



# Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology

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**Subject:** Email Update July 2015

**Date:** June 30, 2015

Dear Registrant:

Welcome to the most recent update from NSBEP. In this format of communication with registrants, the Board strives to provide updates on subjects of interest to registrants of the Board.

The NSBEP would like to wish you a Happy Canada Day!

In this update:

- Telepsychology Memorandum of Understanding - Update
- Change to Annual Process involving Registration Certificates
- Board Website
- Insurance Coverage - Question and Answer
- Assisting with Supervision, Oral Examinations and Transfer Interviews
- Recent Board Appointments

## **1. Telepsychology Memorandum of Understanding - Update**

On March 27, 2014, the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Prince Edward Island Psychologists Registration Board regarding the practice of telepsychology. Since that time, the MOU has allowed registrants of NSBEP to provide psychological services, via telepsychology (only), to the residents of Prince Edward Island (and vice versa for psychologists registered in PEI).

The Nova Scotia Board and the PEI Board also initiated discussions with the College of Psychologists of New Brunswick and the Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board so that this agreement could be expanded to include all of the Atlantic Provinces.

On October 28, 2014, the MOU was signed with the College of Psychologists of New Brunswick (CPNB), the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology (NSBEP), and the Prince Edward Island Psychologists Registration Board (PEIRB) regarding the practice of telepsychology.

The MOU was subsequently expanded to include Newfoundland and Labrador. On May 29, 2015, the College of Psychologists of New Brunswick (CPNB), the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology (NSBEP), the Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board (NLPB), and the Prince Edward Island Psychologists Registration Board (PEIRB) signed a MOU regarding the practice of telepsychology. The full text of the MOU is available by [clicking here](#).

Normally, psychologists providing services to the residents of another Canadian jurisdiction would be required to be registered in that jurisdiction. The MOU with the Atlantic Provinces provides an alternate pathway: psychologists registered with NSBEP (including those on the register of candidates) would need to notify the PEI Registration Board or, NLPB, or CPNB of their intention to provide telepsychology services in the applicable jurisdiction. Such notification should include the psychologist's name, contact information and NSBEP registration number at the beginning of each year or prior to beginning such practice. Psychologists registered in any other Atlantic Province would need to provide the same notification to the NSBEP should they wish to provide services via telepsychology to a client in Nova Scotia.

Psychologists planning to engage in the practice of telepsychology should be familiar with the Model Standards for Telepsychology Service that were developed by the Association of Canadian Psychology Regulatory Organizations (ACPRO), adopted by NSBEP, and issued to registrants as an Advisory for Psychological Practice. These Standards are available by [clicking here](#).

## **2. Change to Annual Process involving Registration Certificates**

As you know, several years ago the NSBEP made changes to the registration process enabling registrants to quickly renew their registration online. Now, as soon as registrants complete their renewal online, they get access to their payment receipt and a Registration Confirmation. These items confirm that a psychologist's registration has been renewed for the year. Because of the online renewal process, one implication has been that the only document requiring the use of regular mail has been the yellow insert that is placed behind the circular window of the Registration Certificate.

Effective for 2016 Registration Renewals, the Board will be eliminating the requirement for Registered Psychologists to have to take apart the frame of their Registration Certificate each year in order to replace the insert. As you may know, the intention behind the insert was to verify that a psychologist's registration was current for the year. This process was put in place prior to existence of public websites. However, Board members when considering this topic, discussed the fact that even though one could have a Registration Certificate insert displaying the current year, this does not assure the public that a psychologist's registration has not ended at some point during the calendar year or in fact that there have been no findings of professional misconduct or sanctions related to a psychologist's registration. In terms of providing up-to-date confirmation of registration, the Board over the years, has invested in improvements to the website allowing a variety of current information to be displayed for both registrants and the public. One can search the website to verify that a psychologist's registration is current and obtain information about how to find out whether there have been any disciplinary findings for a registrant (this refers to a Reprimand or greater). We know from website statistics that more people are turning to the website for various purposes.

The change in process will help keep NSBEP moving in a "green" direction by reducing the use of paper. As well, this helps to keep costs down when considering that the price of postage has increased significantly in the last while, and other ongoing costs associated with this process will be eliminated. Consequently these savings can better be utilized by continuing to enhance both the Board's website and Registry Information Management System. The intention is that such enhancements will continue to improve features for both registrants and the public and better enable the Board to conduct its work.

So instead of having to take apart your Certificate each year, you can simply reverse the existing yellow insert behind the circular window of your Certificate. By reversing the yellow insert, the circular hole will be filled in and your Certificate frame will not have to be taken apart again.

Rest assured, the Board did consider other options, such as providing a gold seal in place of the circular window. However, it was noted that the Certificate already contains the gold seal of the Board on its left side, so another seal would be redundant. The Board also considered the option of providing a new Certificate to all Registered Psychologists, but the costs of conducting a mass printing and mail-out campaign would be very high, and determined not to be a good use of funds.

However, if any registrant is uncomfortable with this suggestion to reverse the insert, he/she can order a new Certificate which will not contain a circular window. The price to obtain a second Certificate will not be increasing and remains at \$15. This amount pays the costs of the material to produce the Certificate, and other expenses such as printing, delivery, labour, and mailing. However, in terms of sentimental value, it should be noted that a new Certificate would not contain the signature of the Board Chair and/or Registrar in place when your original Certificate was issued. Again, this change in process can be remedied subtly by simply reversing the existing insert behind the circular window of the existing Certificate. It is likely that this process will be the "greenest" choice for Registered Psychologists.

Those on the Candidate Register will be issued a Registration Certificate to cover the period of Candidacy.

This information about the change in process for Registration Certificates will be placed on the NSBEP website and provided to registrants when the notices are sent for 2016 renewals.

### **3. Board Website**

Registrants are always encouraged to make use of the website to keep track of any developments and to perform various tasks. For instance, the website provides access to various legislation, standards and additional guidelines NSBEP has established to direct practice along with news releases. We also have different versions of "Frequently Asked Questions" to serve the various requirements of visitors to our site.

Additionally, the NSBEP Directory of Psychologists is available from the website. Such information can be helpful for the public and other professionals. Please ensure that your information is accurate.

The Board has recently launched an online application system allowing applicants to complete their portion of the application process online. This helps to reduce costs for the applicant and speeds up the application process. As well, this enhancement makes it easier

for the Board to update the database when applicants become registrants.

The Board site offers a Registrant Portal, which allows registrants to perform a variety of self-serve functions. In addition to renewing your registration, you can update your contact information or Psychological Practice Profile at any time.

You can also access a Confirmation of Registration document that you can save to your computer and/or print off if you wish to share it with others to verify your registration, e.g., an employer, insurance companies, agencies, etc.

You can return to this portal at any time in future, if you wish to obtain another Confirmation of Registration, update your information, or even pay a miscellaneous fee (e.g., paying an oral exam fee, reinstatement fee, etc.).

To get started with any of the self-serve functions, visit [nsbep.org](http://nsbep.org) and click on "Registrant Login" in the upper right hand screen.

If you have any suggestions about how we can improve the website or provide additional information, please feel free to contact Matthew Wagner, Assistant Registrar.

#### **4. Insurance Coverage**

The Board at times receives variations of the below question.

*I have moved out of province / recently retired / am taking a leave of absence from the register or from work, do I need insurance coverage?*

Yes. This insurance coverage is necessary to cover individuals' prior actions, taken in the course of their previous duties as a psychologist (e.g., prior to their retirement, leave of absence from the register, leave from work, out-of-province move, or change of profession, etc.). This is because professional liability insurance coverage is written on a claims made form. This means that a policy must be in place when an allegation is made, regardless of when the actual event took place. Claims made policies provide coverage as long as members continue to renew insurance each year. Psychologists who do not renew coverage (or at least obtain tail coverage if they are no longer practicing) will not be covered for a claim made today for an incident that occurred in the past. You should talk to your insurance company. Insurers can typically provide tail coverage for those no longer practicing psychology. Typically such coverage is possible for a one-time-fee, or, for a limited period of time without cost. Again, it is important to check with your own insurance company.

#### **5. Assisting with Supervision, Oral Examinations and Transfer Interviews**

The NSBEP extends sincere appreciation to all registrants who give their time, knowledge and experience in acting as a Board Supervisor or assisting with Oral Examinations and Transfer Interview Committees.

In keeping with Standard IV.4 of the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists, working with the Board in these capacities provides an excellent way to contribute to the continuing education and the professional and scientific growth of self and colleagues.

## Oral Examinations & Transfer Interviews

Oral Examinations are conducted as candidates take the final steps towards Registration.

The Oral Examination provides an opportunity for a face-to-face interaction between examiners and examinees to discuss areas of practice, professional behaviour and ethical dilemmas, and to assess the examinee's understanding of the core competencies required for psychological practice, as well as the meaning of registration and the position of psychology as a profession.

Transfer Interviews are held for psychologists who are registered in another jurisdiction and are eligible to transfer based on their full registration in another jurisdiction and their meeting certain criteria. These interviews do not result in a pass or fail but do focus on ethical practice and local jurisprudence issues. At times, the Transfer Interview Committee might recommend that a condition be added to a psychologist's registration. An example of a condition would be completing supervision for a period of time.

### *Supervision*

The purposes of candidate register supervision are to:

1. To monitor the performance of candidates in the core competency areas to ensure standards are being met;
2. To provide opportunities for candidates to further develop their skills, knowledge, professional attitudes, and sound professional judgment.

Psychologists can act as a Supervisor for the entire duration of the candidacy period or they may choose to do so for a limited period of time.

As mentioned, there are times when supervision might be required for a registered psychologist. For instance, if a candidate has passed an oral exam with conditions, they may be registered with a condition requiring him/her to undergo an additional period of supervision to remediate concerns identified by the oral exam committee. In some instances, supervision may also be recommended to a psychologist who has transferred from another jurisdiction.

Those who have been a Registered Psychologist for two years are eligible to volunteer to serve as a NSBEP Supervisor.

The NSBEP encourages psychologists to consider becoming involved with the work of the Board. To obtain more information or to volunteer for one of these roles, please contact Matthew Wagner, Assistant Registrar.

## **6. Recent Board Appointments**

The Board is pleased to have received two appointments from the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia, effective July 1st. Mark Russell, M.Sc., R.Psych., has been appointed to the NSBEP for a term ending June 30, 2018. Nancy Bartlett, Ph.D., R.Psych., has been reappointed for a second term ending June 30, 2018.

Kind regards,

Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology

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