

NEW APA DIRECT OBSERVATION REQUIREMENT for PRACTICUM

BAPIC FAQ and Guide

The new APA (CoA) Standards of Accreditation will require that evaluation of practicum students/interns/residents be based in part on direct observation as part of supervision.

- **What are the reasons for this new requirement?** The new direct observation requirement is intended to increase the quality of training, increase public confidence in the training and practice of psychology, and support students in their professional development. Note that other professions are being required to do the same in their training models.
- **What qualifies as direct observation?** There are many ways to meet this supervisor direct observation requirement including: co-therapy in room with student, co-leading group therapy with student, visual observing student in therapy, intake or evaluation, videotaping of student, and/or one-way mirror observation. Direct observation of students must be done at least once per evaluation period (which is usually twice a year).
- **What about other forms of observation of student's work?** APA continues to support other types of supervision including audiotape, student verbal report of cases, review of written work, case presentations, mock therapy/evaluation with volunteers, and so forth. However, these types of observation do not meet the direct observation requirement..
- **How can BAPIC schools and agencies work together on this?** BAPIC schools and agencies can work closely to ensure this happens in a way that benefits the training and upholds high ethical standards of agencies, clients and the profession. Many sites already do this type of direct observation and supervision. BAPIC will collect the Best Practices of agencies and support agencies in meeting this requirement.
- **When is this new direct observation to be implemented?** Schools have been asked to plan for and begin implementing this requirement now, but the final date by which it will be formally required is January 1, 2017. Thus, the goal is to get most agencies involved now so that any challenges can be met in a collaborative and professional way as we move forward.

Questions? Ask a BAPIC school representative.

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