18 Obtaining a License to Practice Psychology

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In a profession that is rich with complexity and virtually boundless in applications, the simplest of facts remains: if you want to practice as a psychologist, you must be licensed to do so. This is true in every state, province, and territory of the United States and Canada. In several states, you may not legally use the title of "psychologist" without a license to practice psychology. Perhaps the most damaging reality is that a license is required by nearly every third-party payer for reimbursement of services and a requisite for employment for most positions at major agencies that employ psychologists (e.g., the VA). Without the ability to independently receive reimbursement for services, there is very little you can do without a license to practice and earn a sustainable income. Although the primary rationale for the license to practice is protection of the public, it can sometimes feel like yet another hurdle to a new psychologist.

Many graduates of doctoral-level psychology programs go on to have full and rewarding careers without ever obtaining a license. University professors and research scientists have no practical need for it (although some will obtain a license to supervise clinical students, conduct treatment outcome studies, or to satisfy accreditation requirements). Nevertheless, if your plan is to rely on practicing psychology as a service provider, then the psychology license represents the first essential requirement for independent practice. You do not become a practicing psychologist when you receive your doctorate; you become one when you obtain your license.

You may have various reasons for wanting a license. You may be training to start a career as a full-time practicing psychologist, or you may plan to work in an academic setting with the hopes of doing some clinical work on a part-time basis. Perhaps you want to train and supervise students to become psychologists themselves. Regardless of your reason for seeking licensure, there are many things that you need to know in order to make the licensure process occur smoothly and expeditiously. This process has changed significantly in noticeable ways in the 20 years since this chapter was first

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written for the first edition of this book, as well as since the second revised edition. Prospective applicants at the dawn of the new millennium were still sitting for paper-and-pencil licensure exams, which were only offered on two fixed dates per year. Even the precursor to the iPhone, the iPod, had yet to be invented, and study preparatory kits still offered tape cassettes as part of their materials. Students and post-docs and early career psychologists sought support and answers to their questions on email listservs rather than social networking sites. Nearly every jurisdiction (state and/or province) would not allow a post-doc to take the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP) during their post-doc year and several other licensure laws and statutes had yet to be changed. Since the second edition of this book, there have been further changes for more states allowing newly minted psychologists to become licensed directly after internship (negating the need for a post-doc year). In addition, more recent changes have been the development and piloting of some states to require the EPPP (Part 2 – Skills) for licensure.

In spite of these changes in the past 10 years, the basics for getting licensed have not: obtaining your doctoral degree, completing internship, passing licensure examination(s), providing letters to your state or province's board of verification of completion of educational and clinical hour requirements. This chapter is intended to provide you with the main information you need to plan and execute the process of obtaining your license. As you will discover, there is some variability among states, provinces, and territories that may play a role in your future as you plan your career. Table 18.1 lists a number of suggestions for beginning the licensure application process.

1. Before You Even Get Started: Looking Ahead

Psychology licensure laws are quite different from driver's license laws, in more ways than one. Every state, province, and territory in the United States and Canada has its own unique licensure law. Although the laws are all generally similar, there is enough variability to make some license requirements uniquely different from others (e.g., exam cut-off scores, years of supervised training hour requirements, etc.). To complicate things further, the license for each state, province, or territory applies *only* for that state, province, or territory in any non-federal job. If you have a license to practice in California, you cannot practice in New York unless you have a New York license; your license only applies in California. If you were to move to New York and you wanted to continue practicing, you would then need to also get licensed in New York.

Because of these differences, it is important to know the state(s) in which you plan to be licensed as you begin preparing for the licensure application process. Unfortunately, this requires an assumption that you know in which state(s) you will be living or working within a year or two; an assumption that may not always be realistic. What if you live in the Washington, DC area and you will be considering jobs in Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia? What if you are considering several different states yet have no idea what jobs will be available? What if your spouse or partner will need to relocate to an as-yet undetermined area in the future? What if you decide to relocate to another state many years into your career? One

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Table 18.1 *Essential tips for getting licensed*

Applying/Preparing (during your pre-doctoral internship year)

- Review the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards' (ASPPB's) website and information on licensing at www.asppb.net
- Review your licensing board's website and review their application documents
- Check if your training makes you eligible for the requirements of your jurisdiction
- Contact supervisors and provide them with necessary documentation
- Organize and prepare any hard-copy typed application, documentation, and transcripts
- Submit your application when you are eligible (usually after post-doctoral year is complete), respecting any deadlines
- Prepare yourself for numerous fees (transcripts, exams, licensure application)
- When eligible, apply to sit for the EPPP exam at a time that allows for adequate study and preparation time

Studying (during your post-doctoral year)

- Purchase an EPPP study program kit; if it is too expensive, share the expense with another applicant or borrow a recently used (i.e., within last two years) kit
- Take your first practice exam no earlier than 12 months, and no later than 6 months, *within* your anticipated EPPP exam date to identify your baseline "pre-study" score
- Begin studying lightly 6 months prior to your exam
- Continue self-administering timed practice exams once or twice per month, reviewing your errors, analyzing weaker content areas, and charting scores and dates
- Focus your study time on the content areas with which you are having the most difficulty
- Increase study time accordingly based on performance on practice exams
- Become familiar and comfortable with the unique style of EPPP questions and multiple-choice answers
- Do not cram

interesting exception to this challenge is the psychologist practicing for the federal government (e.g., VA medical centers). In general, federal service allows for the psychologist to hold a licensure from any state.

There can be a number of reasons why you may not be certain where you will be practicing, yet you will likely only be able to apply for one state license. Because of this, it is a good idea to become familiar with the requirements for the states you are considering; particularly, your top three preferences. Knowing what these states require will be very important as you complete your internship and post-doctoral training. You want to ensure that your training, whether pre-doctoral or post-doctoral, is meeting the minimum eligibility requirements for all of the states you are seriously considering. Most pre-doctoral internships and post-doctoral fellowships will design their training so that your training hours exceed the eligibility requirements for most states.

2. General Eligibility Requirements for Licensure: What You Will Need

Although there is some variability, requirements for licensure involve three main areas: education, training/supervised experience, and examinations. As

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noted, each state, province, and territory has its own specific licensure requirements and the wording can often vary. For the purposes of this chapter, eligibility requirements will be described in more general terms.

2.1 Education

All licensure laws for independent practice require a doctoral degree in psychology, usually from a regionally accredited institution. Criteria are usually provided for required coursework. Because each jurisdiction is different, you will want to ensure that your transcript includes the required courses specified. Many states require that the program be accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA), Canadian Psychological Association (CPA), or designated by the ASPPB/National Register Joint Designation Committee. If you do happen to graduate from a non-APA-accredited program, you will need to provide documentation that your program provided all of the required coursework specified.

2.2 Training/Supervised Experience

Each jurisdiction has its own requirement for number of clinical hours necessary for licensure. These requirements have continued to change over the years in several states and provinces. It is generally the standard that at least two years of approved full-time supervised experience are required. Of these two years, one year is usually pre-doctoral (internship) and the other year is post-doctoral (post-doc). However, several jurisdictions have made it easier to become licensed upon graduation, rather than making it legally impossible to be licensed during the first post-doc year. At the time of the first edition of this book, only one state (Alabama) did not require a post-doc year for licensure; at the time of the second edition of this book, 11 US states, 4 Canadian provinces, and 1 US territory did not require that the supervised clinical hours be obtained post-doctorally. As of 2018, now 16 jurisdictions have optional requirements for a post-doc year depending on pre-doctoral hours accrued: Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, and Washington.

As the cumulative hours of supervised clinical experience tends to range from 3000 to 4000 per year, the trend toward modifying the requirement that one of these years be post-doctoral has helped prevent the dilemma most post-docs face of being unable to obtain a license during the first year of their career and, subsequently, receive third-party payment for services, be eligible for most clinical jobs, or even legally refer to oneself as a psychologist. Criteria for supervision time, clinical internship, and residency are usually specified. Because of this, it is particularly important to check your prospective state to see what their current requirements are.

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2.3 Examinations

A passing score on the EPPP is required by all states, provinces, and territories. The EPPP will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter. Only applicants for licensure are eligible to take the EPPP and eligibility requirements to sit for the exam vary by jurisdiction. The EPPP is most commonly taken upon completion of the post-doctoral year, although some jurisdictions allow post-docs to take the EPPP prior to completion of their post-doc year. Some states also require oral and/or written exams, most often the jurisprudence exam.

Assuming these requirements, it is a good idea to begin contacting any state, provincial, or territorial licensing board for licensure application information before you begin your post-doctoral year. In addition to the application, this should include a copy of the licensure law as well as the rules and regulations of the board. It will be important to determine when you will be eligible to take the EPPP exam, as well as any other required examinations, and to complete any required paperwork prior to the appropriate deadlines. You may find that materials need to be submitted by a deadline that falls during the middle of your post-doctoral year. A list of state, provincial, and territorial psychology licensing board phone numbers and addresses is provided by ASPPB and you can check your jurisdiction's specific board requirements at: www.asppb.net/page/BdContactNewPG/.

3. Considerations of Differences among State, Provincial, and Territorial Requirements

As mentioned, each state, provincial, and territorial license law is different. As a result of this, there are roughly 63 slightly different sets of requirements. Although they are similar in many ways, you will want to be aware of the way in which they are specifically different. As you review the licensure requirements for the state, province, or territory you are considering, there are a number of questions you will need to address:

- Does my degree meet the required criteria?
- Do I have the minimum number of required hours for both pre-doctoral internship and post-doctoral training? Do both training experiences meet the criteria?
- Do I have enough documented supervision time? Is that requirement specified?
- When am I eligible to take the EPPP exam?
- Will I be able to obtain my license during my first post-doc year?
- What is the cut-off score for the EPPP?
- Am I required to take any other examinations?
- What are the deadlines for submitting my application and documentation?
- What are the various fees I will be expected to pay?

The ASPPB offers a full guide of the requirements for each state, territory, and province on their website. Included in this site is an online and interactive version of ASPPB's old Handbook of Licensing and Certification requirements, which lists the

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specific educational, clinical, and examinations required by their state or provincial laws. This comprehensive and easy-to-follow resource on all eligibility requirements for a majority of jurisdictions is now available at: http://psybook.asppb.org/.

As you review the requirements for your state, province, or territory, it is recommended that you consider the requirements for the other 62 licensing boards. It is ideal to exceed the requirements for all 63 licensing boards should you ever wish to obtain licensure in another state later in your career. For example, while Arizona does not require a jurisprudence exam, California does. If you were considering practice in the Washington, DC area, you would want to know that the requirements for face-to-face supervision for post-doctoral training differ from Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. It would also be important to know that the most common EPPP cut-off score is a scaled score of 500 (or approximately 70 percent), although a few boards have a different cut-off score for each test administration. A review of the requirements for all 63 licensing boards on the three main areas (education, supervised experience, and examinations) will help inform you.

4. The Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology

The EPPP was developed by the ASPPB to serve as a standardized examination to evaluate applicants for licensure. In 2020, the ASPPB bifurcated the EPPP into two components: EPPP (Part 1 – Knowledge) and EPPP (Part 2 – Skills). The EPPP (Part 1 – Knowledge) is the comprehensive exam that was previously known simply as the EPPP. Its stated intent is to evaluate the broad-based knowledge expected to be gained, following the appropriate doctoral education and supervised training in psychology. All 63 licensing boards require the EPPP for licensure in psychology.

4.1 EPPP (Part 1 – Knowledge)

Since 2002, the EPPP (Part 1 – Knowledge) has become administered entirely as a computer exam and is available at any time. The original paper-and-pencil EPPP was made up of 200 multiple-choice items; the computerized administration is made up of 225 items. For several years, the additional 25 items were used as experimental items to be determined whether to use in future administrations and the EPPP score was based on 200 scored items. This ratio shifted slightly starting August 2011, where 175 items are scored and 50 items are unscored "pretest" items. This represents the first time that the EPPP score is based on 175 items and not 200, which may slightly shift the margin for error. On a 200-item EPPP, an applicant could miss 60 items and still pass in most jurisdictions; on a 175-item EPPP, the margin of error goes down to 52. However, the computerized administration of the EPPP has a time limit of 4 hours and 15 minutes, which allows for 15 additional minutes over the original 4-hour limit of the shorter pencil-and-paper exam, and it is available year-round.

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The content of the EPPP consists of items representing eight weighted content areas. The newest current content areas (effective February 2018) are based on an analysis completed in 2017 examining what licensed psychologists do and what knowledge is required of them. Detailed explanations for each of the content areas are available from ASPPB, and are summarized below with their content percentage as well as the specific subdomains covered on the examination.

- *Ethical/Legal/Professional Issues* (16 percent): Knowledge of (a) ethics code (b) other professional standards, (c) mental health-related legal statues, (d) identifying ethical challenges, (e) ethical-decision making models, (f) continuing education, (g) emerging ethical issues, (h) rights of patients, (i) ethics in research, (j) ethics with supervision, (k) ethics with technology.
- *Assessment and Diagnosis* (16 percent): Knowledge of (a) psychometrics, (b) assessment theory, (c) strengths and limitations of different assessment methods, (d) appropriate use of assessments, (e) differential diagnosis, (f) assessment in organizations, (g) cultural issues in assessment, (h) diagnostic systems, (i) data interpretation, (j) epidemiology, (k) theories of psychopathology, (l) outcome measurement, (m) technology in assessment.
- *Treatment, Intervention, and Prevention and Supervision* (15 percent): Knowledge of (a) treatment matching, (b) models of interventions, (c) techniques and their efficacy, (d) treatment of special populations, (e) group and organizational interventions, (f) consultation models, (g) vocational models, (h) telehealth, (i) health systems, (j) public health/prevention, (k) models of supervision.
- *Cognitive-Affective Bases of Behavior* (13 percent): Knowledge of (a) intelligence, (b) learning, (c) memory, (d) motivation, (e) emotion, (f) neuropsychology, (g) cognitive-affective processes, (h) social factors in cognition.
- *Growth and Lifespan Development* (12 percent): Knowledge of (a) growth, (b) impact of environment, (c) models of development, (d) identity developmental, (e) impact of family structure, (f) impact of major life events, (g) risk factors, (h) disease across lifespan.
- *Social and Cultural Bases of Behavior* (11 percent): Knowledge of (a) social cognition, (b) communication, (c) group processes, (d) personality theory, (e) cultural differences, (f) diversity, (g) effects of oppression.
- *Biological Bases of Behavior* (10 percent): Knowledge of (a) biological basis of sensation, perception, and mood; (b) psychopharmacology; (c) results of major psychopharmaceutical clinical trials; (d) genetic basis of behavior; (e) neuroimaging methods.
- *Research Methods and Statistics* (7 percent): Knowledge of (a) sampling, (b) research design, (c) data analysis, (d) data interpretation, (e) research designs and their limitations, (f) research evaluation, (g) community research.

The computerized EPPP (Part 1 – Knowledge) can be taken 6 days a week throughout the year. Should you need to retake the examination, up to four exams are allowed per 12-month period; you would only need to wait at least 60 days from

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your previous administration. The EPPP is administered at an authorized Prometric Testing Center, for which there are available testing centers in every state, and you need not take the exam in the jurisdiction for which you are applying. After applying for licensure in your jurisdiction, you can then register to take the EPPP online through ASPPB's website at www.asppb.net. Prometric Testing Centers in your vicinity can be located at www.prometric.com.

Another significant difference resulting from the shift to computerized testing is the use of scaled scores. The old pencil-and-paper EPPP utilized a raw score and was reported as a percentage. For example, an applicant receiving 150 correct answers out of 200 would receive a raw score of 150, or 75 percent. With the computerized exams, the raw scores are converted to National Scaled Scores ranging from 200 to 800. This is done in an attempt to allow comparisons of different exams with varying difficulties. A National Scaled Score of 500 is considered the equivalent of a raw score of 140, or 70 percent. A National Scaled Score of 450 is considered the equivalent of a raw score of 130, or 65 percent. Since 2002, all scores are reported as scaled scores.

No computer proficiency is needed to take the computerized EPPP. The program is designed to allow you to skip a question, if necessary, and return to it later on. Upon finishing your exam, results should be received within two to three weeks, although an unofficial score will be given right away at the testing center.

4.2 EPPP (Part 2 – Skills)

Perhaps the most significant change upon the licensure landscape since the publication of the last edition of this chapter is ASPPB's development and introduction of a second component of the licensure exam that focuses on clinical competencies. According to the ASPPB, the impetus for adding a second component to the licensure exam was a need for a standardized assessment of clinical competencies, heterogeneity of the training of psychologists, and unreliable alternative methods of gauging clinical skill.

Development of the exam started in 2016 and a beta version of the EPPP (Part 2 – Skills) launched in late 2021. Currently, EPPP (Part 2 – Skills) is in its "early adopter phase," which means that the jurisdictions who early adopt are now requiring completion of both the original EPPP, now named EPPP (Part 1 – Knowledge), and the EPPP (Part 2 – Skills) in order to be licensed. Currently the early adopters of the EPPP (Part 2 – Skills) are: Arizona, District of Columbia, Georgia, Guam, Nevada, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island. At the time of this writing, these jurisdictions were set to begin requiring the EPPP (Part 2 – Skills) beginning in late 2020. In addition, beginning in early 2021, Manitoba will also become an early adopter of EPPP (Part 2 – Skills).

Importantly, the EPPP (Part 2 – Skills) cannot be taken without prior passing of the EPPP (Part 1 – Knowledge). The format of the exam is as follows: there are 130 scored questions with an additional 40 unscored questions. Test-takers are

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given 4 hours and 15 minutes to complete the exam. The test includes three formats for asking questions: 45 percent are traditional multiple-choice or multiple-response items, 45 percent are scenario-based questions, and 15 percent are identified as "Other Item Types." ASPPB describes the scenario-based questions as giving the test-taker a clinical scenario with up to five questions based on this scenario. There are up to three different scenarios given to a test-taker. Two other types of question types are described by ASPBB: Point and Click, and Drag and Drop. Point and Click show test-takers a picture and are asked to identify the correct aspect of the image requested. Drag and Drop questions ask the test-taker to match multiple pieces of information to corresponding information on the other side of the screen.

Like the EPPP (Part 1 – Knowledge), the EPPP (Part 2 – Skills) covers a broad range of domains, subdomains, and sub-subdomains. A full explanation is available from ASPPB's website (www.asppb.net), but major domains and subdomains of EPPP (Part 2 – Skills) are summarized below with their content percentage as well:

- *Assessment and Intervention* (33 percent): Knowledge of (a) application of diversity to assessment, (b) clinical interviewing, (c) test administration, (d) data integration, (e) diagnostic formulation, (f) intervention selection, (g) modifying interventions.
- *Ethical Practice* (17 percent): Knowledge of (a) practice of ethics, standards, and legal statues; (b) appropriate documentation; (c) ethical practice management.
- *Collaboration, Consultation, and Supervision* (17 percent): Knowledge of (a) working within systems, (b) collaboration, (c) interdisciplinary work, (d) program evaluation, (e) supervisee management, (f) promotion of healthy work environment.
- *Relational Competence* (16 percent): Knowledge of (a) applying research on social context, (b) working with groups and organizations, (c) respect for others, (d) managing professional conflicts.
- *Professionalism* (11 percent): Knowledge of (a) boundaries of competence, (b) self-assessment and feedback.
- *Scientific Orientation* (6 percent): Knowledge of (a) conducting a literature review, (b) proper dissemination of research knowledge.

4.3 Studying and Preparing For the EPPP (Parts 1 and 2)

Regardless of how you performed in graduate school, the EPPP is an examination that requires preparation, review, and practice. Many senior psychologists will candidly remark that, despite their experience and proficient knowledge of psychology, they would have a difficult time passing the EPPP were they to take it today. Yet, the majority of doctoral-level examinees do receive a passing score on the exam. Success on the EPPP will result from many of the same factors relied on in graduate school: a combination of preparation, knowledge, and anxiety management.

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If you speak with others who have taken the EPPP, you will hear a variety of strategies to help prepare you for the EPPP. Perhaps the most focused and helpful of strategies are the EPPP study kits/programs often advertised on psychology publications such as the APA Monitor. For years, the two most common and popular programs have been available from the Association for Advanced Training in The Behavioral Sciences (www.aatbs.com) and Academic Review (www.academicreview.com). Both programs offer comprehensive multivolume home study programs with analysis of content areas, full-length practice exams modeled after EPPP exams, multivolume audio programs, computer review programs, live workshops, and other study aids designed to prepare you for the EPPP. Prices are relatively expensive, although different price levels are available and many will argue that the benefits of the program are priceless. Both programs are comparable in effectiveness and reputation.

Perhaps the most integral components of these programs are also the most inexpensive to obtain; that is, the books and practice exams. The designers of the programs do an impressive job of condensing several years of psychology graduate school into books designed purely for study and review. Some academics may bristle at the notion of creating Cliff Notes versions of graduate school in psychology; however, the comparison fits and fits well. Your old textbooks were not designed to be reviewed as efficiently as these books were. The audio files offer another mode of ingesting large amounts of information, particularly in times in which you would otherwise be doing very little, such as commuting or exercising.

The practice exams, probably beyond anything else, are the most integral tool you can use to prepare you for the EPPP. Both AATBS and Academic Review offer over half a dozen full-length practice exams modeled after the EPPP and provided with detailed explanations for each answer. Sample items from former EPPP exams are also available through ASPPB and are quite helpful. There are a few benefits of the practice exams. First, you become more familiar with the often vague or cumbersome manner in which some EPPP items are presented. Second, you can continually monitor which content areas you understand with proficiency, and in which content areas you are under-performing. Continued administration of the practice exams provides you with opportunities to learn from items answered incorrectly. Finally, practice exams demystify the EPPP and condition you to the timing and fatigue variables and facilitate development of better test-taking strategies. ASPPB also offers practice exams, administered at the same Prometric testing centers as the actual EPPP, under similar conditions as the EPPP. The Practice EPPP exams (PEPPPO and PEPPPO2) are available for a fee by going to www.asppb.net/page/Practiceexinfo/.

If you have completed a doctoral program in psychology, then you likely know what study strategies work best for you. Some people prefer to study individually; others prefer to study in groups. Your colleague may prefer to use flash cards, while you never have. Nevertheless, it is best to avoid comparing your progress to that of others preparing for the EPPP; every person is different and you need to focus on the strategy that works for you. Regardless of what that strategy is, you should set aside

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Table 18.2 *Studying for the EPPP*

Sample study schedule for a 6-month study plan

- Month 1: 1–3 hours per week; 1 practice exam
- Month 2: 2–5 hours per week; 1–2 practice exams
- Month 3: 4–8 hours per week; 2–4 practice exams
- Month 4: 7–12 hours per week; 2–4 practice exams
- Month 5: 10–20 hours per week; 2–4 practice exams
- Month 6: 10–20 hours per week; 2–4 practice exams

Additional Suggestions

- Make adjustments based on your own study preferences, knowledge of content material, and performance on practice exams
- Do not compare your study schedule to someone else's and panic; everyone is different
- Plan on finding the EPPP challenging
- Expect to get one out of every four questions incorrect (this would still give you an exceptional score)
- Pace yourself
- Anticipate a few questions that will seem impossible to answer correctly
- Guess if you are uncertain; there is no penalty for guessing incorrectly, so do not leave any items unanswered

several months of progressively intensive study to be adequately prepared for the EPPP. Some have suggested 300–400 hours of study time, although that would depend on your study habits. A sample study schedule is provided in Table 18.2.

It is unknown what study materials will be needed to prepare for the EPPP (Part 2 – Skills). The ASPPB website contains a video tutorial on their website as well as sample questions in their EPPP candidate handbook. At the time of this writing, it does not appear that AATBS, Academic Review, or other study preparation companies have study packages specifically available for studying for the EPPP (Part 2 – Skills), but that will most likely change.

Perhaps your best measure of your level of readiness will be reflected in your performance on the practice exams. Because of this, it is a good idea to take an initial practice exam *at least* 6 months in advance of your planned EPPP administration date. Both AATBS and Academic Review study programs should provide corresponding content areas for each question, which allows you to calculate percentage scores for each of the eight content areas. For example, you may find you scored 40 percent of the Treatment/Intervention questions, 51 percent of the Assessment and Diagnosis questions, and so on. Do not be alarmed if your performance on the first practice exam is poorer than you expected. Keeping track of your performance on the eight content areas serves to inform you of the areas on which you need to focus your studies. It also provides you with a barometer of your progress over time. It is a good idea to take at least one, if not two, practice exams per month. It is *ideal* to be scoring above the 75 percent range overall by the time you are preparing to take the EPPP. As you review your scores, take note that the practice tests in both study kits are often more difficult than the EPPP itself. Although it is unlikely you will ever

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feel completely comfortable and confident, you should feel relatively prepared by the time you are ready to take the EPPP.

5. After Licensure: Banking Your Credentials

Assuming you have successfully completed all of the requirements for licensure and have obtained your professional license to practice psychology, you should consider banking your credentials (see Table 18.3). This usually involves the process of submitting and verifying documentation to a centralized credentials "bank" for your education/coursework, practica, internship, doctoral degree, post-doctoral training, EPPP scores, license, and other credentials. This can be very helpful and time-saving in the future as you apply for insurance or managed-care panels, jobs, or other credentials. ASPPB offers a Credentials Bank program, which allows you to electronically store your transcripts, exam scores, and documentation of training experience so that it can be sent as needed to future licensing boards. As mentioned, you may find yourself changing jobs and location sometime in the future, whether in the next few years or decades from now. Organizing and submitting documentation can be difficult enough; it can become increasingly difficult years later after supervisors retire, programs modify or close, and addresses change. The Credentials Bank provides a readily accessible archive for necessary licensure documentation. There is an initial fee to set up the record, and then a maintenance fee every 2 years to keep the record available.

In an effort to streamline the mobility of licensure from state to state, ASPPB also developed the Certificate of Professional Qualification in Psychology (CPQ). The CPQ is a credential given to applicants who meet certain eligibility requirements (similar to most licensure requirements), have practiced for a minimum of 5 years, and have no record of disciplinary action. ASPPB recommends to licensing boards that the CPQ be accepted as a sign of eligibility for licensure. At the time of this writing, 43 jurisdictions accept the CPQ as evidence of eligibility for licensure and several others are in the process of accepting or recognizing the CPQ.

The National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology also provides the opportunity for credential banking. There are similar eligibility requirements, although once listed in the National Register there are additional benefits, such as verifying credentials for applications to insurance panels and the American Board of

Table 18.3 *To-do list after obtaining a license*

Upon Licensure
● Bank your credentials with ASPPB or the National Register
● Display your license in your main office as required by most jurisdictions
● Remain current with license fees and continuing education requirements, if required
● Retain copies of your licensure application information, which will be needed for various applications such as insurance panels or the American Board of Professional Psychology

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Professional Psychology (ABPP). The National Register is available at www .nationalregister.org.

Some states, provinces, and territories will allow an applicant to be "license eligible" if they hold the CPQ, National Register, or ABPP. You would usually only need to take and pass the written or oral local examination, if required, to be licensed in that jurisdiction. Some jurisdictions will also require a certain number of continuing education hours per number of years to maintain licensure.

Throughout the process, obtaining a license can be a difficult, challenging, and even frustrating task. Yet, for the practicing psychologist, it is the most important credential you will ever acquire.

6. Additional Resources

6.1 Websites

- www.asppb.net – Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards
- www.aatbs.com – Association for Advanced Training in the Behavioral Sciences
- www.academicreview.com – Academic Review
- www.nationalregister.org – National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology
- www.prometric.com – Prometric Testing Centers

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