

Steps to becoming a licensed psychologist:

Note: Psychologists only need to be licensed if they want to work in clinical practice. Those focusing on research and/or teaching do not need to worry.

- 1. *Get into a Ph.D./Psy.D. program.*** This sounds simple but takes a lot of effort.
- 2. *Figure out what area you'd like to specialize in.*** The key to this process is to get as much experience as possible while in doctoral training, so you know what groups you like working with. It's okay to change your mind, by the way.
- 3. *Finish your dissertation.*** Sounds like an easy thing, but this is the stage where most people get caught up!
- 4. *Apply to a pre-doctoral internship program.*** This is done after you finish all of your academic classes. Most schools do not require that you are done with your dissertation, but it really helps if you are because you'll be very busy as an intern!
- 5. *Finish your pre-doctoral internship.*** You can either do one full-time year or two half-time years. States have different requirements, so check with the state's board of psychology to be sure you do everything right. In California, you must have 1,500 hours.
- 6. *You are now a Ph.D./Psy.D. but you are still unlicensed.***
- 7. *Find a formal or informal postdoctoral training program.*** There are many formal programs, but they don't pay that well. Most people get their hours informally by working as an assistant to a licensed psychologist. This takes longer but usually pays better. Again, states have different requirements, so make sure you're following all the rules. In California, you must have another 1,500 hours.
- 8. *Take the E.P.P.P. examination.*** This is the national examination for licensing in the U.S. The exam is the same in all states but what's considered passing is not, so check with your state board of psychology again! States also vary as to when you can take the exam. In California, you can take it after finishing your internship. Other states make you wait until you have finished all postdoctoral hours. The exam is really hard (passing rates in CA are 50%) and expensive, so study well!
- 9. *Take the state's jurisprudence or oral examination.*** States vary with what they require, but most states just require a relatively short, multiple choice, jurisprudence examination. These are different in every state and were created to make sure that you know the state's psychology laws. These exams can only be taken after you have passed the E.P.P.P. and after you have finished the postdoctoral hours. It's much cheaper to take than the E.P.P.P. and quite a bit easier as well.

Congratulations!! Now you're licensed! Go cure the world...