal and State laws and
5 regulations.

6 (2) Be identified as written by the prescribing psychologist
7 in a manner determined by the board.

8 (3) Be maintained in the patient's record.

9 (f) A prescribing psychologist may not delegate the
10 authority to prescribe to any other person.

11 Section 6.3. Controlled Substances.--When authorized to
12 prescribe controlled substances, a prescribing psychologist
13 shall file with the board in a timely manner the prescribing
14 psychologist's Drug Enforcement Agency registration and number.

15 Section 4. Sections 8(a)(7), (10) and (13) and (b)(6), 8.1
16 and 11 of the act are amended to read:

17 Section 8. Refusal, Suspension or Revocation of License.--

18 (a) The board may refuse to issue a license or may suspend,
19 revoke, limit or restrict a license or reprimand a licensee for
20 any of the following reasons:

21 * * *

22 (7) Having a license to practice psychology or prescription
23 certificate suspended, revoked or refused or receiving other
24 disciplinary action by the proper psychology licensing authority
25 of another state, territory or country.

26 * * *

27 (10) Knowingly aiding, assisting, procuring or advising any
28 unlicensed person to practice psychology or practice as a
29 prescribing psychologist, contrary to this act or regulations of
30 the board.

1 * * *

2 (13) Failing to perform any statutory obligation placed upon
3 a licensed psychologist or prescribing psychologist.

4 * * *

5 (b) When the board finds that the license or application for
6 license of any person may be refused, revoked, restricted or
7 suspended under the terms of subsection (a), the board may:

8 * * *

9 (6) Restore a suspended license to practice psychology or
10 prescribing psychologist and impose any disciplinary or
11 corrective measure which it might originally have imposed.

12 * * *

13 Section 8.1. Reporting of Multiple Licensure.--Any licensed
14 psychologist of this Commonwealth who is also licensed to
15 practice psychology, is a prescribing psychologist or another
16 health profession in any other state, territory or country shall
17 report this information to the board on the biennial
18 registration application. Any disciplinary action taken in any
19 other state, territory or country shall be reported to the board
20 on the biennial registration application or within ninety days
21 of disposition, whichever is sooner. Multiple licensure shall be
22 noted by the board on the psychologist's or prescribing
23 psychologist's record, and such state, territory or country
24 shall be notified by the board of any disciplinary actions taken
25 against said psychologist in this Commonwealth.

26 Section 11. Penalties and Injunctions Against Unlawful
27 Practice.--(a) Any person who engages or offers to engage in
28 the practice of psychology or prescribing psychologist without
29 holding a currently valid license or prescription certificate as
30 required by this act or any person or the responsible officer or

1 employe of any corporation or partnership, institution or
2 association who violates any of the provisions of this act or
3 any rule or regulation of the board promulgated pursuant
4 thereto, for a first offense shall be guilty of a misdemeanor
5 and upon conviction shall be sentenced to pay a fine of not more
6 than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or undergo imprisonment of
7 not more than six months; and on each additional offense shall
8 be subject to a fine of not less than two thousand dollars
9 (\$2,000) or imprisonment of not less than six months nor more
10 than one year, or both.

11 (b) In addition to any other civil remedy or criminal
12 penalty provided for in this act, the board, by a vote of the
13 majority of the maximum number of the authorized membership of
14 the board as provided by law, or by a vote of the majority of
15 the duly qualified and confirmed membership or a minimum of four
16 members, whichever is greater, may levy a civil penalty of up to
17 one thousand dollars (\$1,000) on any current licensee who
18 violates any provision of this act or on any person who
19 practices psychology or practices as a prescribing psychologist,
20 as defined in this act, without being properly licensed or
21 certified to do so under this act. The board shall levy this
22 penalty only after affording the accused party the opportunity
23 for a hearing, as provided by Title 2 of the Pennsylvania
24 Consolidated Statutes (relating to administrative law and
25 procedure). All fines and civil penalties imposed in accordance
26 with this act shall be paid into the Professional Augmentation
27 Account.

28 (c) It shall be unlawful for any person to practice or
29 attempt to offer to practice psychology or practice as a
30 prescribing psychologist, as defined in this act, without having

1 at the time of so doing a valid, unexpired, unrevoked and
2 unsuspended license issued under this act. The unlawful practice
3 of psychology or practice as a prescribing psychologist, as
4 defined in this act, may be enjoined by the courts on petition
5 of the board or the Commissioner of Professional and
6 Occupational Affairs. In any such proceeding it shall not be
7 necessary to show that any person is individually injured by the
8 actions complained of. If the respondent is found guilty of the
9 unlawful practice of psychology or practice as a prescribing
10 psychologist, the court shall enjoin him or her from so
11 practicing unless and until he or she has been duly licensed.
12 Procedure in such cases shall be the same as in any other
13 injunction suit. The remedy by injunction hereby given is in
14 addition to any other civil or criminal prosecution and
15 punishment.

16 Section 5. The State Board of Psychology shall promulgate
17 regulations necessary to implement this act no later than one
18 year from the effective date of this section.

19 Section 6. This act shall take effect as follows:

20 (1) The following shall take effect immediately:

21 Section 5 of this act.

22 This section.

23 (2) The remainder of this act shall take effect in 60
24 days.