

American Psychological Association (APA) Ethics Code and California Laws and Licensing Requirements to be a Psychologist

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Journal for International Medical Graduates

Abstract

In this short article, I will cover the summary of the American Psychological Association (APA) ethics code and the licensing requirements to become a psychologist in the state of California for international medical graduates (IMGs) planning to be licensed in California. Each state can have different requirements, so IMGs should refer to their respective state psychology boards for specific licensing requirements.

Keywords

Psychology, psychologist, APA, licensing, doctor, IMGs1- APA Ethics Code Summary:

The American Psychological Association (APA) Ethics Code provides rules and standards for psychologists to practice. The following are the principles addressed by APA:

General Principles

1. Beneficence and Nonmaleficence: According to the APA Ethics Code, psychologists should benefit their clients (beneficence) and avoid harming them in any way (nonmaleficence) (American Psychological Association, 2017; Fisher, 2022).

2. Fidelity and Responsibility: Relationship of trust and professional standards of conduct must be maintained by every psychologist (American Psychological Association, 2017; Fisher, 2022).

3. Integrity: Psychologists must demonstrate honesty and truthfulness in all aspects of their work (Fisher, 2022).

4. Justice: Fairness and justice are essential elements of psychologists' work (Fisher, 2022).

5. Respect for People's Rights and Dignity: Psychologists must respect people's rights, including the rights to privacy, confidentiality, and self-determination (American Psychological Association, 2017; Fisher, 2022).

Enforceable Standards

The APA Ethics Code includes standards that address:

- **Resolving Ethical Issues:** Guidelines on how to avoid potential ethical violations.
- **Competence:** Emphasizes the importance of high standards of competence for psychologists (Fisher, 2022).
- **Human Relations:** Addresses the importance of avoiding harm, managing conflicts of interest, and obtaining informed consent (Fisher, 2022).
- **Privacy and Confidentiality:** Highlights the importance of maintaining client privacy and confidentiality (Fisher, 2022).
- **Advertising and Other Public Statements:** Ensures truthful public communications.
- **Record Keeping and Fees:** Emphasizes accurate record-keeping and appropriate fee management (Fisher, 2022).
- **Education and Training:** Ensures the provision of quality education and training for psychologists (American Psychological Association, 2017).
- **Research and Publication:** Requires psychologists to engage in ethical research practices.
- **Assessment:** Requires psychologists to conduct assessments based on current standards and evidence-based knowledge (American Psychological Association, 2017).
- **Therapy:** Emphasizes the provision of ethical and competent therapy services (American Psychological Association, 2017).

2- California Laws and Licensing Requirements:

Licensing Requirements

- **Educational Requirements:** Completion of a doctorate degree in psychology (PhD or

PsyD) from an accredited institution is necessary to become a clinical psychologist in California (California Board of Psychology, 2022).

- **Supervised Experience:** Prospective psychologists must complete 3,000 hours or more of supervised work under a licensed clinical psychologist (some hours are pre-doctoral, some post-doctoral) (California Board of Psychology, 2022).

- **Examinations:** Passage of the Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP) and the California Psychology Law and Ethics Examination (CPLEE) is mandatory (California Board of Psychology, 2022).

Continuing Education

Licensed psychologists in California must complete 36 hours of continuing education every couple of years, including ethics and law courses (California Board of Psychology, 2022).

Legal Considerations

- **Confidentiality:** Psychologists must maintain confidentiality of their clients' information, except in cases of suspected danger, abuse, neglect, or court orders to breach confidentiality (California Board of Psychology, 2022).

- **Mandated Reporting:** Psychologists are required to report suspected cases of child abuse, elder abuse, and dependent adult abuse (California Board of Psychology, 2022).

- **Informed Consent:** Psychologists must obtain informed consent from clients, detailing the purpose, type of therapy, limits of confidentiality, and associated risks (California Board of Psychology, 2022).

Conclusion:

The APA Ethics Code outlines ethical practices and standards, emphasizing principles such as beneficence, integrity, and justice. California's educational and licensing requirements for psychologists include supervised experience, examinations, and continuing education to obtain licensure.

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