

School Psychologists to be Regulated by the College of Psychologists.

The Minister of Health has approved changes to the *Psychologists Regulation* under the *Health Professions Act (HPA)* which bring school psychologists under the regulation of the College of Psychologists of BC (CPBC). The changes remove the exemption for non-registrant use of the title “school psychologist” and require all school psychologists to be registrants of CPBC after May 1, 2024. The changes also establish the restricted activities of psychology diagnosis and school psychology diagnosis for registered psychologists and school psychologists respectively. Only registrants of the College of Psychologists of British Columbia may make a psychology diagnosis or a school psychology diagnosis after May 1, 2024. This change is in the interest of public safety and aligns the services provided by school psychologists with the requirements and expectations of other professionals regulated under the HPA.

The BC Association of School Psychologists (BCASP), the CPBC, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education have worked together to ensure that these changes mean that school psychologists as defined in the Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines will continue to practise with no change in scope in the school setting in which they work.

A copy the revisions to the *Psychologists Regulation* is available at:
https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/mo/mo/m0304_2022

Timeline for Implementation and Next Steps

The revised *Psychologists Regulation* establishes that all school psychologists must be registrants of the CPBC after May 1, 2024. BCASP and the CPBC have collaborated to map out an expedited process for BCASP members to obtain registration as school psychologist registrants of the CPBC. The details of the requirements for registration as a school psychologist registrant, and for the expedited process for BCASP members, will be included in the proposed bylaws which the CPBC is required to post for public consideration before enacting. These bylaws will be posted in the fall of 2022, and will confirm when the CPBC process for application for registration as a school psychologist opens and important milestones leading to the removal of the *Psychologists Regulation* exemption for use of the title “school psychologist”.

Frequently Asked Questions

What does regulation through a health professions regulatory college mean?

Health profession regulatory colleges have been delegated the authority under provincial legislation (the *Health Professions Act*) to govern the practice of their registrants in the public interest. Their mandate at all times is to serve and protect the public. The primary function of the colleges is to ensure their registrants are qualified, competent and following clearly defined standards of practice and ethical conduct. The health colleges under the HPA investigate complaints from patients and clients and members of the public.

When will the changes come into force?



The CPBC intends to begin accepting applications in 2023, and all school psychologists must be registered by May 1, 2024.

What are the requirements for BCASP members to become registered with the CPBC?

School psychologists currently certified through the BCASP would be eligible for expedited registration with the CPBC provided they meet other requirements to be established by the CPBC in its bylaws, including fitness to practice and good character requirements, criminal record checks, attending a virtual orientation workshop and successful completion of the online Written Jurisprudence Examination. Former CPBC registrants are encouraged to contact the College before making an application. The CPBC would be working with BCASP to ensure a smooth transition.

It is recommended that school psychologists become familiar with the *Psychologists Regulation*, the College's *Code of Conduct* as well as the bylaws and policies of the CPBC, which can be found on their [website](#). CPBC bylaws specific to school psychologists will be posted soon, and a communique will inform BCASP members of their availability.

What about school psychologists who are not members of the BCASP?

In addition to the requirements set out by the College for BCASP members, school psychologists who are not members of BCASP (or are not already registrants of CPBC) would be required to meet education, training, examination and supervised practice requirements as established by CPBC. It is anticipated that the CPBC would generally align its education requirements with those of the National Association of School Psychologists. These requirements will be detailed in the CPBC bylaws.

Will the scope of practice for school psychologists change?

The scope of practice and services currently provided by school psychologists employed in public and independent schools will not change. Please see https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/inclusive/special_ed_policy_manual.pdf for confirmation of the role of school psychologist.

What will be the role of the British Columbia Association of School Psychologists?

The BCASP plans to continue to function as the professional association for school psychologists. Please see the BCASP website for more information on the role of the BCASP. Ongoing membership with BCASP will not be required in order to maintain CPBC registration as a school psychologist, however all registrants are encouraged to be involved with professional associations in their field.

Who will be responsible for paying fees associated with being regulated?

The CPBC collects fees to cover the costs of regulating the profession in the public interest. For school psychologists employed in public schools, your employer has agreed to cover the costs of CPBC annual renewal fees in the most recent collective agreement. If you have further questions, please contact your employer/district.

School psychologists employed in independent schools should contact their employer for further clarification on payment of CPBC fees.

Who is responsible for paying the cost of the application and jurisprudence exam?

It is our understanding these fees are outside of the annual renewal fees your employer (for school psychologists employed in public schools) has agreed to pay in the most recent collective agreement. It will be up to applicants to cover this expense or seek for these fees to be reimbursed by their employer.

Who will be required to register?

All school psychologists practising in public and independent schools who are not currently registered as registered psychologists with the CPBC would be required to register. Future school psychologists will be required to obtain registration with the CPBC before working as a school psychologist in BC schools as well.

Will there be quality assurance requirements (e.g., continuing competency, practice assessments)?

School psychologists will be required to meet continuing competence requirements as established by the CPBC in its bylaws. The Continuing Competency Program (CCP) is a program for ongoing self-directed learning with which all registrants of the CPBC are required to comply. Continuing competency requirements are established by the CPBC Board. Continuing competency activities include attending events such as annual and special meetings of the CPBC or learning opportunities such as conferences, courses, and workshops that meet the program criteria. For more information about the CCP visit the College website: <https://collegeofpsychologists.bc.ca/registrants/continuing-competency-program/>

Will this affect my liability coverage?

Liability coverage requirements are set out in the College bylaws. The CPBC currently requires registrants (or their employers) to have professional liability coverage of no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

I am studying to be a school psychologist. Will the academic program I am enrolled in still make me eligible for registration?

Coursework, supervised practice and other entry requirements will be set by the CPBC in its bylaws. It is anticipated that the CPBC would set the competency requirements to align with those of the National Association of School Psychologists. During the expedited registration period for BCASP members, the College will not be evaluating the education and training of members already accepted by BCASP. BCASP membership will be sufficient for the purposes of meeting education requirements for registration.