

# Legislative Analysis



## PSYCHOLOGIST LICENSING: DOCTORAL LEVEL

Mary Ann Cleary, Director  
Phone: (517) 373-8080  
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

**Senate Bill 880 without amendment**

**Sponsor: Sen. Vincent Gregory**

**House Committee: Health Policy**

**Senate Committee: Health Policy**

**Complete to 9-15-14**

## A SUMMARY OF SENATE BILL 880 AS PASSED BY THE SENATE 6-4-14

The bill makes several revisions to the criteria for the doctoral degree programs whose graduates are eligible for licensure as a psychologist.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Under the Public Health Code, except as provided for limited licensure, to be eligible for licensure as a psychologist, an individual must obtain a doctoral degree in psychology or a closely related field that includes education and training appropriate to the practice of psychology from a regionally accredited or other college, university, or institution approved by the Michigan Board of Psychology.

In addition to the above requirement, the doctoral degree in psychology or a closely related field must be from a doctoral program that has obtained accreditation by certain national and Canadian entities, or has obtained a similar designation from or been accredited by an entity approved by the board. This requirement was added by a departmental rule revision that took effect August 1, 2011 (R 338.2511(4) of the Michigan Administrative Code).

However, the year before the rule change went into effect, it became apparent that one institution of higher learning that was in the process of applying for accreditation as specified by the rule change was unlikely to complete the process by the rule's effective date. Senate Bill 1315 of 2010, which had been introduced to codify the upcoming rule change, was amended in the House to allow that school's program, and any others, to be considered as meeting the new requirement if it was in the process of becoming accredited by the rule's effective date and became accredited on or before August 31, 2015. Senate Bill 1315 became Public Act 121 of 2010.

### CONTENT:

Senate Bill 880 amends the Public Health Code to extend the deadline from August 31, 2015, to August 31, 2020, by which a doctoral program must obtain accreditation in order to meet the criteria added by rule in 2011 and codified in Public Act 121 of 2010. (If enacted, this would mean that students graduating from a doctoral psychology program from a school that—prior to August 31, 2011—was in the process of obtaining

accreditation as required under Public Act 121 and the 2011 rule change would still be eligible for licensure as a psychologist as long as the program completes the accreditation process or obtains designation from a board-approved entity before August 31, 2020.)

In addition, the bill would add, as an alternate requirement to the one described above (the one added by the 2011 rule and codified by Public Act 121), any doctoral degree program that has been approved by the Board of Psychology.

Thus, to be licensed as a psychologist under the bill, with the exception of limited license granted to a person with a master's degree in psychology, an individual must receive a doctoral degree in psychology or a closely related field from a doctoral degree program that meets both of the following:

- Is offered by a board-approved regionally accredited or other college, university, or institution that includes education and training appropriate to the practice of psychology; and,
- Either (1) has obtained accreditation from one of the listed entities (including a program in the process of obtaining accreditation as described above), **or** (2) is a doctoral degree program approved by the board.

Lastly, instead of placing rule-making requirements with the Board of Psychology, rule-making authority would be vested in the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA), in consultation with the board.

MCL 333.18223

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Senate Bill 880, as passed by the Senate, would not have a significant fiscal impact on the Bureau of Health Care Services (BHCS) within the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA).

Legislative Analyst: Susan Stutzky  
Fiscal Analyst: Paul Holland

---

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.