



Nova Scotia Regulator of Psychology

Advisory: Extended Responsibility in Teaching Psychology and Supervising Practicum Students

Date: August 2025

Introduction

The Nova Scotia Regulator of Psychology (NSRP) requires registrants to adhere to the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists (4th Edition), NSRP Standards of Professional Conduct, and NSRP Standards for Providers of Psychological Services when teaching psychology or supervising practicum students. Teaching and supervision, as psychological services, require registrants to ensure adequate training to prepare students in psychology or related fields (e.g., counselling, social work) for competent, ethical practice, avoiding harm to future clients. Responsibilities are tied to the registrant's role (e.g., teaching, supervision, program oversight), all governed by ethical standards. However, registrants teaching have an extended responsibility to advocate for training standards to protect students and their future clients, raising concerns about systemic issues (e.g., program brevity) even if they do not have administrative responsibility (Canadian Code of Ethics, Principle IV). Registrants are accountable for psychological services provided by non-registered supervisees and must verify the student's graduate program's eligibility for NSRP registration to prevent misleading expectations, such as assuming supervision by a registered psychologist qualifies as a psychology practicum or makes an unacceptable program acceptable ([NSRP Supervision Scenarios, Interns & practicum students](#)).

Ethical and Professional Responsibilities

- **Respect for the Dignity of Persons (Principle I, Canadian Code of Ethics)**
 - Deliver training or supervision that prepares students to respect client rights (e.g., privacy, informed consent) and meet client needs. Advocate for programs that uphold these principles, ensuring students are prepared for ethical practice.
- **Responsible Caring (Principle II, Canadian Code of Ethics)**
 - Provide adequate, evidence-based training or supervision within your role to prepare students for competent practice, using accurate materials that align with professional standards (Standards of Professional Conduct; Standards for Providers of Psychological Services). Inadequate training risks harm to future clients.
 - Raise concerns about programmatic issues (e.g., inadequate resources) that could compromise training quality.
 - **Due Diligence in Supervision:** Before supervising practicum students, verify the graduate program's alignment with NSRP registration requirements (e.g., by consulting the [NSRP registration requirements](#), [list of acceptable programs](#), or contacting NSRP (nsbep@nsbep.org)) to avoid false expectations (NSRP Supervision Scenarios, Interns &

practicum students).

- **Supervision Responsibilities:** Ensure psychological services by non-registered supervisees (e.g., interns, psychometrists) meet professional standards, maintaining accountability as required by the Standards of Professional Conduct (NSRP Supervision Scenarios, Supervision of non-autonomous staff).
- **Integrity in Relationships (Principle III, Canadian Code of Ethics)**
 - Provide accurate content, and clarify psychology's scope to avoid role confusion, especially in programs with overlapping professions (e.g., counselling) (NSRP Supervision Scenarios, Supervision of practitioners from another occupation). Teach students to represent their qualifications honestly, aligning with the Standards of Professional Conduct.
- **Responsibility to Society (Principle IV, Canadian Code of Ethics)**
 - Prepare students to address societal needs and comply with legal obligations (e.g., mandatory reporting under the Children and Family Services Act), as emphasized in the Standards of Professional Conduct. Advocate for programs that ensure competent practice, raising concerns about systemic inadequacies (e.g., program brevity) without administrative responsibility.

Guidance for Registrants

- **Ensure Adequate Training:** Deliver evidence-based training within your role (e.g., teaching courses) to prepare students for competent, ethical practice, addressing client needs and legal compliance (Canadian Code of Ethics, Principle II; Standards of Professional Conduct; Standards for Providers of Psychological Services). Inadequate training risks harm to future clients.
- **Advocate for Training Standards:** Raise concerns about systemic program issues (e.g., insufficient duration) that could compromise training (Canadian Code of Ethics, Principle IV; Standards of Professional Conduct).
- **Clarify Professional Boundaries:** Guide students to distinguish psychology's role from other professions when applicable (Canadian Code of Ethics, Principle III; NSRP Supervision Scenarios, Supervision of practitioners from another occupation).
- **Protect Future Clients:** Ensure training/supervision prepares students to serve clients competently, fulfilling your extended responsibility (Canadian Code of Ethics, Principles I, II, IV; Standards for Providers of Psychological Services).
- **Verify Practicum Program Eligibility:** Before supervising practicum students, confirm the graduate program meets NSRP registration requirements to avoid misrepresentation (Canadian Code of Ethics, Principle III; NSRP Supervision Scenarios, Interns & practicum students).
- **Supervise Responsibly:** Ensure psychological services by non-registered supervisees meet professional standards and clarify boundaries (Canadian Code of Ethics, Principle III; Standards of Professional Conduct; NSRP Supervision Scenarios, Supervision of non-autonomous staff).

Conclusion

Registrants have a responsibility to deliver adequate, ethical training and supervision within their role (e.g., teaching, supervising practicum students, or program oversight), governed by the Canadian Code of Ethics and NSRP Standards of Professional Conduct and Standards for Providers of Psychological Services. However, registrants teaching have an extended responsibility to advocate for training standards and raise concerns about systemic issues.

Those intending to supervise practicum students should verify the graduate programs' eligibility for NSRP registration to avoid misleading expectations and ensure non-registered supervisees' psychological services meet professional standards. Adequate training and clear boundaries with respect to scope of practice protect students and future clients, especially in overlapping professions. The NSRP urges registrants to exercise due diligence, advocate for ethical standards, and uphold their extended responsibility to safeguard public welfare.

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