

APA Style: Abbreviations and Acronyms
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Abbreviations and acronyms are shortened forms of words or phrases. An *abbreviation* is a shortened form of words used to represent the whole (such as APA, Dr., or Prof.) whereas an *acronym* contains a set of initial letters from a phrase that usually form another word (such as radar or scuba). The acronym *radar* is actually an abbreviation of the phrase “Radio Detection and Ranging” whereas the acronym *scuba* is an abbreviation of the phrase “Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus.”

The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA; 2020) provides guidelines for using abbreviations. On its first appearance, a term to be abbreviated must be written out completely and followed immediately by its abbreviation in parentheses (or, if already in parentheses, in brackets within the parentheses). Thereafter, use the abbreviation (APA, 2010, p. 107; APA, 2020, p. 173). As a general rule when abbreviating a term, the abbreviation should be used at least three times in a paper. If the abbreviation is used only one or two times, readers may have difficulty remembering what it means, so writing the term out each time aids comprehension. However, a standard abbreviation for a long, familiar term is clearer and more concise even if the abbreviation is used fewer than three times (APA, 2020, p. 172). APA (2020, p. 173) provides these guidelines for writers who use abbreviations:

When the full version of a term first appears for the first time in a heading, do not define the abbreviation in the heading; instead define the abbreviation when the full version next appears. Use abbreviations in headings only if the abbreviations have been previously defined in the text or if they are listed as terms in the dictionary. When the full version of a term first appears in a sentence in the text, place the abbreviation in parentheses after it. When the full version of a term first appears in parenthetical text, place the abbreviation in square brackets after it. Do not use nested parentheses. If a citation accompanies an abbreviation, include the citation after the abbreviation, separated by a semicolon. Do not use nested or back-to-back parentheses.

The following checklist highlights information contained in the preceding paragraph and supplements this information with recommendations adapted from Lee (2015):

- ✓ Avoid using abbreviations in the title of a paper. Writing out the full term in the title will ensure that potential readers know exactly what is meant. If the article is formally published, using the full term in the title will ensure it is accurately indexed.
- ✓ There is no official rule regarding whether to use abbreviations in the running head. However, unless the abbreviation is well-known and there is no alternative running head that would be better, it is usually best to avoid using abbreviations in the running head. If an abbreviation is used in a running head, it is best to use it without any definition. Then, the abbreviation should be defined the first time it is used in the text of the paper.

- ✓ When the full version of a term first appears in a sentence in the text, place the abbreviation in parentheses after it.

Correct: Assessment of depression was measured by scores on the Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II).

Incorrect: Severity of depression was measured by scores on the BDI-II (Beck Depression Inventory-II).

- ✓ When the full version of a term first appears in parenthetical text, place the abbreviation in square brackets after it. Do not use nested parentheses.

Correct: Assessment of depression (as measured by scores on the Beck Depression Inventory-II [BDI-II]; Beck et al., 1996) suggests moderate to severe depression.

Incorrect: Assessment of depression (as measured by scores on the Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II), Beck et al., 1996) suggests moderate to severe depression.

- ✓ If a citation accompanies an abbreviation, include the citation after the abbreviation, separated by a semicolon. Do not use nested or back-to-back parentheses.

Correct: Depression can be assessed using the Beck Depression Inventory-I (BDI-I; Beck et al., 1996).

Incorrect: Depression can be assessed using the Beck Depression Inventory-I (BDI-I) (Beck et al., 1996).

Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Definitions

ABPP: American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) serves the public by promoting and *certification* of *professional psychologists* engaged in specialty practice. ABPP provides certification for doctoral-level licensed psychologists in 15 specialty areas. In 2017, approximately 3,900, or 4 percent, of licensed psychologists in the United States were board certified. According to Lin, Christidis, and Stamm (2017), about one-third of those were certified in clinical psychology, and 26 percent were certified in clinical neuropsychology. Based on addresses listed as residence/office in the ABPP Directory, California (422), New York (297), Florida (277), Texas (226), and Massachusetts (176) had the most board-certified psychologists (Lin, Christidis, & Stamm, 2017).

APA: American Psychological Association (APA) is a scientific and professional organization that represents psychologists in the United States.

APA CoA: The APA Commission on Accreditation (APA CoA) is recognized by both the secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) as the national accrediting authority for professional education and training in psychology. APA CoA accredits doctoral graduate programs in clinical, counseling, and school psychology and programs offering combinations of two or more of these areas, internship programs in professional psychology, and postdoctoral residency programs that provide education and training in preparation for professional practice. The CoA Portal (<https://coaportal.apa.org/login>) is the online information system that programs, site visitors, and APA CoA members use throughout the accreditation process. Users are granted access to different information based on their role and stage of the accreditation process.

APIT: Authority to Practice Interjurisdictional Telepsychology is a PSYPACT designation that permits the ASPPB E.Passport holder one (1) year of telepsychology practice into a PSYPACT *receiving state*. A receiving state is a Compact State that has enacted PSYPACT legislation. Under Georgia Law 43-39-22(C), “‘Authority to Practice Interjurisdictional Telepsychology’ means: a licensed psychologist's authority to practice telepsychology, within the limits authorized under this Compact, in another Compact State.”

APPIC: Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) is a consortia of psychology pre-doctoral internships and post-doctoral fellowships.

Application Initiation Form: The Application Initiation Form is the Board’s form used to register the applicant with the Board office for referral to ASPPB. The information on this 22 page form is verified on the PLUS application.

ASPPB: Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) is the alliance of state, provincial, and territorial agencies responsible for the licensure and certification of psychologists throughout the United States and Canada. ASPPB was formed in 1961 to serve psychology boards in the two countries. Currently, the psychology boards of all fifty states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam and all ten provinces of Canada are members of ASPPB. Much of the impetus for its founding was related to mobility for practitioners. By consensus, the first step was to create and maintain a standardized written Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP). ASPPB has done so since 1965.

BOE: Board of Examiners (BOE) refers to the Georgia Board of Examiners of Psychologists, which is also variously known by its licensees as the Psychology Licensing Board, Licensing Board,

Psychology Board, or the Georgia Board. In 1951, with passage of Act No. 276, Georgia became the second state in the country to enact a licensing law for psychologists (Doverspike, 2012)¹, although it has traditionally been referred to as the first state (Doverspike, 2007).

CACREP: The Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs is a CHEA-recognized accreditor of counseling programs in the United States.

CHEA: The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) carries out periodic review (“recognition”) of institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations.

CPA: Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) is the national association for the science, practice and education of psychology in Canada. With over 7,000 members and affiliates, the CPA is Canada’s largest association for psychology (<https://cpa.ca/aboutcpa/>).

Compact: A *compact* is a legal term that refers to an agreement, treaty, or contract. The term *compact* is most often applied to agreements among states or between nations on matters in which they have a common concern. The Constitution contains the *Compact* Clause, which prohibits one state from entering into a *compact* with another state without the consent of Congress.

CPQ: Certificate of Professional Qualification (CPQ) is a credential offered by ASPPB. After being licensed in a jurisdiction through PLUS for five years, psychologists meeting eligibility requirements will be issued ASPPB’s Certificate of Professional Qualification in Psychology (CPQ) and the ASPPB Interjurisdictional Practice Certificate (IPC). As of 2019, the IPC has been replaced by the E.Passport. The CPQ is currently accepted as meeting the educational, training, supervised experience and examination requirements in 44 of 64 ASPPB member jurisdictions throughout the United States and Canada. Another seven jurisdictions recognize the CPQ as meeting most of the major requirements for licensure in that state or province (Bradshaw, 2014). The purpose of the CPQ is to document that the individual holding the certificate has met specific requirements in licensure, education, examination and training and has never had disciplinary actions taken against his or her license. Psychology licensing boards that accept the CPQ have agreed to accept the CPQ holder’s educational preparation, supervised experience and examination performance for licensure. The CPQ does not itself constitute a license to practice.

E.Passport: An active ASPPB E.Passport is required for a psychologist to receive Authority to Practice Interjurisdictional Telepsychology (APIT) from the PSYPACT Commission. The APIT permits the practice of telepsychology from a *home* state (the state in which a psychologist holds a license, is physically located, and has designated as a *home* state) into a *receiving* state, which must be a Compact State that has enacted PSYPACT legislation. A *receiving state* is a Compact state that has enacted PSYPACT legislation. Under Georgia Law 43-39-22(L), “‘E. Passport’ means: a certificate issued by the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) that promotes the standardization in the criteria of interjurisdictional telepsychology practice and facilitates the process for licensed psychologists to provide telepsychological services across state lines.”

EPPP: Examination for Proficiency in Professional Psychology (EPPP) is a licensing examination developed by the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) that is used in most U.S. states and Canadian provinces.

GPA: Georgia Psychological Association (GPA) is a state professional association that was incorporated on August 27, 1947 by a group of psychologists. One of GPA’s founders, Hermon Martin, Ph.D., served as its first President (1946-47). The group also included Atlanta psychologist Robert Hughes, Ph.D., who served as GPA’s second President (1947-1948), and Athens psychologist Austin S. Edwards, Ph.D., who later became GPA’s fourth President (1949-50). On July 13,

1951, Dr. Edwards was issued psychology license PSY000001 and Dr. Martin was issued psychology license PSY000002.

I/O: Industrial / Organizational (I/O), which is typically pronounced as “I and O” refers to a recognized specialty area of psychology. It is also sometimes loosely referred to as “industrial psychology” or “corporate psychology.”

IPC: Interjurisdictional Practice Certificate (IPC) was offered by ASPPB as a standalone temporary practice mobility credential. This standalone credential was intended to offer psychologists in-person practice privileges into jurisdictions that accept the IPC, for up to 30 work days per year. Originally, seven jurisdictions accepted the IPC credential (Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Ohio, and South Carolina). The credential granted temporary authority to practice based on notification to the licensing board of intention to practice temporarily, and verification of one’s qualifications for such practice by ASPPB. The IPC allowed psychologists to provide temporary psychological services in jurisdictions that accepted the IPC for up to 30 days (a day being defined as any part of a day in which psychological work is performed) per year without obtaining full licensure in that jurisdiction with proper notification. Under Georgia Law 43-39-22(Q), “‘Interjurisdictional Practice Certificate (IPC)’ means: a certificate issued by the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) that grants temporary authority to practice based on notification to the State Psychology Regulatory Authority of intention to practice temporarily, and verification of one’s qualifications for such practice.”

In order to reduce the potential for confusion and assist member jurisdictions in their efforts to protect the public through appropriate mobility credentialing, the ASPPB Board of Directors voted to sunset the standalone IPC certificate. As of June 30, 2019, no new applications for standalone IPCs have been accepted. At that time, current IPC holders were able to use their IPC into any of the seven currently accepting IPC states, until June 1, 2020. At that time the standalone IPC program will be closed. Current IPC holders will have their IPC placed into a holding state, ready for reactivation if that holder becomes licensed in a compact state.

According to ASPPB (<https://www.asppb.net/page/IPCPSYPACT>), On July 1, 2019 the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) achieved the threshold number of jurisdictions (seven) to begin forming its governing Commission, required to make this interstate compact operational. Georgia was the seventh state to enact PSYPACT. Under the rules of PSYPACT, psychologists holding an active license in a compact state were able to apply for the IPC, which would allow the psychologist to receive a Temporary Authorization to Practice (TAP) from the PSYPACT Commission. For those already holding the IPC, applications for the TAP were accepted as of July 1, 2020. For those not already holding the IPC, applications for the IPC were accepted as of July 1, 2020. Psychologists holding an IPC are eligible to apply for the TAP, which authorizes in-person psychology privileges in other compact states.

NR: National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology (NR), which is also known as the National Register, was formerly National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology. It is the largest credentialing organization for psychologists in the U.S. Founded in 1974, the National Register was created to identify qualified Health Service Providers. Currently, the National Register certifies 11,000 licensed psychologists as health service providers and reviews

credentials for doctoral students. The National Register is a 501c3 nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC.

PLB: Professional Licensing Boards (PLB) is a division of the Office of the Secretary of State. The PLB serves as administrative support to the 41 licensing boards housed with the agency. The agency staff assists the boards in carrying out their licensing responsibilities and with processing applications for licensure, license renewals, and complaints. The PLB does not directly oversee or direct the actions and decisions of the boards and does not have the authority to review, modify, or overturn a decision which has been made by any board.

PLUS: Psychology Licensing Universal System (PLUS) is an online system that allows a psychologist in a participating jurisdiction to apply for licensure, certification or registration (after first contacting the local licensing board) through ASPPB and to have their licensure-related information verified, stored and then recognized in all participating jurisdictions.

PSYPACT: Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) is an interstate compact specifically designed to facilitate the practice of telepsychology and the temporary face-to-face practice of psychology across state lines. Approved in February 2015 by the ASPPB Board of Directors, the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) was created to facilitate telehealth and temporary in-person, face-to-face practice of psychology across jurisdictional boundaries. PSYPACT is an interstate compact, which is an agreement between states to enact legislation and enter into a contract for a specific, limited purpose or address a particular policy issue. PSYPACT became operational on July 1, 2019 when Georgia became the seventh state to enact PSYPACT. At that time, licensed psychologists in PSYPACT states became able to apply for and use ASPPB certificates, which include these two certificates:

Authority to Practice Interjurisdictional Telepsychology (APIT) from the PSYPACT Commission requires an active ASPPB E.Passport, which permits the practice of telepsychology into a *receiving state*, which is a Compact state that has enacted PSYPACT legislation. The **Home State** is the PSYPACT state where you are licensed to practice **and** physically located when telepsychological services are delivered.

Temporary Authorization to Practice (TAP) requires the ASPPB Interjurisdictional Practice Certificate (IPC) to conduct temporary practice in a distant state. Temporary practice must be in-person and face-to-face in a *distant state*, which is a Compact state that has enacted PSYPACT legislation.

Residency: As defined under Rule 510-2-.04 (4) (a) (Time Requirements for Training), “Residency means continuous physical presence, in person, at the educational institution in a manner that facilitates acculturation in the profession, the full participation and integration of the individual in the educational and training experience, and includes faculty student interaction. Models that use face-to-face contact for shorter durations throughout a year or models that use video conferencing or other electronic means to meet the residency requirement are not acceptable.”

Rule 510-2-.04 (4) Time Requirements for Training

(4) Time Requirements for Training. The Licensure requirements are consistent with the APA or CPA Accreditation requirements in that applicants for licensure should be able to demonstrate three full-time academic years of graduate study and additionally the completion of an internship prior to the attainment of the doctoral degree. Two of the three academic training years must be fulfilled at the doctoral degree granting institution and one year must be matriculated in continuous full-time residence at that same institution.

(a) Residency means continuous physical presence, in person, at the educational institution in a manner that facilitates acculturation in the profession, the full participation and integration of the individual in the educational and training

experience, and includes faculty student interaction. Models that use face-to-face contact for shorter durations throughout a year or models that use video conferencing or other electronic means to meet the residency requirement are not acceptable.

SWE: Supervised Work Experience (SWE) refers to post-doctoral residency or fellowship, which usually consists of one or two years of additional supervised training before licensure as a psychologist.

TAP: Temporary Authorization to Practice is a PSYPACT designation that permits the TAP holder to engage in 30 days of in-person practice into a *distant* state, which is a state that has passed PSYPACT legislation. The TAP is granted by the PSYPACT Commission after a credentials review of a psychologist who holds an ASPPB Interjurisdictional Practice Certificate (IPC). Temporary practice must be in-person and face-to-face. Under Georgia Law 43-39-22(BB), “‘Temporary Authorization to Practice’ means: a licensed psychologist’s authority to conduct temporary in-person, face-to-face practice, within the limits authorized under this Compact, in another Compact State.” Under Georgia Law 43-39-22(CC), “‘Temporary In-Person, Face-to-Face Practice’ means: where a psychologist is physically present (not through the use of telecommunications technologies), in the Distant State to provide for the practice of psychology for 30 days within a calendar year and based on notification to the Distant State.”

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Footnotes

1. In 1945, Connecticut was the first state in the country to pass a law for the licensing of psychologists. This information was provided by personal communication via email sent to the author on 04-28-2017 by Carol Webb, Ph.D., ABPP, then Chief Operation Officer of the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASBBP).

Appendix

Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT)

Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT), Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact Commission. (2020, February 27). *Compact temporary authorization to practice*. <https://psypact.site-ym.com/page/GovernanceDocuments>

Section 5 (Compact temporary authorization to practice) of Article V (Compact temporary authorization to practice) was drafted November 21, 2019, introduced at public meeting on November 21-22, 2019, and became effective February 27, 2020.

Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT), Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact Commission. (2020, February 27). *Conditions of telepsychology practice into a receiving state*. <https://psypact.site-ym.com/page/GovernanceDocuments>

Section 6 (Conditions of Telepsychology Practice into a Receiving State) of Article VI (Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT), was drafted November 21, 2019, introduced at public meeting on November 21-22, 2019, and became effective February 27, 2020.) was drafted November 21, 2019, introduced at public meeting on November 21-22, 2019, and became effective February 27, 2020.

Section 6.2 Initiation of Psychological Services: A psychologist must initiate a client/patient contact in a psychologist's Home State via telecommunications technologies when treating a client/patient in a Receiving State.

Section 6.3 Provision of Psychological Services: For the purposes of this Compact, the provision of psychological services is deemed to take place at the physical location of the psychologist.

Section 6.4 Scope of Practice: For the purposes of this Compact, a psychologist practices under the scope of practice of the State Psychology Regulatory Authority of the Receiving State.

IMPORTANT: For the practice of telepsychology under PSYPACT, Home State is the PSYPACT state where you are licensed to practice and physically located when telepsychological services are delivered.

Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact PSYPACT. (2019, September 9). *Understanding how PSYPACT works*. www.psypact.org

According to PSYPACT (2019, p. 1), here is how the process works:

- (1) Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) legislation is enacted by a state legislature. Upon enactment, the state officially joins PSYPACT.
- (2) Each state appoints a representative to serve as that state's Commissioner. The PSYPACT Commission is the governing body of PSYPACT and is responsible for writing the Bylaws and Rules of PSYPACT.
- (3) Psychologists licensed in their Home State can obtain authorization to practice under PSYPACT from the PSYPACT Commission. A psychologist's practice under PSYPACT can occur in two ways (which are not mutually exclusive):

Correct Citation for Reference Entry

The reference entry correct citation styles for this document are illustrated below. Students should defer to the style preferences of their individual course instructors to determine whether the course instructor has preferences that are more specific than those shown below:

American Psychological Association

Doverspike, W. F. (2020). Abbreviations and acronyms. <http://drwilliamdoverspike.com/>

Chicago Manual of Style / Kate Turabian

Doverspike, William, “Abbreviations and Acronyms,” June 19, 2020.
<http://drwilliamdoverspike.com/>

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Modern Language Association

Doverspike, William F. “Abbreviations and Acronyms” 19 Jun. 2020 [Date accessed]

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