

Republic Act No. 10029 – Philippine Psychology Act of 2009

What does the new law seek to achieve?

RA 10029 seeks to regulate the practice of psychology and psychometrics in the Philippines to protect the public from inexperienced or untrained individuals offering psychological services, and to nurture competent, upright and assiduous psychologists whose standards of practice are excellent and globally competitive.

How does the law achieve this purpose?

RA 10029 has created the Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology which will monitor the registration, licensure and practice of psychologists and psychometricians in the Philippines. The new law has also required psychologists and psychometricians (with certain exceptions) to pass a Licensure Examination.

What is the composition of the Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology?

The Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology (“the Board”) is composed of a Chairperson and 2 members who are appointed by the President of the Philippines from a list of 3 nominees for each position submitted by the integrated and accredited national organization of psychologists.

What are the qualifications of the members of the Board?

- ✓ Natural born citizens and residents of the Philippines;
- ✓ At least 35 years of age;
- ✓ Of good moral character;
- ✓ Have a doctorate degree in psychology conferred by a university, college or school in the Philippines or board duly recognized and/or accredited by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED);
- ✓ Have at least 10 years of practice in psychology and psychometrics in a duly recognized institution, clinic or center
- ✓ Have at least 5 years of teaching experience in the field of psychology
- ✓ Are registered and licensed psychologists, except in the case of the first members of the Board who will automatically be conferred a valid certificate of registration and a valid professional identification card in psychology and psychometrics upon appointment to the Board
- ✓ Neither officers, trustees nor members of the faculty of any university, college, institute or school where a regular course in psychology is offered or taught or review classes conducted, and do not have any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in any such institution
- ✓ Are not officers and do not hold any position other than being members of the integrated and accredited national organization of psychologists
- ✓ Have not have been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude.

What is the term of office of the Board members?

The Board members will hold office for 3 years or until their successors have been appointed and duly qualified. However, the first members of the Board will hold office for the following terms: the Chairperson for 3 years; 1 member for 2 years; and the other member for 1 year. Each member may be reappointed for 1 full term of 3 years.

Is the Board supervised by any body or agency?

Yes, the Board is under the administrative control of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

Does the Board have the power to investigate and hear cases?

Yes. The Board can investigate and, when warranted, hear administrative cases involving violations of RA 10029, its implementing rules and regulations, and any applicable code of ethics and/or code of professional standards. For this purpose, it may issue subpoena *testificandum* and subpoena *duces tecum* to secure the appearance of witnesses and the production of documents.

Who are qualified to take the Licensure Examination for Psychologists?

An applicant for the Licensure Examination for Psychologists must be:

- ✓ A Filipino citizen, a permanent resident or a citizen of a foreign state/country which extends reciprocity to the Philippines relative to the practice of psychology
- ✓ Holds at least a master's degree in psychology conferred by a university, college or school in the Philippines or abroad recognized/accredited by the CHED, and has obtained sufficient credits for the subjects covered in the examination
- ✓ Has undergone a minimum of 200 hours of supervised practicum/internship/clinical experience related to psychological intervention, psychological assessment, and development, implementation and evaluation of psychological treatment, under the auspices of a licensed psychologist or other licensed mental health professional
- ✓ Of good moral character
- ✓ Has not been convicted of an offense involving moral turpitude.

Who are qualified to take the Licensure Examination for Psychometricians?

An applicant for the Licensure Examination for Psychometricians must be:

- ✓ A Filipino citizen, a permanent resident or a citizen of a foreign state/country which extends reciprocity to the Philippines relative to the practice of psychometrics
- ✓ Holds at least a bachelor's degree in psychology conferred by a university, college or school in the Philippines or abroad recognized/accredited by the CHED, and has obtained sufficient credits for the subjects covered in the examination
- ✓ Of good moral character
- ✓ Has not been convicted of an offense involving moral turpitude.

A citizen of a foreign country may take the Licensure Examination as long as his/her country extends reciprocity to the Philippines. What do we mean by reciprocity?

The country of which the foreigner is a citizen does any of the following:

- Admits Filipino citizens to the practice of psychology or psychometrics without need for registration and issuance of a certificate of registration/professional identification card; or
- Allows Filipino citizens to practice psychology or psychometrics without restriction; or
- Allows Filipino citizens to practice psychology or psychometrics after an examination on terms of strict and absolute equality with nationals of said country.

What is the passing score for the Licensure Examination?

The candidate must obtain a weighted general average of at least 75% for all subjects, with no grade lower than 60% in any given subject.

An examinee who obtains a weighted general average of 75% or higher but obtains a rating below 60% in any given subject may retake such subjects within the next 2 years, and upon obtaining a rating of at least 75% in each such subject, will then be considered to have passed the licensure examination.

May a person become a registered psychologist without taking the Licensure Examination?

Yes, provided:

- ✓ He/she possesses the qualifications required to take the examination
- ✓ He/she files with the Board within 3 years after its creation an application for registration and issuance of certificate of registration and professional identification card
- ✓ He/she submits credentials satisfactory to the Board that he/she had, on or prior to the effectivity of RA 10029:
 - Obtained a doctoral degree in psychology and accumulated 3 years of work experience in the practice of psychology; or
 - Obtained a master's degree in psychology and accumulated at least 5 years of work experience in the practice of psychology; or
 - Obtained a bachelor's degree in psychology and accumulated at least 10 years of work experience in the practice of psychology as a psychologist, has updated his/her professional education in various psychology-related functions, and is presently employed in a government or private agency as a psychologist.

May a person become a registered psychometrician without taking the Licensure Examination?

Yes, provided:

- ✓ He/she possesses the qualifications required to take the examination for registration as a psychometrician

- ✓ He/she files with the Board within 3 years after its creation an application for registration and issuance of a certificate of registration and professional identification card
- ✓ He/she submits credentials satisfactory to the Board that he/she, before the effectivity of RA 10029, had obtained a bachelor's degree in psychology and had accumulated at least 2 years full time work experience in the practice of psychometrics.

What happens after the examinee hurdles the Licensure Examination or after an applicant qualifies for registration without examination?

The examinee/applicant will take an oath to uphold the profession, and upon compliance with all requirements including payment of fees, be issued a certificate of registration and professional identification card, unless he/she has been convicted of a criminal offense involving moral turpitude, or has been found guilty by a judicial or other duly constituted tribunal of immoral or dishonorable conduct, or has been medically diagnosed to be of unsound mind.

For how long will the professional identification card be valid?

3 years, renewable upon proof of compliance with continuing education requirements prescribed by the Board and/or the PRC.

Is the psychologist/psychometrician required to disclose his registration information in documents he signs in the practice of his profession?

Yes. The psychologist or psychometrician should indicate his/her registration and professional identification card number and date of issuance, the duration of validity, including the professional tax receipt number, on each document signed, used or issued in connection with the practice of his/her profession.

May licensed psychologists or psychometricians from foreign countries be allowed to practice in the Philippines?

Yes. The Board may issue a special/temporary permit, with the approval of the PRC, effective for 1 year subject to renewal, to *licensed* psychologists or psychometricians from foreign countries who:

- Are internationally acknowledged specialists or outstanding experts in psychology or psychometrics, provided their services are important and necessary either due to the lack or inadequacy of available local specialists or experts, or in recognition of their potential contribution to the promotion and advancement of the practice of psychology of psychometrics through transfer of technology; or
- Whose services will be free and offered exclusively to indigent patients in a particular hospital, center or clinic; or
- Are employed as exchange professors to teach psychology or psychometrics in schools, colleges, or universities offering psychology or psychometrics courses or programs.

On what grounds may a certificate of registration and professional identification card be suspended or revoked, or a special/temporary permit cancelled?

- Allowing any other person to use one's certificate of registration and professional identification card or special/temporary permit to advertise or to practice the profession or for any other purpose, regardless of whether such enables the unqualified individual to engage in the practice of psychology or psychometrics
- Using, exhibiting and/or misrepresenting as his/her own the certificate of registration and/or professional identification card or special/temporary permit of another
- Procurement of a certificate of registration and/or professional identification card or special/temporary permit by fraud or deceit, including giving false, inaccurate, misleading or incomplete information to the Board to obtain such certificate, identification card or permit
- Violating or conspiring to violate any of the provisions of RA 10029, its implementing rules and regulations, the code of ethics or code of professional standards
- Manifest physical or mental incompetence to render psychological services with reasonable skill and safety to one's clients/patients
- Professional misconduct or negligence in the performance of duties as a psychometrician
- Engaging in the practice of the profession during the period of one's suspension.

May a revoked certificate of registration be reinstated?

Yes, upon good cause and written application to the Board after 2 years from the date of revocation.

Where can the Board's decision be appealed?

Appeal should be filed with the PRC within 15 days from receipt of the decision, otherwise the decision becomes final. The PRC's decision may be appealed before the Court of Appeals within 15 days from receipt of the decision.

Are psychologists and psychometricians bound by privileged communication?

Yes. Psychologists or psychometricians cannot, without the consent of the client/patient, be examined on any communication or information disclosed and/or acquired in the course of giving psychological services to such client. The protection extends to all pertinent records and shall be available to the secretary, clerk or other staff of the licensed psychologist or psychometrician. Any evidence obtained in violation of this will be inadmissible for any purpose in any proceeding.