



NCSPP Statement regarding COVID-19
Submitted by the NCSPP Executive Committee

NCSPP is a training council composed of delegates from programs and schools of professional psychology. Our response to the COVID-19 Crisis continues to be aligned with our goal to advance the development of the highest quality of graduate training in professional psychology.

Our programs are all concerned about the evolving situation regarding COVID-19, and it is important to come together as a community to offer support to each other, and our faculty, staff, students, and training sites.

NCSPP understands that many of our member programs are at different developmental stages in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the wellbeing of our training communities as well as the impact of the Coronavirus on the clinical training of our students .

NCSPP encourages students and faculty to follow their university's directions and academic policies regarding continuing education and make progress towards graduation.

Some of the concerns that are most significant include but are not limited to:

- 1) Always promoting trainee safety training settings in response to this current (and future) public health concerns.
- 2) The decision-making process and accommodations about attendance to the training site and clinical training hours (i.e., absence policies need to consider self-isolation needs and quarantine restrictions; how to make-up clinical hours, contract extensions or intensive training schedules).
- 3) The possibility of community clinic closures, leading to disruption in client care and potential further loss of clinical training hours.
- 4) The possible use of alternative continuity of treatment with telehealth sessions and associated HIPAA compliance issues.
- 5) Incorporating social justice in developing responses to the COVID-19 communications.
- 6) Maintaining ethical principles of practice and supervision.

We join with the leadership of APA, CCTC, and ASPPB to extend our support to our students, faculty, and the clients we serve. In addition to the joint statements made by APA, APPIC, and ASPPB and the forthcoming statements by CCTC, we wish to highlight some guiding principles that are particularly salient to NCSPP member programs and aligned with our mission.

1. NCSPP continues to hold the highest standards in the education and training of professional psychologists, but the wellbeing of our students and trainees are our highest priority. We understand that students and trainees are differentially affected by COVID-19—based on



differences in socioeconomic status, gender, physical status, spirituality/religion, sexual orientation, and sexual identity, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability/disability, age, and others factors. Therefore, a measured and thoughtful response to our students and trainees that recognizes and acknowledges how privilege or the lack of opportunity shapes a student's learning experience is critical. Furthermore, our commitment to helping the underserved and marginalized and the public good is a core value guides our decision-making and our ability to respond during this time of Crisis.

2. As professional psychologists, our students are encouraged to contribute to caring for others during this time of need, however; services should be delivered in a manner that promotes the health and safety of our students and the clients they serve. NCSPP promotes that all mental health services which can be delivered remotely, using appropriate technology including telephone and appropriate telehealth platforms, should be conducted in such a manner. All non-necessary mental health services are being cancelled or suspended. Programs and clinical sites are recommended to determine what aspects of assessments can be performed electronically and any non-essential assessments requiring in-person sessions should be postponed until it is safe to resume in-person sessions.
3. NCSPP will continue to monitor and provide input on public policy resulting from the COVID-19 Crisis that may have an impact on our students through our participation and engagement with those entities that develop policies affecting education and training of professional psychologists.
4. NCSPP will provide a forum for the exchange of information about the functioning of schools and programs of professional psychology during the COVID-19 crisis through electronically-supported means and the development of a repository for collecting resources for remote instruction. These include but are not limited to syllabi, communication with students and practicum sites, adjustments made regarding practicum, supervision, and telepsychology.
5. NCSPP expects academic and clinical programs to maintain the highest ethical practices in all responses during the COVID-19 crisis.
6. More than ever, NCSPP's liaison relationships with others involved in the education and training of professional psychologists are critical, and regular updates will be provided as information becomes available.
7. NCSPP realizes programs will need to adjust delivery of training and education as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. We encourage documentation that demonstrates how programs ensure the maintenance of academic quality. Our accrediting bodies can provide consultation and guidance.
8. NCSPP encourages research, development, and application in appropriate areas of psychology to offer solutions for significant problems of human welfare such as the COVID-19 crisis.
9. NCSPP will serve as a repository for the collection of materials to support our programs.
10. The NCSPP website will serve as a place where all our members can contribute to the collection and disseminating of information regarding schools and programs of professional psychology's response to the COVID-19 Crisis.