

MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL LICENSING STUDY

Office of Professional Regulation

[https://sos.vermont.gov/opr/regulatory/
regulatory-review/mental-health-
licensing-study/](https://sos.vermont.gov/opr/regulatory/regulatory-review/mental-health-licensing-study/)





ACT 117 of 2022

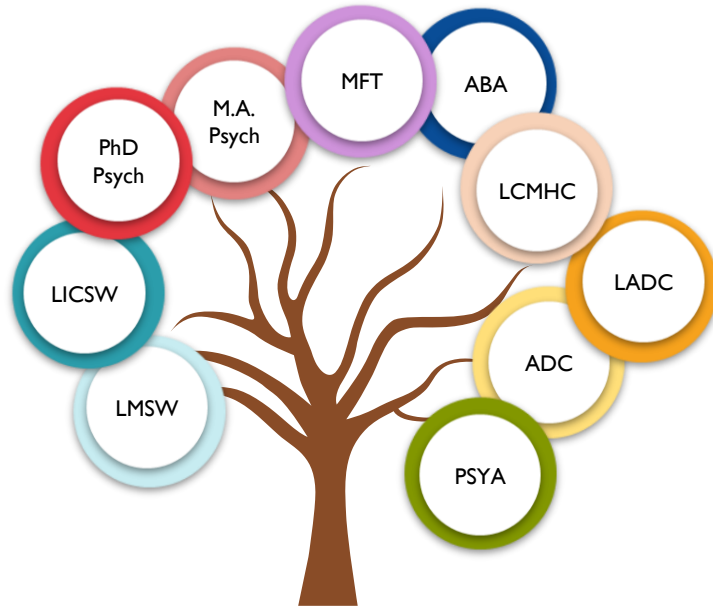
[Available here: Section 8 \(page 8\)](#)

The Office of Professional Regulation shall conduct a study on:

1. The possibility of streamlining the licensure of mental health professionals
2. Whether additional regulation of supervisors for professionals-in-training is necessary
3. The barriers to entry into mental health professions for marginalized groups

OPR shall submit findings and recommendations on or before December 15, 2024.

STREAMLINING LICENSURE



- Stakeholders are asked to consider ways to improve administration, efficiency, and access, while still protecting the public.
- Act 117 specifically requires a review of the feasibility of creating one mental health professional license with endorsements for specific mental health professions.
- Other possibilities for streamlining the licensing process will be considered
 - e.g., the feasibility of a single mental health licensing board for all mental health professions at OPR

STREAMLINING LICENSURE

Items for review:

- Overlapping scopes between professions
- Use of the Roster across professions
- Voluntary certifications for modalities
- Review of qualifications and pathways to licensure
- Endorsement and substantial equivalency
- And more!



SUPERVISOR REGULATIONS

Act 117 mandates a review of the following:

- The potential limits on areas of mental health work a supervisor may supervise based on the supervisor's own work experience and education.
- The rate or fee a supervisor may charge for providing supervision.
- The number of supervisees assigned to one supervisor.

Additional considerations include:

- Barriers finding supervisors
- Training for supervision
- Reimbursement for supervised practice
- Implications for mobility
- Training in specialties
- Agreements between supervisors and supervisees
- Risks to the public

BARRIERS TO ENTRY FOR UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES

Act 117 mandates a review of barriers to entry for the following individuals:

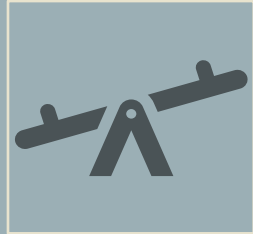
- Black, Indigenous, or Persons of Color (BIPOC)
- Refugees and New Americans
- LGBTQIA+ individuals
- Individuals with low income
- Individuals with disabilities
- Those individuals with lived mental health and substance use experience entering mental health professions regulated by the Office of Professional Regulation



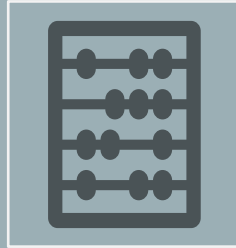
BARRIERS TO ENTRY FOR UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES



What does equity mean in professional licensing?



What inequities currently exist? What were past inequities? How were they addressed?



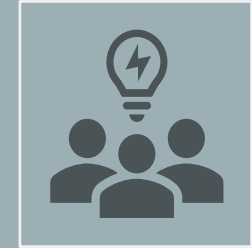
How do current and past regulations create inequities?



How do individual or community experiences vary?



How to assess the impact of systemic oppression and under-representation?



How do we continue to ensure inclusion of underrepresented communities?



A graphic on the left side of the page features a light blue background with several overlapping, semi-transparent shapes in shades of green, blue, and teal. These shapes include circles and irregular polygons, creating a layered, abstract effect. A white rectangular box is centered over the graphic, containing the text "STAKEHOLDER INPUT" in a white, sans-serif font.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

OPR shall seek input from the following groups:

- Representatives of each mental health care profession associated with the office of professional regulation;
- The commissioner of mental health or designee;
- The chair of the health equity advisory commission;
- Representatives of mental health care professional organizations and Vermont Care Partners;
- Representatives of health insurers;
- Individuals in mental health care professions or seeking to enter mental health care professions, selected by AALV, inc., the Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs, the Vermont Center for Independent Living, and Outright Vermont;
- Other interested stakeholders, including individuals from diverse backgrounds to represent the interests of BIPOC communities and other historically underrepresented populations in mental health care professions.



LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Mental Health Professional Licensing Report

- OPR will use this study's findings for a report to the legislature.
- Each subcommittee will research, discuss, and draft policy recommendations to the larger body.
- The whole study group will meet once a month to review and discuss recent subcommittee activity and recommendations.
- OPR will provide subcommittees with a general template to standardize the policy recommendations' format for an easy translation into the final legislative report.

NEXT STEPS

1. **Professional Licensing Study Q & A**
2. **Organizing Subcommittees:**
 - Study members will organize subcommittees by topic
 - Subcommittees will meet at least once per month to share resources and continue policy discussions
 - Subcommittees will be responsible for drafting and presenting policy recommendations to the larger group
 - Study group meets monthly on the 3rd Monday at 2:00pm
 - Next meeting is October 16th

