

COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES: ACTIONS TAKEN IN AUGUST 2025

The American Psychological Association's governing Council of Representatives approved measures at its meeting Aug. 5-6 in Denver addressing issues including combating the stigma of discrimination, operating principles for students seeking a master's degree in health service psychology and the benefits of inclusivity to psychology.

By a vote of 147-18, with 1 abstention, the Council approved **operational principles intended to provide needed parameters to inform current and future actions related to inclusion of master's professionals in the practice of health service psychology**. These actions include the development of a defined title and scope of practice and licensure pathway for master's-trained psychology professionals to be included in APA's Model Act for State Licensure of Psychologists. The principles state that M-HSP practitioners should have a scope of practice that ensures they are competitive in the marketplace with other behavioral health master's level practitioners outside of psychology. M-HSP practitioners should be able to provide some services, independently without supervision and within a defined standard appropriate to the master's level of education, training and supervision, including psychotherapy and diagnostic intake.

The body also passed, by a vote of 149-9, with 3 abstentions, a policy statement on the **benefits of inclusivity to psychology and higher education**. This statement acknowledges ongoing assaults on higher education, including reductions in research funding, restrictions on international student participation, and broader academic freedom challenges. It emphasizes the essential role that inclusivity plays within these broader contexts, highlighting psychological science supporting the benefits it offers to educational environments and psychological practice.

The **Policy Statement on Disability and Inclusion: Combating the Stigma and Discrimination of Ableism**, passed 158-2, with 1 abstention. By recognizing disability as a natural aspect of human diversity and valuing the knowledge embedded in the lived experiences of disabled people, this statement promotes a shift away from deficit-based models toward more inclusive and responsive practices. It calls on psychologists to engage in a range of actions, including: supporting full compliance with all relevant state and local laws; promoting inclusive and universal design principles; encouraging the equal inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of research; and supporting large-scale public education campaigns to combat ableism at the societal/cultural level.

By a vote of 126-32, with 4 abstentions, the Council adopted the **Policy Statement on**

Reconciling Traditional Wisdom and Psychological Science. This statement encourages the integration of traditional wisdom from around the world (e.g., spirituality among Native Americans, Confucian philosophy among some Asian cultures, cosmology among First Nation Canadians and Africans) with psychological research to create a more inclusive, culturally relevant approach to understanding human behavior and well-being. It says that supporting the value of traditional wisdom derived from non-Eurocentric worldviews with Eurocentric paradigms is a step toward fulfilling the commitment that APA has made to retire hierarchical and racist perspectives in psychology.

By a vote of 163-1, the council updated its **Resolution on Psychological Needs of Children Exposed to Disasters.** This measure encourages culturally informed research aligned with APA's Multicultural Guidelines on the development, implementation and evaluation of interventions to encourage resilience and mitigate the potential psychological effects of disasters on children and their families and promote effective coping strategies that lead to long-term enhanced functioning. It also supports efforts to increase research funding to engage in empirical investigations of preparedness interventions and multiple tiers of interventions post-disaster.

The council also updated its **Guidelines for Psychology's Role in Pediatric to Adult Health Care Transition**, by a vote of 112-34, with 10 abstentions. These guidelines are primarily intended to educate and inform health and pediatric psychologists on how to serve successfully on multidisciplinary teams when working with adolescents and young adults with medical conditions to facilitate patients' access to services, promote health equity, and support positive health outcomes during the health care transition process.