

**EMORY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
INTERNSHIP IN HEALTH SERVICE PSYCHOLOGY**

***MANAGEMENT OF PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS, REMEDIATION, DUE PROCESS  
AND GRIEVANCE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES***

(Revised 2/2019)

**OVERVIEW**

Promoting a culture of professional competence among interns and faculty is a foundational value and principle of the Emory University Internship in Health Service Psychology (hereafter referred to as the “Internship”) and essential to ensuring that the training provided upholds psychology’s social contract with the public. Accordingly, it is critical that the Internship have on hand specific guidelines and procedures to manage competency concerns in the training program. These guidelines and procedures also must include processes that safeguard fair treatment when addressing such concerns. Therefore, consistent with the values and principles of the Internship relative to promoting professional competence, as well as the American Psychological Association Standards of Accreditation for Doctoral Internship Programs in Health Service psychology, this document provides a description of the training program’s due process and grievance guidelines and procedures. These are defined as follows:

- (1) Due Process Procedures – procedures for faculty supervisors who identify professional competence concerns in a psychology intern.
- (2) Grievance Procedures – procedures for the process invoked when a psychology intern has a complaint against a faculty member associated with the Internship.

This document outlines the responsibilities of the Internship, the rights and expectations of interns enrolled in the training program, and our conceptualization of professional competence and competence problems. This is followed by a description of due process and grievance guidelines and procedures. It should be noted that in addition to following the guidelines and procedures spelled out in this document, interns and faculty associated with the Internship are expected to abide by the guidelines of the hiring institution.

The information presented in this document does not pertain to instances in which a psychology intern has concerns about someone aside from a faculty member (e.g., peer, staff). However, in these instances the intern is encouraged first to handle the situation informally with the person in question and then seek consultation from the Director of the Internship in Health Service Psychology (i.e., Internship Director) or designated Associate Director and/or Chief Psychologist. If the intern believes that such concerns are not effectively resolved via an informal grievance process, the intern should follow the appropriate institutional and/or university protocols (e.g., Emory University sexual misconduct protocols).

*After reviewing the document and having any questions answered by the Internship Director, interns provide a signed attestation that they have read the document and agree to abide by its contents. Interns also sign a waiver for Internship training faculty to be in direct communication with the relevant State Boards of Examiners of Psychology, and/or the intern’s graduate school faculty or postdoctoral training site in the event of a determination of serious competence problems or ethical or legal violations by the intern.*

## **MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION OF SIGNIFICANT INTERN COMPETENCE PROBLEMS OR ETHICAL OR LEGAL VIOLATIONS**

### **Responsibilities of the Internship Training Program**

The internship program is responsible for providing interns with the opportunity (in terms of setting, clinical experience, and supervision) to develop and consolidate each of the health service psychology competency domains that pertain to professional functioning as well as begin assuming the professional role of a psychologist consistent with the scientist/practitioner model. A major focus of internship training is to support interns in integrating their personal values, attitudes and functioning as individuals with their professional functioning. The training program is committed to providing the type of learning environment in which an intern can meaningfully explore personal issues that relate to professional functioning. A complete description of the training model is provided in the Intern Manual.

The Internship training program has the following specific responsibilities:

- Maintain a due process and grievance guidelines and procedures document, provide interns with the document, review the document with interns as part of their orientation no later than the first day of internship, and require interns to read the document and sign a form indicating their agreement to abide by these guidelines and procedures
- Provide interns with information regarding relevant professional, ethical, and legal standards, guidelines, and regulations and offer appropriate forums to discuss the implementation of such standards, guidelines, and regulations
- Provide continuous informal verbal feedback to interns throughout the training year (formative feedback)
- Complete formal written trainee performance evaluations of intern progress, at minimum, at the end of each training rotation (summative feedback). These evaluations address intern knowledge of and adherence to professional standards, professional skills and competencies, and personal functioning as it relates to the delivery of professional services. They also acknowledge strengths and identify competency domains, if any, in which interns are not meeting competency expectations
- Share written evaluation feedback in one-on-one meetings between intern and each rotation supervisor. Convene end of rotation evaluation meetings between the intern and Internship Director or faculty designee (i.e., an Associate Internship Director) to provide a full evaluative summary incorporating the collective input of all supervisors and make relevant recommendations and suggestions
- Discuss and resolve, if possible, any discrepancies that surface between interns' and faculty supervisors' appraisals in the evaluation process, determine collaboratively strategies for continued improvement, and forward all signed evaluations to the Internship Director
- Maintain communication with the intern's graduate psychology training program (hereafter referred to as "sponsoring institution") at minimum via mid-year and end-of-year evaluation letters sent to the sponsoring institution's Director of Clinical Training. The Internship initiates more frequent contact with the sponsoring institution in the event that problems arise during the course of the internship year.
- Bring any concerns about competence problems directly to interns in a timely fashion,

develop an agreed upon course of action (experiences, resources) that is decided upon collaboratively for addressing the problems and improving interns' performance to a satisfactory degree, and provide ongoing monitoring and feedback

- Implement the due process procedures (detailed below) for any intern who is not meeting expectations in one or more competency domains based on input from multiple sources
- Document in writing to all relevant parties any actions taken by the Internship related to interns' competence problems and the rationale for these actions

### **Rights of Interns**

Interns have the right to complete their internship training in an environment that is respectful of professional integrity and itself abides by the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct. They are entitled to ongoing feedback regarding knowledge, skills, and attitudes pertaining to their professional activities as trainees, including in areas where concerns arise about competence problems or ethical or legal breaches. Interns have a right to expect that the Internship will adhere to due process and grievance procedures.

Specifically, interns have the right to:

- Be trained by professionals who behave in accord with the American Psychological Association's (APA) Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct
- Be treated with respect for their professional standing, which recognizes their training and experience
- Receive ongoing evaluation that is specific, respectful, timely, and pertinent and that identifies problems of professional competence, when present
- Evaluate the training program experience both through informal feedback throughout the training year and formally through completion of written supervisor evaluations, core seminar evaluations, and internship exit evaluations
- Be informed fully and in a timely fashion about performance concerns and have the opportunity to participate in a collaborative fashion in the development of a competency remediation plan to resolve competency concerns
- Have sufficient time to respond to any action taken by the program
- Respect for their personal privacy balanced with the best interests of the training program
- Be informed about program due process and grievance procedures
- Have program due process and grievance procedures followed by all parties

### **Expectations of Interns**

In the course of training interns are expected to demonstrate an appropriate level of mastery of health service psychology competencies (assessment, intervention, supervision, consultation and interprofessional/interdisciplinary skills, research, ethical and legal standards, individual and cultural diversity, professional values/attitudes/behaviors, and communication and interpersonal skills); assume the professional role of a psychologist consistent with standards of professional practice, including professional behavior that is consistent with ethical and legal standards; appropriately manage personal matters and concerns as these pertain to professional functioning; and, at minimum, demonstrate a basic capacity to function independently as a psychologist by the conclusion of the internship training year.

Specific training program expectations for interns are:

- Demonstrate sufficient progress in each of the health service psychology competency domains that are the focus of internship training as assessed via written evaluations completed by faculty to ensure that interns attain the expected level of competence by the completion of the internship training year
- Complete the required number of hours for completion of internship (2000 hours over 12 months) – training needs and interests take priority over revenue generation
- Be cognizant of and abide by the guidelines as stated in the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct; all other APA guidelines and standards; and other professional documents or standards that address psychologists' ethical, personal or legal responsibilities
- Demonstrate a capacity to integrate relevant professional standards into their repertoire of professional and personal behavior, including awareness of ethical issues when they arise in clinical work with clients and awareness of ethical considerations in their own and others' professional work.
- Abide by the laws and regulations governing the practice of psychology as included in appropriate legal documents, such as the Georgia State Board of Examiners of Psychologists Law
- Remain cognizant of and abide by all institutional and university policies that pertain to professional conduct and behavior
- Meet all professional, legal, and ethical expectations
- Inform their faculty supervisors and the Internship Director when they are experiencing personal difficulties that are interfering with their professional competence and collaboratively develop plans for support and accommodation

### **Professional Competence and Competency Issues in Internship Training**

#### **Competence, Competence Concerns, and Competence Problems**

Competence is developmental and what is expected differs depending on the individual's stage of professional functioning. Further, competence is context dependent, as different competencies, aspects of each competency, and execution of each competency varies depending on the setting and environment. Competencies are composed of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and their integration, which as a coherent group are necessary for professional practice. The competency domains that are the focus of internship training in health service psychology include assessment, intervention, supervision, consultation and interprofessional/interdisciplinary skills, research, ethical and legal standards, individual and cultural diversity, professional values/attitudes/behaviors, and communication and interpersonal skills. Interns are evaluated formally in each of these competency domains and are required to have achieved a minimum level of competency in each as a condition for successful completion of internship.

An individual's competence can be viewed on a continuum from highly capable/expert, to advanced competence indicative of readiness for independent practice (expected level at the end of the training program), to competent in accord with one's expected level of professional development (expected throughout the course of the program), to exhibiting behavior indicative of competence concerns, to manifesting behavior suggestive of competence problems. This

document focuses primarily on competence problems, with some attention paid to competence concerns. While it is a professional judgment as to when an intern's behavior is indicative of a competence problem rather than just a "concern," for purposes of this document, a "concern" refers to a trainee's performance, behaviors, attitudes, or characteristics that may require remediation, but are not excessive for professionals in training. It is recommended that some of the remediation strategies described below related to addressing competence problems be implemented when an aspect of an intern's professional functioning becomes a concern. If a concern does not respond to remediation strategies, it may become a competence problem.

### **Definition of Competence Problem in Intern Performance**

For purposes of this document a competence problem in a psychology intern is defined broadly as : (1) an inability to acquire and demonstrate the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to achieve an expectable level of performance in each of the health service psychology competency domains; and/or (2) an inability to effectively manage personal stress, psychological challenges, disproportionate emotional reactions, and/or interpersonal difficulties such that professional functioning and capacity are significantly compromised.

Typical sources of competence problems include but are not limited to educational or academic deficiencies, psychological adjustment problems, inability to adaptively regulate personal stress, insufficient level of self-directed professional development, and/or unproductive use of and/or response to supervision. Behaviors and attitudes typically are identified as competence problems when they include one or more of the following characteristics:

- are not merely a reflection of a knowledge or skill deficit that can be rectified by academic or didactic training or supervision
- have potential for ethical or legal ramifications if not addressed
- reflect a persistent insensitivity to individual and diversity considerations defined broadly
- interfere with intra-professional and interdisciplinary relationships with peers, coworkers, faculty supervisors, and/or subordinates
- are not acknowledged or understood by the intern when identified
- do not change as a function of feedback, remediation efforts, and/or time
- negatively affect the quality of services delivered or performed by the intern
- negatively affect the intern class
- negatively affect the public's view of the clinical setting, training program or institution
- require a disproportionate amount of attention by training personnel

### **Due Process Procedures for Faculty Supervisors who Detect Problems of Professional Competence in a Psychology Intern**

#### **Due Process Overview and Guidelines**

Due process ensures that decisions made by the Internship about intern competency problems are not arbitrary or personally based, requires that the Internship identify specific evaluative procedures that are applied to all trainees, and makes sure that the Internship has appropriate appeal procedures available so that an intern has the opportunity to challenge program actions. The Internship due process guidelines:

- present interns with written information regarding the training program's expectations pertaining to professional functioning

- stipulate performance evaluation procedures, including when and how evaluations are conducted, and ensure that evaluation occurs at meaningful intervals
- articulate procedures and actions involved in making decisions regarding competence problems
- specify communication, early and often, with the sponsoring institution about intern competence problems, including seeking input from the sponsoring institution about how to address such problems
- institute, with the input and knowledge of the sponsoring institution, a remediation plan for identified competence problems, including a time frame for expected remediation and consequences if the competence problems are not resolved
- provide a written procedure that describes how interns may appeal the training program's action
- ensure that interns have sufficient time to respond to any action taken by the training program
- use input from multiple professional sources when making decisions or recommendations regarding intern performance
- provide to all relevant parties written documentation of any action taken by the training program and its rationale

### **Due Process Procedures**

In the rare instances in which an intern's competence problems are not resolved through the usual supervisory process and the intern fails to meet the expected competency benchmarks in one or more health service psychology competency domains according to formative or summative evaluations, the faculty supervisor who assigned the rating will inform the Internship Director. If the Internship Director is in conflict, one of the two Associate Internship Directors or Chief Psychologist will be the designated person to carry out the responsibilities of implementing the due process procedures.

*Failure to meet competency benchmarks is defined as a rating of < 3 out of 5 in any competency domain on the written trainee evaluation form, denoting performance that is "below" or "significantly below" the expected level of competence.* When this occurs, the Internship Director will gather information from all relevant parties, including the intern. If, based on the information gathered, the Internship Director concludes that the competence problem(s) can be addressed at the local level, then guidance for doing so will be provided and the intern's progress will be monitored closely. If, however, the Internship Director determines that the problem(s) of professional competence warrant further attention, a sequence of due process procedures will be initiated, the key elements of which include *notice, remediation and probation, hearing, and appeal*. The procedures for handling competence problems are designed with sufficient flexibility to protect the program and the public, and to provide the appropriate level of support and remediation to the intern with the competence problem(s).

### **Notice**

Notice will be provided to the intern during a meeting that includes at a minimum the Internship Director, the faculty supervisor who has identified the competence problem(s), and the intern who is not meeting competency expectations in one or more competency domains. The intern may choose to invite a person associated with the training program who can provide support and

advice and/or serve as an advocate. At this meeting, the problems of professional competence will be articulated specifically by the faculty supervisor(s), the intern's perspective regarding the concerns will be elicited, and the rationale for the level of notice being provided will be given. The following is the typical sequence of notice that interns may be given in response to concerns about their competence problems:

- *Verbal Warning* - emphasizes the need to engage in recommended amelioration strategies to alter the competence concern - no record of this action is kept and the sponsoring institution is not notified of the action.
- *Written Warning and Competency Remediation Plan* – the training program provides a written warning that indicates that the faculty supervisor(s) are aware of and concerned with the intern's competence, that the concerns have been brought to the attention of the intern, that the faculty supervisor(s) will work with the intern to specify the steps necessary to rectify the competence problems using a competency remediation plan, and that the behaviors at this time are not significant enough to warrant serious action – A copy of the written warning and the competency remediation plan will be kept in the intern's file. The intern's sponsoring institution will be notified in writing of the action and invited to provide input into the competency remediation plan. The intern will receive a copy of the written notification to the sponsoring institution.
- *Probation Notice* – the training program provides a written statement to the intern that includes the time frame for the probation period during which the competence problem(s) is expected to be ameliorated, the additional remediation strategies that will be implemented, and the procedures designed to ascertain whether the problem has been appropriately rectified. A copy of the probation notice and the revised competency remediation plan will be kept in the intern's file and sent to the sponsoring institution.
- *Suspension Notice* – the training program temporarily suspends performance so the faculty supervisors can make a determination about the appropriate decision and course of action in response to extreme competence problems and/or violations of ethical and legal standards and the sponsoring institution receives written notification of this action. The intern will receive a copy of the written notification to the sponsoring institution.
- *Termination Notice* – the training program permanently suspends performance, with the support of School of Medicine Department Leadership and Human Resources, in response to extreme competence problems and/or violations of ethical and legal standards. This action would require a vote of the internship faculty. The intern, the Chief Psychologist, Chair of the department, and the intern's sponsoring institution all would be informed in writing of the intern's termination.

### **Competency Remediation and Probation**

It is important to have meaningful ways to address competence problems once they have been identified. The training program therefore, ideally *in collaboration with* the intern, will formulate strategies for the remediation of competence problems, the assessment of the outcomes of the remediation process, and the determination of next steps. The Competency Remediation Plan template (see Appendix A) includes the elements of the remediation plan, which encompass the following:

- Competency domains in which the intern does not meet the expected competency benchmarks and description of the competency problems in each domain in which benchmarks are not met

- Dates the problem was brought to the intern's attention and by whom
- Steps already taken to address the problems by both the intern and the faculty supervisor(s)
- Expectations for acceptable performance
- Responsibilities/actions to be taken by both the intern and the faculty supervisor(s) (in behavioral terms)
- Timeframe for acceptable performance
- Assessment methods
- Dates of evaluation
- Outcomes of the plan at each evaluation point

The following remediation strategies may be included in this Competency Remediation Plan and additional strategies also may be recommended:

- Participate in more frequent supervision with the same or other faculty supervisors and/or supervision that has a different format, emphasis, and/or focus
- Read specific articles/books and write reflections based upon these readings
- Participate in additional didactic training in person or online
- Complete self-reflective writings that are discussed with an agreed upon faculty supervisor
- Redress with relevant parties competence problems that emerge during the course of the remediation process
- Train with a modified workload or schedule
- Engage in personal therapy (Intern Director and other faculty supervisors have lists of therapists willing to work with interns at a reduced rate)

Progress related to the Competency Remediation Plan must be monitored, discussed, and documented in an ongoing fashion and must include the intern's self-assessment and input from multiple sources. Based upon the progress reflected and discussed at the evaluation meeting that includes at minimum the Internship Director, the faculty supervisor(s), and the intern (and a support person/advocate associated with the training program of the intern's choosing if desired), the following steps may be taken, each of which will be documented in the intern's file and shared with relevant parties:

- Resume normal training activities if all competency expectations as outlined in the Competency Remediation Plan are met
- Continue with the Competency Remediation Plan and re-evaluate at a designated evaluation point if significant progress has been made, but the intern continues to not meet competency benchmarks. Only one renewal or extension is possible during the internship year and the extension may exceed the originally recommended time interval for remediation
- Place the intern on probation if progress has been made but significant competence problems remain, implement additional remediation strategies, determine the next designated evaluation point, and make clear that in the absence of adequate progress, the intern may be terminated from the program
- Consider alternative options to termination if appropriate, such as a leave of absence and/or a longer internship

- Terminate intern from program if significant competence problems persist

If an intern is placed on probation and it is determined that the conditions for revoking the probation status have not been met, one of the following actions may be taken by the training program:

- Continue or modify the probation for a specific time period, with written notice to the intern of ongoing steps that must be taken to ameliorate the problem in the specified time frame
- Give the intern a limited endorsement, including the specification of those competencies that the intern can perform adequately, and convey this information to the sponsoring institution, postdoctoral training programs, and all relevant State Boards of Examiners of Psychology or credentialing organization if the program is contacted about the intern's performance
- Recommend and assist in implementing a career shift for the intern
- Issue a written Termination Notice that the intern will be terminated from the Internship program as of the date specified in the notice and make clear this information will be shared with the sponsoring institution, postdoctoral training programs, and all relevant State Boards of Examiners of Psychology or credentialing organizations if the program is contacted about the intern's performance

### **Appeals and Hearings**

Efforts should be made to resolve disagreements about program decisions and actions directly among the involved parties whenever possible. However, interns who wish to contest program actions and decisions have the right to appeal program decisions and actions and to have a hearing related to the appeal. Interns must submit a written appeal to the Internship Director within 10 days of receipt of the notice of a program decision and action. Failure to submit a written challenge within 10 days will be taken as assent to the program decision and actions. Once a written appeal is received, the following steps will occur:

- The Internship Director will convene a Review Panel consisting of the Internship Director, two faculty members selected by the Internship Director, and two faculty members selected by the intern
- A review hearing will be conducted, chaired by the Internship Director, in which evidence is heard from the faculty supervisor(s) directly involved in the program decision and actions, who has the right to be present at the hearing. The intern retains the right to be present at the hearing, to hear all facts, and to dispute or explain behavior that is the focus of the program decision and actions. The intern also has the right to include a support person/advocate associated with the training program if desired
- Within 15 days of the completion of the review hearing, the Review Panel files a written report to the Chief Psychologist, including any recommendations for further action. Decisions made by the Review Panel will be made by majority vote of the five panel members. The intern is informed of the recommendations by the Internship Director and through receipt of a copy of the panel report
- Within 5 days of receipt of the report and recommendations, the Chief Psychologist will either accept the Review Panel's action, reject the Review Panel's action and provide an alternative, or refer the matter back to the Review Panel for further deliberation. In the latter case, the Panel then will report back to the Chief Psychologist within 10 days of the

receipt of the Chief Psychologist's request for further deliberation. The Chief Psychologist will then make a decision regarding what action is to be taken

- If the Review Panel finds in favor of the intern and this action is accepted by the Chief Psychologist, no further action against the intern is taken. The Internship Director will consult with the faculty supervisor(s) directly involved concerning the decision
- If the Review Panel finds in favor of the faculty supervisor (s) and this action is accepted by the Chief Psychologist, the original program decision and actions are implemented
- The Review Panel and/or the Chief Psychologist may, at their discretion, find neither in favor of the faculty supervisor(s) nor the intern. They may instead modify the original program decision and action and stipulate the details of a revised course of action. In this instance, the Internship Director will consult with both the faculty supervisor(s) and the intern concerning the decision and work with them collaboratively to develop a new action plan
- Decisions of the Review Panel may be appealed to an Appeal Committee consisting of the Vice Chair for Education and the Chair of the Emory University School of Medicine department that employs the intern. The decision of the Appeal Committee is final

### **Expedited Formal Grievance Procedure Initiated by Faculty Supervisors for Extreme Competence Problems or Violations**

There may be extreme instances in which the aforementioned procedures are expedited because of the severity of the problem. This is most likely to occur when the intern engages in behavior indicative of professional incompetence (consistent with the definition above); violates the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, legal standards, or the policies set forth by the institution or setting in which the intern is based; behaves in a manner that is insubordinate or exploitative; engages in behavior indicative of discriminatory harassment; behaves in a manner that infringes on the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of other trainees, faculty members, staff, or patients; engages in illegal activity; or demonstrates significantly compromised behavior due to emotional or substance abuse problems. In such cases, faculty supervisor(s) may initiate a formal grievance procedure. Any faculty supervisor may submit to the Internship Director, in writing, a grievance against an intern for violation of professional and ethical standards or laws; professional incompetence; or infringement on the rights, privileges or responsibilities of others. After review by the Internship Director, the intern will receive a written copy of the grievance. The sponsoring institution will be notified and also receive a copy of the grievance. The following steps will then occur:

- The intern may be placed on unpaid administrative leave until the final determination is made or may be immediately suspended or terminated. This will occur within 72 working hours after notification to the Internship Director. Such program decisions and actions will be determined by a vote of the internship faculty in consultation with the leadership and human resources personnel associated with the department in which the intern is employed
- All decisions and associated program actions will be documented in the intern's record and shared in writing with the intern, the Chief Psychologist, the Chair of the department in which the intern is based, and the intern's sponsoring institution. This information also will be made available upon request to the American Psychological Association's Commission on Accreditation site visitors
- If there are requests for information about an intern who has been terminated from the

program from a postdoctoral training program, licensing board, or credentialing organization, the termination decision will be released

- All other actions, including the intern's right to appeal and to a hearing, are subject to the procedures outlined above

### **Grievances Initiated by Interns**

Below we describe both informal and formal grievance processes and procedures that can be followed by interns when they have competence concerns about a faculty member. For purposes of this document, a competence problem in a faculty member is defined broadly as: (1) an inability to exhibit the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with the competent practice of health service psychology across the broad array of competency domains; (2) an inability to effectively control personal stress, psychological dysfunction, excessive emotional reactions, and/or interpersonal difficulties, such that these difficulties interfere with professional functioning; and (3) inappropriate behavior, including insufficient attention to the training needs of the psychology intern.

#### **Informal Grievance Process and Procedures**

Prior to filing a formal grievance against a faculty member, interns are expected to use the following informal grievance procedures, as we believe most problems are best resolved through direct discussions between the intern and the faculty member of concern. The intern can receive consultation about approaching such conversations from the Internship Director or other faculty supervisors. Members of the training community who are approached by an intern who expresses concerns are expected to be receptive to the feedback, engage actively and thoughtfully in the conversation, and seek appropriate consultation from their colleagues. The goal of such conversations is to arrive at a mutually agreed upon plan for future interaction. In the majority of instances, direct discussions and shared problem-solving are sufficient and no further action is required. The Internship Director will maintain a record of verbal complaints that have not been officially lodged and if the Internship Director detects a pattern of complaints, the Internship Director will address the matter directly with the person in question and/or their supervisor.

If the aforementioned conversations and/or plan for improved interaction do not produce a satisfactory resolution, either party may request that the Internship Director act as a mediator or help select a mediator agreeable to both parties. Such informal mediation may facilitate a satisfactory resolution through continued discussion and/or may result in recommended changes to the supervisory and training environment.

In most instances, it will be the intern who determines if the informal grievance process led to a satisfactory outcome. If not, the intern may opt to pursue a formal grievance process. However, there may be instances in which the Internship Director has significant concerns about a member of the training community's competence based on the information shared by the intern and needs to address these directly with that individual, even if the intern does not want to pursue a formal grievance process. There also are times when the Internship Director has significant concerns about the competence of a member of the training community based on information shared by an intern, but the intern does not feel comfortable directly addressing the concerns due to their nature even via an informal grievance process. In such instances, the Internship Director will

intervene directly with the person of concern in consultation with the Chief Psychologist. In both of these cases, these processes will be handled with sensitivity and in a manner designed to support the best interests of both parties. If the competence problems persist after the Internship Director meets with the person of concern, then the Internship Director, relevant Associate Director, and Chief Psychologist will meet with the person of concern and outline a Performance Improvement Plan. The formulation, presentation, and management of these plans will be developed in conjunction with the appropriate Human Resource personnel and in accord with the relevant Human Resource procedures.

### **Formal Grievance Processes and Procedures For Competence Problems with a Faculty Member Detected by an Intern**

This section outlines formal grievance processes and procedures to be used when an intern has competence concerns about a faculty member that the intern believes were not effectively resolved via the informal grievance process. Nothing here precludes attempted resolution of difficulties with a faculty member by adjudication at a clinic, hospital, or university level.

The program leadership will do its best to ensure that an intern who pursues a formal grievance in good faith related to a faculty member will not experience adverse personal or professional consequences. In addition, consistent with the APA's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, the Internship Director will handle the formal grievance process in a manner that protects the confidentiality of both parties to the fullest extent possible.

The following steps are the procedures to pursue a formal grievance when an intern detects competence problems in a faculty member that persist after attempts at informal resolution that have included both a direct conversation and informal mediation:

- The intern will be required to submit a formal complaint in writing to the Internship Director and the faculty member will be asked to respond to the grievance in writing within 15 days of its receipt. The intern will then have 5 days to respond in writing to the faculty member's response
- The Internship Director will convene a Review Panel within 30 days of receiving the initial written complaint. The panel will consist of the Internship Director (or one of the two Associate Directors), two faculty members selected by the Internship Director, and two faculty members selected by the intern. Any party involved in the dispute may not serve on the panel. The Review Panel will review all written materials
- A Review Hearing will be conducted, chaired by the Chief Psychologist, in which evidence is heard. Both parties involved in the complaint (intern, faculty member of concern) retain the right to be present at the hearing, to hear all facts, to dispute any evidence or claims presented, and to be accompanied by a support person
- Within 15 days of the completion of the Review Hearing, the Review Panel must file a written report to the Chief Psychologist, including any recommendations for further action. Decisions made by the Review Panel will be made by majority vote of the five panel members and must be reviewed and approved by the Chief Psychologist. Based on the Review Panel's findings, one of the following recommendations may be proposed: (1) no disciplinary action against the faculty member, (2) reprimand of the faculty member with Performance Improvement Plan, and/or (3) request to the appropriate administrative personnel for suspension of the faculty member's privilege to be involved

in the training program (the specifics and duration of this suspension would depend on the nature of the complaint and the history of prior complaints, but the minimum duration would be 1 year). In addition, the Review Panel may recommend a change to the intern's training and supervision plan related to the faculty member of concern (e.g., addition of another supervisor, change in supervisor)

- The intern will be informed of the recommendations by the Internship Director and the faculty member will be informed by the Chief Psychologist. Each will receive a copy of the panel report. As the lead faculty administrator, it is the responsibility of the Chief Psychologist to follow-up on the responses to these recommendations (e.g., monitor faculty Performance Improvement Plan)
- Recommendations of the Review Panel will be forwarded to the appropriate University, Clinic, or Hospital administrator for review and response. Decisions of the Review Panel may be appealed by the faculty member in writing to an Appeals Committee consisting of the Dean of the Emory University School of Medicine and the Chair(s) of the Emory Medical School Department in which the intern and the faculty member hold appointments. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be final
- If the Internship Director is the object of the grievance, then the aforementioned procedures will be conducted by the Chief Psychologist

## *Appendix A*

# Competency Remediation Plan

**Date of Competency Remediation Plan Meeting:**

**Name of Intern:**

**Primary Supervisor (s):**

**Names of All Persons Present at the Meeting:**

**Names of All Persons Invited but could not Attend:**

**All Additional Pertinent Supervisors:**

**Date for Follow-up Meeting(s):**

Circle all competency domains in which the intern's performance does not meet the benchmark:

- Professionalism (professional values, attitudes, and behaviors)
- Communication and Interpersonal Skills
- Individual and Cultural Diversity
- Ethical and Legal Standards
- Integration of Science and Practice
- Assessment
- Intervention
- Consultation and Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary Skills
- Research/ Evaluation
- Supervision
- Advocacy

Description of the problem(s) in each competency domain circled above:

Date(s) and context (e.g., informal feedback during supervision, mid rotation performance evaluation) the competence problem(s) was brought to the intern's attention and by whom:

Steps already taken by the intern to rectify the competence problem(s) identified above (this should be completed collaboratively by the trainer(s) and the trainee):

Steps already taken by the supervisor(s) to address the competence problem(s) identified above:

# Plan

Competency Domain/ Essential Components:

Problem Behaviors:

Expectations for Acceptable Performance:

Intern's Responsibilities/Actions:

Supervisors'/Department's Responsibilities/Actions:

Timeframe for Acceptable Performance (Short- and Long- Term):

Assessment Methods:

Dates of Evaluation:

Consequences for Unsuccessful Remediation:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have reviewed the above Competency Remediation Plan with my primary supervisor, any additional supervisors, and the Internship Director (or designated Associate Director). My signature below indicates areas of agreement and disagreement with the Competency Remediation Plan. If I choose to decline to sign the Competency Remediation Plan, I may check the box indicating that choice below, with the understanding that the Competency Remediation Plan will be implemented even in the absence of my signature. If I choose not to sign I must provide comments detailing the rationale for my decision and any disagreement that I have with the Competency Remediation Plan.

I agree with the following aspects of the Competency Remediation Plan:

I disagree with the following aspects of the Competency Remediation Plan (A description of the rationale for disagreement with aspects of the plan is required):

I decline to sign the Competency Remediation Plan

Intern Required Comments:

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Intern's Name

Date

---

Internship Director

Date

All supervisors with responsibilities or actions described in the above Competency Remediation Plan agree to participate in the plan as outlined above. Please sign and date below to indicate your agreement with the plan.

---

Supervisor Name and Signature

Date

---

Supervisor Name and Signature

Date

---

Supervisor Name and Signature

Date

Summative Evaluation of the Competency Remediation Plan

Follow-up Meeting(s):

Date (s):

In Attendance:

Competency Domain/ Essential Components:

Expectations for Acceptable Performance (be specific):

Outcomes Related to Expected Benchmarks (met, partially met, not meet):

Next Steps (e.g., competency remediation concluded, Competency Remediation Plan extended/modified, next stage in Due Process and Grievance Procedures):

Next Evaluation Date (if needed)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have reviewed the above summative evaluation of my Competency Remediation Plan with my primary supervisor(s), any additional supervisors, and the Internship Director (or designated Associate Director). My signature below indicates areas of agreement and disagreement with the summative evaluation of my Competency Remediation Plan. If I chose to decline signing the summative evaluation of my Competency Remediation Plan I may check the box indicating that choice below, with the understanding that the next steps will be implemented even in the absence of my signature. If I choose not to sign, I must provide comments detailing the rationale for my decision and any disagreement I have with the summative evaluation of my competency remediation plan.

I agree with the following aspects of the summative evaluation:

I disagree with the following aspects of the summative evaluation (A description of the rationale for disagreement with aspects of the summative evaluation is required):

I decline to sign the summative evaluation of my Competency Remediation Plan

Intern's Required Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Intern's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Internship Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

All supervisors with responsibilities or actions described in the above Competency Remediation Plan agree to participate in the plan as outlined above. Please sign and date below to indicate your agreement with the plan.

---

Supervisor Name and Signature

Date

---

Supervisor Name and Signature

Date

---

Supervisor Name and Signature

Date

**EMORY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE INTERNSHIP IN HEALTH SERVICE PSYCHOLOGY**

My signature below indicates that I have read the Emory University School of Medicine Internship in Health Service Psychology DUE PROCESS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES and I agree to abide by their contents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Intern's Name (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

My signature below indicates that I am providing a waiver for the internship faculty to disclose to the relevant State Boards of Examiners of Psychology, my graduate school faculty, and/or my postdoctoral training program faculty/staff information regarding the internship program faculty's determination of serious competence problems or ethical or legal violations on my part.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Intern's Name (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date