

**Mississippi Board of Psychology**

5-Year Strategic Plan

For the Fiscal Years 2021-2025

**823-00**

## **1. Mississippi Board of Psychology Mission**

The mission of the Mississippi Board of Psychology is to protect the people of Mississippi against unauthorized, unqualified, and improper practice of psychology as authorized by [Miss. Code Ann. § 73-31-1](#).

## **2. Our Philosophy and Core Values**

The Mississippi Board of Psychology (Board) is committed to the safeguard and protection of consumers of psychological services by regulating the practice of psychology in Mississippi. The Board ascribes to the following core values:

- **Standards:** The Board strives to adhere to the highest professional and ethical standards while executing its statutory responsibilities.
- **Accountability:** The Board strives to enforce, without discrimination, the licensing and regulation of any person who presents himself/herself to the public as a licensed psychologist or who offers psychological services to individuals, groups, organizations, corporations, institutions, government agencies or the general public.
- **Innovation:** The Board strives to embrace new ideas and changes in order to improve mobility, consistency, and availability within the licensure and practice of psychology.
- **Integrity:** The Board strives to maintain transparency in its daily management and official responsibilities as defined through legislation.
- **Stewardship:** The Board strives to be good stewards in the efficient and effective use of all human, fiscal, and material resources. We are dedicated to continuous evaluation and improvement.
- **Respect:** The Board strives to be respectful of the culture and values of all applicants, licensees, complainants or any citizen who has contact with the Board.

## **3. Relevant Statewide Goal and Benchmarks**

Statewide Goal #1: To protect Mississippians from risks by licensing appropriately trained and qualified professionals.

Relevant Benchmark #1: Access to appropriately trained and qualified professionals.

1. Number of licensed psychologists.
2. Number of disciplinary actions.
3. Number of psychologists certified to complete civil commitment exams.

Statewide Goal #2: Evaluate competencies at the point of licensure, EPPP-1, EPPP-2, CE credits.

1. Number of trainings/meetings related to implementation of EPPP-1 and EPPP-2.
2. Plan for implementation of new EPPP-1 and EPPP-2 requirements.
3. Consider CE credits update.
4. Plan for making CE credit changes to Rules and Regulations.

#### **4. Overview of the Board's 5-Year Strategic Plan 2021-2025:**

The Mississippi Board of Psychology's mission is to prevent the unauthorized, unqualified, and improper practice of psychology in Mississippi. This mission is possible through statutes that empower the Board to establish licensing requirements, to set standards for professional behavior, and to review the professional conduct of licensed psychologists to promote competent practice and public welfare.

The Board of Psychology's first priority during the next five years is to stay abreast of national and state issues that affect the ethical practice of psychology. Board members' active participation on list-serves and conferences focused on psychological services will help accomplish this. Emerging issues about licensure and practice are systematically included on the Board's agenda for discussion and action where needed.

The Board of Psychology is charged with protecting the public by assuring candidates for licensure meet minimal standards to practice and that licensees uphold legal and ethical expectations. The Board will take appropriate action to mitigate harm to anyone who receives services from a Mississippi psychologist. Some of the upcoming discussions of the Board will include a consideration of:

- 1) Addition of the EPPP-2, a competence examination recently development by ASPPB,
- 2) Pros/cons of continuing to offer an oral examination once the EPPP-2 goes into effect.
- 3) Possibility of joining the Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) for delivery of telehealth services.
- 4) Utilizing the data management system to promote electronic licensure renewals and to more efficiently review Continuing Education requirements and materials.
- 5) Establishing parameters for administrative and ministerial duties for the Mississippi Autism Board and providing efficient administration of the Mississippi Autism Board.

#### **5. Agency's External/Internal Assessment**

- 1) There has been a slight increase in the number of applicants over the past several years, resulting in more licensed psychologists for the state and more revenue for the Board. However, the increase in revenue is offset by the increase in the number of application reviews, board meetings, oral exams, and associated costs such as travel.

- 2) The Board has recently included an Emeritus Status for senior psychologist who meet certain criteria resulting in a decrease in licensure renewal income of the Board.
- 3) The necessity to stay abreast of any state or federal mandates that affect psychology licensure or practice, the increase of applications and offering oral examinations more frequently creates a heavier workload on the voluntary membership of the Board and results in more board meetings and the associated costs.
- 4) The Board finds it necessary to participate in the Annual and Mid-winter meeting of ASPPB in order to stay informed of current psychology regulatory issues.
- 5) The Board continues an on-going process of evaluating all aspects of duties and responsibilities under the Board's mandate. This includes contracted services, standards set forth in the Rules & Regulations, Statutes, and standards/processes for license renewal. This process allows for early detection and prompt attention to problem areas.
- 6) The Board has no full-time employees and therefore contracts for administrative services. The Board is in the process of identifying additional administrative assistance for administration of the Mississippi Autism Board. Currently, Board members are performing administrative services that fall within the designated sphere of responsibility of each Board officer.

The Board has elected to utilize the services of the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) to ensure efficient and effective accounting and financial practices. A Memorandum of Understanding exists between the Board and DFA outlining the services that will be performed by DFA.

## **6. Agency Goals, Strategies, and Measures by Program of FY 2021 through 2025:**

### **Program 1: Licensure & Regulation**

**Goal A: Issue license for the independent practice of psychology to individuals who have met the standards and qualifications set forth in the statues (Miss. Code Ann. § 73-31-13).**

**Objective A.1** Establish licensing requirements that examines education and training credentials, and administers examinations for minimal competency to practice psychology

*Outcome:* Complete, primary source verified applications submitted for Board review.

*Outcome:* Candidates demonstrate minimal competency to practice psychology in Mississippi.

*Outcome:* Qualified Licensed Psychologists.

**A.1.1 Strategy:** Require applicants to submit primary source documentation of appropriate education, training, and experience and good moral character to satisfactorily meet minimum requirements to become licensed as a psychologist.

*Output:* Number of applicants requesting initiation of the application process.  
*Output:* Number of applicants that complete the PLUS process.  
*Output:* Number of state and national background checks received.  
*Efficiency:* Online application reduces office workload and costs.

**A.1.2 Strategy:** Board review of each completed application and supporting documentation to determine if applicant is approved for examination to continue the licensure process.

*Output:* Number of completed applications received through PLUS.  
*Output:* Number of approved candidates for examination.  
*Efficiency:* Cost per application and office expenses offset by fee.  
*Efficiency:* Utilizing the PLUS reduces office workload.

**A.1.3 Strategy:** Board review of applicant's national examination (EPPP) results, MS oral examination and jurisprudence exam to determine his/her knowledge of psychology, statutes, and ethical standards and his/her application skills meet the criteria to practice psychology at a minimal level.

*Output:* Number of candidates passing EPPP.  
*Output:* Number of candidates passing MS jurisprudence exam.  
*Output:* Number of candidates passing MS oral exam.  
*Efficiency:* Cost per application and office expenses offset by fee.

## **Program 1: Licensure & Regulation Renewals**

**Goal B: Renew licenses of psychologists who satisfactorily meet the annual renewal requirements ([Miss. Code Ann. § 73-31-9](#)).**

**Objective B. 1.** Annually review qualifications for renewal of all licensed psychologists

*Outcome:* Qualified Licensed Psychologists.  
*Outcome:* Licensed psychologists maintain evidence informed practices.  
*Outcome:* Decrease in number of complaints against Licensed Psychologists.

**B.1. Strategy:** Provide a renewal application that meets all reporting requirements

*Output:* Number of renewal applications received.  
*Output:* Increased number of psychologists who renew online.  
*Efficiency:* Online renewal reduces office costs and increases customer service.  
*Efficiency:* Online renewals decrease processing time of license renewals.  
*Efficiency:* Online renewal immediate deposit of funds into State Treasury account.  
*Explanatory:* Costs reduced through online renewal and payment; associated fee offsets the cost.

**B.2.2 Strategy:** Track compliance with biennial continuing education (CE) requirement.

*Output:* Number of psychologists reporting at least twenty (20) CE hours per reporting with at least two (2) hours of CE that address ethics or legal issues regarding the practice of psychology.

*Output:* Number of licensees utilizing online reporting log.

*Output:* Number of psychologists who are audited for CE compliance.

*Efficiency:* Administrative costs to process and report psychology CE.

*Efficiency:* Time spent by Board's CE coordinator managing CE inquiries and reviews.

*Explanatory:* Online tracking and reporting of CE reduces office cost to review and process.

**Goal C: Enforce regulatory laws governing licensed psychologists**  
**(Miss. Code Ann. § 73-31-1).**

**Objective C. 1.** Set standards for professional behavior, and review the professional conduct of licensed psychologists to promote competent practice and public welfare.

*Outcome:* Uniform expectations and disciplinary process for licensed Psychologists.

*Outcome:* Psychologists are well informed on statutory expectations and disciplinary process.

*Outcome:* Decrease in number of complaints against licensed psychologists.

**C.1.1. Strategy:** Board will stay informed of legal and ethical changes and other relevant state or national information that impacts psychology practice.

*Output:* Board members and management staff attend ASPPB and other relevant meetings.

*Efficiency:* Cost of attendance.

*Explanation:* ASPPB offers \$500 scholarships for attending ASPPB and other relevant meetings.

**C.2.2. Strategy:** Educate licensed psychologists of any statutory, rule, or regulation change by participating in the MS Psychological Association meetings.

*Output:* Board members and administrative staff attend the meetings.

*Output:* Board invited to present on disciplinary issues at the meetings.

*Output:* Board offers training to become a Civil Commitment examiner at the meetings.

*Output:* Board conducts an Open Board session during the meetings.

*Efficiency:* Costs of attendance and travel for Board meeting.

*Explanation:* Costs of audiovisual needs for presentation covered by association.

**C.3.3. Strategy:** Update State statute when necessary to reflect changes in board policy, national/professional trends, or state mandates affecting competent practice and public welfare.

*Output:* Board reviews statutes, Rules and Regulations and policies on an on-going basis.

*Output:* Board proposes changes to State statute through legislature.

*Output:* Board provides in-service training upon request.

*Efficiency:* Costs of research, legal counsel, travel, report preparation, legislative education.

## **Program 2: Mississippi Autism Board**

The Mississippi Autism Board was created by the legislature in 2015. This Board was empowered under Miss. Code Ann. § 73-75-1, et seq., to license qualified applicants in the practice of behavior analysis and to promulgate such rules as are necessary to provide for the licensing of behavior analysts and assistant behavior analysts. During FY18 the legislature directed the transition of the Mississippi Autism Board to operate under the administrative oversight of the Mississippi Board of Psychology.

**Goal A: Provide administrative and ministerial services for the Mississippi Autism Board as set forth in statute ([Miss. Code Ann. § 73-75-11](#)).**

**Objective A.1 Establish procedures for the collection, deposit and disbursement of Autism Board funds.**

*Outcome:* Accurate accounting of funds accrued and available for the support of Autism Board activities.

**A.1.1 Strategy:** Develop in conjunction with DFA a process to insure the timely deposit of and accurate accounting for funds received for Autism Board functions.

*Output:* Creation of a holding account for Autism Board funds which can be separately identified from Board of Psychology funds.

*Output:* Monthly reporting of funds accrued and disbursed for Autism Board functions and activities included as line items in the Board of Psychology financial report.

**A.1.2 Strategy:** Develop a written process for Autism Board to request disbursement of funds for Autism Board functions and activities.

*Output:* Written procedure by which the Autism Board petitions the Board of Psychology for approval of disbursement of funds for Autism Board activities.

*Efficiency:* Ensures that Autism Board funds are disbursed only for approved activities and that disbursements are kept within annual spending limits.

*Efficiency:* Facilitates successful performance of the Board of Psychology's fiduciary responsibility concerning oversight of Autism Board funds.

**Objective A.2 Define administrative and ministerial functions to be provided by the Board of Psychology for the Autism Board.**

*Outcome:* Improved clarity concerning the role of the Board of Psychology's relationship with the Autism Board in the performance of administrative and ministerial functions.

**A.2.1 Strategy:** Meet with Autism Board to establish menu of administrative and ministerial services to be provided by the Board of Psychology.

*Outcome:* Determination of hours per week expended in the performance of administrative and ministerial functions for the Autism Board.

*Outcome:* Delineation of responsibilities to be performed by Board of Psychology administrative staff and by Autism Board members and officers.

*Outcome:* Prioritization of work to be performed by the Board of Psychology, based upon Autism Board funds available for that purpose.

*Efficiency:* Avoid expenditure of limited Autism Board funds on more staff time than necessary to accomplish statutory responsibility.

*Efficiency:* Avoid duplication of effort or lack of performance based on unclear roles of Board of Psychology and Autism Board.

*Efficiency:* Ensure that limited Autism Board funds are utilized efficiently to finance key administrative and ministerial functions performed by the Board of Psychology within limited Autism Board funds available for that purpose.