

Professional Guidelines for Psychologists

**Guidelines for Supervisors:
Addressing Unacceptable
Performance of
Registered Provisional
Psychologists**

Adopted by CAP March, 2002



COLLEGE OF ALBERTA PSYCHOLOGISTS
**ADDRESSING UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE OF
REGISTERED PROVISIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS**

Preamble

The supervision of Provisional Psychologists involves ensuring that they have a beneficial learning experience while at the same time protecting the welfare of present and future clients by ensuring that the services the Provisional Psychologist provides do not fall below minimal professional standards. While it is to be expected that Provisional Psychologists, by virtue of their training status, lack the full knowledge, skills, and judgment necessary for competent independent practice, there may be times when they exhibit unacceptable performance in response to the demands of supervision. Reasons for this can be preexisting such as inter- or intra-personal skill deficits or situational such as burnout, distress, or substance abuse. Whatever the reason, addressing unacceptable performance of Registered Provisional Psychologists should focus on observable performance and proceed in a clear and fair manner.

**PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE OF
REGISTERED PROVISIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS**

1. When a supervisor is concerned about the performance of a Provisional Psychologist, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to address the matter with the Provisional Psychologist directly as soon as the concern arises and to facilitate a consensus as to a course of remedial action.
2. If unacceptable performance on the part of the Provisional Psychologist is not addressed to the satisfaction of the supervisor through consensus, a revised Supervision Plan should be developed, signed by the supervisor and the Provisional Psychologist, and a copy provided to the Registration Approvals Sub-Committee.
 - 2.1. Revised Supervision Plans should include at a minimum:
 - a) a clear description of the specific performance which is judged to be unacceptable;
 - b) specific performance objectives;
 - c) specific remedial actions to be taken by the Provisional Psychologist and identification of anyone who will assist in carrying them out;
 - d) a defined mechanism whereby the Provisional Psychologist's performance will be evaluated; and
 - e) specific timelines for meeting performance objectives.
 - 2.2. Remedial actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a) consultation with a Supervision Facilitator;
 - b) increased supervision;
 - c) shifting the focus of supervision;
 - d) modifying the format of the supervision (e.g., more direct observation);
 - e) reduction of client load;
 - f) academic assignments;
 - g) assigning a different supervisor;

- h) recommendation for personal therapy; and
 - i) leave of absence.
3. If the Provisional Psychologist does not agree to the revised Supervision Plan, or fails to meet the performance objectives specified in the revised Supervision Plan within the agreed upon time frame(s), the supervisor should complete a written Final Evaluation and provide copies to the Provisional Psychologist and the Registration Approvals Sub-Committee. The Provisional Psychologist then has the option of withdrawing from the registration process or submitting a new Supervision Plan to the Registration Approvals Sub-Committee. The new Supervision Plan must address the performance issues specified in the Final Evaluation.
 4. Certain breaches of the Standards of Practice or the Criminal Code of Canada while in the professional role of a Provisional Psychologist may be cause for termination of the Supervision Plan and should be handled by a complaint to the Registrar. Examples of such activities may include alcohol or drug intoxication, theft, or engaging in sexual intimacies with a client.