

BACB Newsletter



NOTICE: The information contained in BACB Newsletters may be outdated and should be independently verified via our website.

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Introducing the Monthly Experience System

We received overwhelming support for the change to monthly supervisory periods after our announcement in the [October 2017 BACB Newsletter](#). During preparations for the implementation of the 2022 Fieldwork Standards, we recognized that an earlier implementation of the monthly supervisory period under the current experience standards was possible and would provide greater flexibility to trainees and supervisors. Thus, we are introducing the “monthly experience system,” including a number of new forms and resources for trainees and supervisors. The new [BCBA/BCaBA Experience Standards: Monthly System](#) (hereafter referred to as “Experience Standards”) document provides comprehensive details related to all aspects of this change; summaries are provided below.

Transition Timeline. All documents, resources, and standards related to the monthly experience system are now available on the BACB website. Supervisors and trainees may begin using the new system on April 1, 2018. However, the monthly system will be required for all experience hours accrued beginning **January 1, 2019**.

Supervision Requirements. The Experience and Supervision Standards Training Module was designed to inform supervisors and trainees about the many facets of the Experience Standards. The module contains information specific to the weekly/biweekly supervisory period requirements and is therefore no longer relevant under the monthly experience system. In addition, the availability of new resources that provide comprehensive and detailed guidance about the Experience Standards makes the module less valuable as a precursor to experience and supervision. Thus, **effective immediately**, the Experience and Supervision Standards Training Module will no longer be required for supervisors or trainees. However, supervisors must still complete an 8-hour supervision training before providing supervision. To assist trainees and supervisors in their adherence to the Experience Standards, we have developed a number of new resources, including the [Pre-Experience Checklist](#), [Experience Tip Sheet](#), and [Experience Tracker](#).

Required Documentation. Because experience varies across settings and practice areas, we are granting supervisors and trainees the flexibility to develop their own unique system for documenting ongoing experience and supervision in a way that demonstrates adherence to the Experience Standards and the Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts. The unique documentation system must include all of the required elements listed in the Experience Standards and must be in place at the transition to the monthly experience system.

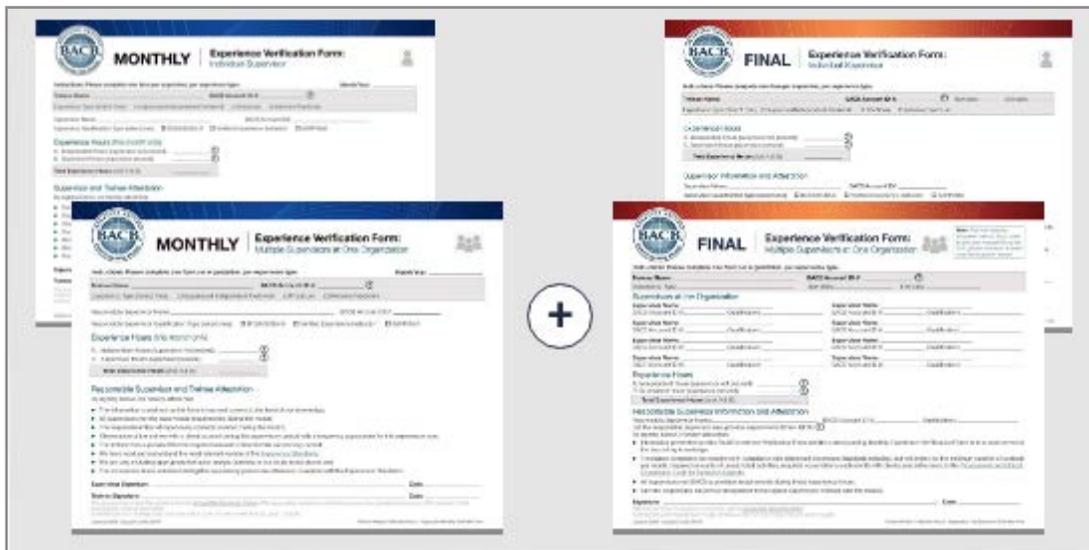
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The Experience Supervision Form is being replaced with a new form: the Monthly Experience Verification Form. This form is designed to be completed on a monthly basis and retained by the supervisor and trainee in their supervision records. The form that will be submitted with a trainee's application for certification is now titled the Final Experience Verification Form. In addition, there are now two versions of each of these forms to accommodate experiences that involve a single supervisor, as well as those that involve multiple supervisors within an organization.

Some notable improvements to the experience verification form include:

- ▶ A new [acceptable signature policy](#) that provides additional flexibility to trainees and supervisors for ensuring adherence to timelines for signing documents.
- ▶ Interactive and fillable PDFs that can easily be completed and signed electronically.
- ▶ Embedded tips that clarify information to be included in various fields.



Conversion from Weekly/Biweekly to Monthly Periods. The current requirements for each type of experience (i.e., supervised independent fieldwork, practicum, intensive practicum) have been converted for the new monthly experience system. The new values are described below.

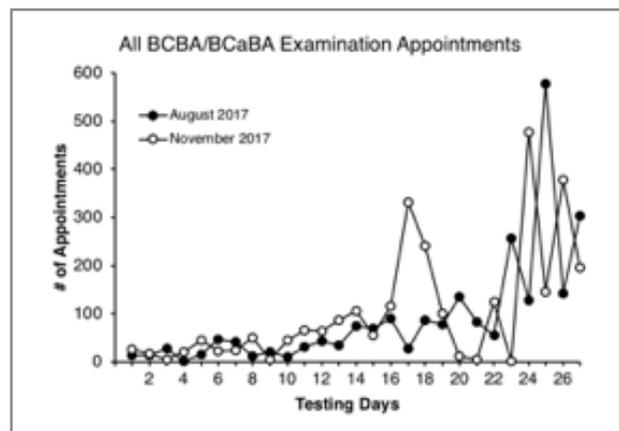
- ▶ **Hours:** Trainees are required to complete a minimum of 20 hours and a maximum of 130 hours of experience per month. This range, which was recommended by subject matter experts and approved by the BACB Board of Directors, provides flexibility for trainees who occasionally work partial months.
- ▶ **Contacts:** Trainees are required to have a minimum number of contacts with their supervisor during each supervisory period: supervised independent fieldwork (2 contacts), practicum (4 contacts), intensive practicum (8 contacts).
- ▶ **Observations with Client:** Supervisors must observe trainees working with a client during each supervisory period: supervised independent fieldwork (2 observations), practicum (4 observations), intensive practicum (4 observations).
- ▶ **Combined Experience Types:** Trainees are now permitted to combine types of experience during the monthly period by documenting them separately. When combining experience types, the maximum hours permitted in a month applies to the number of hours combined across all types of experience. In addition, the required percentage of supervision hours must be met independently for each experience type.
- ▶ **Experience Audits.** Experience is subject to audit at any time and for any reason at the discretion of the BACB. In the event that a certification application is audited for experience, application processing will be suspended until the completion of the audit. The following documentation may be requested: (a) the trainee and supervisor's unique system for documenting experience; (b) Monthly Experience Verification Forms; and (c) the Experience Tracker. Information or documentation may be requested from the trainee or the supervisor during this process. Any experience that is not in compliance with the Experience Standards will be disqualified.

Pearson VUE Examination–Appointment Data

Occasionally, test takers express concern that there are insufficient examination appointments available during scheduled test windows. We conducted several analyses to investigate this potential discrepancy.

BCBA and BCaBA examinations are administered at 349 Pearson VUE test sites in 37 countries. Across these sites, there are 4,471 workstations available for BACB test-takers during each examination window, which far exceeds the number of individuals who are authorized to test in a window.

The figure below illustrates the number of BCBA/BCaBA examination appointments each testing day during the August and November windows in 2017. In both windows, the largest number of candidates tested in the last 7 days. In August 2017, 64% of candidates (n = 1,548) tested in the last 7 days of the window; in November 2017, 48% (n = 1,329) tested in the last 7 days. In August and November, all applications were processed before the examination window started, indicating that this trend is due to candidate preferences as opposed to limited availability.



To determine the need for additional appointments, we completed additional analyses, using the 3 highest-volume test sites as examples. The table below depicts the examination appointments that were used and unused at these sites during the August and November 2017 windows.

Site	August 2017 (Unused)	November 2017 (Unused)
Site 1	41 (1,260)	74 (990)
Site 2	64 (1,350)	87 (540)
Site 3	35 (810)	72 (720)

Effective immediately: Experience and Supervision Standards Training Module no longer required for supervisors and trainees

Effective January 1, 2019: monthly experience system must be used (i.e., monthly supervisory period, new BACB documents, unique documentation system)

Taken together, the data sets shown above suggest that candidates who are flexible in their preference for specific dates (and likely times) and are willing to test earlier in the window will likely be able to obtain an appointment without difficulty. Furthermore, scheduling an appointment earlier in the window allows for candidates to have an opportunity to reschedule if anything interferes with their scheduled appointment (e.g., illness, family emergency). By contrast, those who test in the final week—when many appointments are already filled—risk having to delay their examination by 3 months if something interferes with their appointment. **In summary, the BACB recommends scheduling exam appointments early in the month and being flexible with date and time preferences.**

Which BCaBA and RBT Activities Should be Supervised?

The BACB requires all BCaBAs and RBTs who are providing behavior-analytic services to be supervised. We periodically receive inquiries from certificants who are unsure whether their job duties are considered “behavior-analytic.” The following guidance is being provided to help BCaBAs and RBTs ensure they are in compliance with the BACB’s supervision requirements and make adequate preparations in the event they are audited for supervision documentation.

To avoid noncompliance with a supervision requirement, BCaBAs and RBTs must assess whether their activities require supervision. This should be done routinely and when their work functions and settings change. As stated in the glossary of the [Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts](#), the BACB defines behavior-analytic services as follows:

Behavior-analytic services are those that are explicitly based on principles and procedures of behavior analysis (i.e., the science of behavior) and are designed to change behavior in socially important ways. These services include, but are not limited to, treatment, assessment, training, consultation, managing and supervising others, teaching, and delivering continuing education.

There are at least two noteworthy aspects of the definition above. First, it is purposely setting neutral. Thus, the setting in which a BCaBA or RBT is working or employed has no bearing on whether the activities are behavior-analytic in nature. Second, some BCaBAs serve in a consultative, rather than a direct service-delivery role. According to the BACB’s definition of behavior-analytic services, if recommendations are being made that are explicitly based on the principles and procedures of behavior analysis and are designed to change behavior in socially important ways, then the BCaBA’s consultative services must be supervised.

If there is any uncertainty as to whether a BCaBA or RBT is providing behavior-analytic services, the BCaBA or RBT should first review the **definition** of behavior-analytic services above and then their respective **task list**. Any remaining doubt should be addressed through a **consultation** with their Supervisor (BCaBA) or Responsible Certificant (RBT) or an established BCBA/BCBA-D. We recommend that a written record of that consultation is retained, as it may be requested in the event of an audit.

The 2018 Michael Hemingway Behavior Analysis Award



This annual award is given in honor of the late Michael Hemingway, who played a central role in the development of behavior analyst certification in Florida before serving as a founding director of the BACB. Michael’s commitments to the profession of behavior analysis and to increasing access to behavioral services are reflected in the behavior of the individual who receives this award. We are pleased to announce that the 2018 recipient of the Michael Hemingway Behavior Analysis Award is Dr. Jana Gandalovicová for her public policy and advocacy efforts in the Czech Republic. Dr. Gandalovicová was instrumental in the passage of recent legislation in the Czech Republic that now formally recognizes applied behavior analysis as a profession; the first law of its kind in Europe. In addition, Dr. Gandalovicová has influenced public policy and funding in a number of ways to facilitate greater access to behavior-analytic services, including: securing coverage of ABA services from major medical insurance providers, establishing the first ABA classroom for children with autism in the Czech

Republic, enlisting financial support from the government for a Verified Course Sequence at Masaryk University, securing funding from the largest health insurance company in the Czech Republic for ABA-resource language translation, and facilitating cooperation between the Czech Society for Applied Behavior Analysis and the Global Autism Project. Her extraordinary efforts have benefited families and the profession in countless ways. Thank you, Jana!

New Article on the Certification of Behavior Analysts Published

Carr, J. E., & Nosik, M. R. (2017). Professional credentialing of practicing behavior analysts. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 4, 3-8. doi:10.1177/2372732216685861
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SAGE

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Abstract
Treatments based on applied behavior analysis (ABA)—an applied science of human behavior—have been increasingly recognized in public policy, both at the federal and state levels. Despite this recognition, however, the relative newness of the science often raises questions about the nature of the treatment approach and the qualifications and regulation of its practitioners. Thus, the present article is a primer on the features of ABA most relevant to public policy stakeholders, including professional certification, licensure, and workforce expansion.

Keywords
applied behavior analysis, autism, BACB, certification, credentialing, licensure

Tweet

The high demand for ABA services has resulted in the rapid growth in the number of credentialled practitioners around the world in recent years.

Key Points

- Applied behavior analysis has been demonstrated as a highly successful treatment approach in a variety of areas, including autism, substance abuse treatment, gerontology, brain injury rehabilitation, and occupational safety, among others.
- In less than two decades, the BACB has credentialled more than 50,000 behavior analysts and behavior technicians in more than 70 countries, and there are no indications of a slowdown in growth trends.
- In less than a decade, half of U.S. states have passed laws to regulate practicing behavior analysts.
- Most U.S. licensure laws rely on the BACB's credentials or standards, which reduces costs to states and facilitates practitioner mobility across state lines.

Introduction

Treatments based on applied behavior analysis (ABA) are becoming increasingly recognized by governments as effective approaches for solving problems of human behavior. At the U.S. federal level, for example, ABA treatments have been written into special education law (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004), are used for occupational safety by the U.S. Department of Energy (2003), are used to improve outcomes in probation systems (Taxman & Rudes,

2013), and are funded by federal health plans (TRICARE, 2016). At the state level, ABA treatments have long been implemented and funded for developmental disabilities treatment within state education and disabilities departments, are increasingly funded by private health plans (Autism Speaks, 2016), and have been used for various purposes within municipal systems (e.g., drug courts; Marlowe, Festinger, Dugosh, Anshel, & Kirby, 2008). In addition, licensure laws for ABA practitioners have been passed in 25 states within the past decade. ABA is a relatively new applied science and, thus, many policy stakeholders may have questions about the treatment approach and those who generally provide it. The present article is a primer on ABA and the credentialing of its practitioners, which should be relevant for legislators, government administrators, and funders as they encounter the treatment approach in their respective policy arenas.

ABA

Behavior analysis is the science of behavior and its roots extend back to the early 20th century (Skinner, 1938, 1945; Watson, 1913). Its underlying philosophy is behaviorism, which is based on the premise that attempts to improve the human condition through behavior change (e.g., education, behavioral health treatment) will be most effectively served if behavior itself is considered the proper subject matter rather than less tangible concepts such as the mind and the

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Fee Changes to BCBA-D, BCBA, and BCaBA Applications

Since the BACB was formed in 1998, certificant fees paid to the BACB (e.g., initial application, recertification) have not changed and, thus, have not been adjusted for inflation. Based upon the results of a recent fee study, a modest increase to BCaBA, BCBA, and BCBA-D fees will take effect beginning September 2018. No other BACB fees are changing at this time.

BCaBA, BCBA, and BCBA-D Fees <i>(effective for fees assessed beginning September 1, 2018)</i>						
	Initial Application		Retake Application		Recertification Application	
	<i>New</i>	<i>Current</i>	<i>New</i>	<i>Current</i>	<i>New</i>	<i>Current</i>
BCaBA	175	165	120	115	140	130
BCBA	245	230	140	130	215	200
BCBA-D	105	100			290	270

A Summary of Recent and Upcoming Changes to BACB Standards

Effective Date	Area	Change	Newsletter
January 1, 2017	BcaBA Supervision	Changes to the following policy requirements: Supervisor Responsibilities and Qualifications, Supervision Amount and Structure, Group Supervision, and Documentation of Supervision	December 2014
August 1, 2018	BCBA/BCaBA Eligibility Requirements	Changes to the Experience Standards (i.e., monthly system, module requirement)	March 2018
January 1, 2022	BCBA/BCaBA Eligibility Requirements	Changes to the coursework requirements for the BCBA (Option 1) and BCaBA credentials	January 2017
January 1, 2022	BCBA/BCaBA Examination Content	All BCBA/BCaBA examinations will be based on the BCBA/BCaBA Task List (5th ed.)	January 2017