



# BCBA/BCaBA EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

## MONTHLY SYSTEM

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**Note:**

Anyone applying for BCBA or BCaBA certification on or after January 1, 2022 will be required to meet the standards announced in the [October 2017 Newsletter](#).

# EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

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One of the primary eligibility requirements for certification as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) or a Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst® (BCaBA®) is the completion of a defined practical experience in applied behavior analysis. The BCBA/BCaBA Experience Standards: Monthly System (hereafter referred to as the “Experience Standards”) provide the necessary information for supervisors and trainees to ensure that all experience hours are compliant with the Experience Standards. Because BACB standards may change over time, supervisors and trainees are responsible for being knowledgeable about current information from the [BACB website](#), [BACB newsletters](#), and the [online table of recent and upcoming changes](#) to ensure that accrued experience hours will qualify at the time of application.

## Supervisor Requirements

**Supervisor Qualifications.** Supervisors must be one of the following:

- A BCBA/BCBA-D in good standing. Supervisors who hold BCBA/BCBA-D certification must also meet an [ongoing supervision CEU requirement](#);
- A licensed or registered psychologist certified by the American Board of Professional Psychology in [Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology](#) who was tested in Applied Behavior Analysis; or
- An authorized [Verified Course Sequence \(VCS\) Instructor](#) who is providing supervision in a Practicum or Intensive Practicum (Verified Experience Instructor).

**Supervisor Training.** Supervisors must complete an [8-hour supervision training](#) before providing any supervision to those accruing experience hours. Any experience obtained after March 31, 2015 will not be accepted unless the supervisor completed the training prior to providing supervision. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring they have completed the training prior to providing supervision, although trainees should confirm the date that the supervisor completed the training prior to signing a supervision contract.

**Supervisor/Trainee Relationship.** The supervisor may not be related to, subordinate to, or employed by the trainee during the experience period. Employment does not include compensation paid to the supervisor by the trainee for supervision services. See sections 1.0 and 5.0 of the [Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts](#) (“Code”).

## Supervision Requirements

**Nature of Supervision.** The purpose of supervision is to improve and maintain the behavior-analytic, professional, and ethical repertoires of the trainee and facilitate the delivery of high-quality services to the trainee’s clients. Effective behavior-analytic supervision includes, but is not limited to:

- Monitoring the skills of the trainee throughout the supervised experience
- Developing and communicating performance expectations to the trainee
- Conducting behavioral skills training for the trainee
- Observing the trainee’s performance with clients and delivering feedback
- Modeling technical, professional, and ethical behavior
- Guiding the development of behavioral case conceptualization, problem-solving, and decision-making repertoires
- Reviewing the trainee’s written materials (e.g., behavior programs, data sheets, reports) and delivering related feedback about the products
- Overseeing and evaluating the effects of the trainee’s behavior-analytic service delivery
- Evaluating the effects of supervision throughout the supervised experience

**Structure of Supervision.** Supervision should ideally consist of individual (i.e., one-on-one) interactions between the supervisor and trainee, however, group supervision is permitted in certain circumstances. Groups are interactive meetings in which 2-10 trainees who share similar experiences participate in the supervision activities described above (Nature of Supervision). The number of trainees in a group meeting may not exceed 10 at any time, regardless of the number of BCBA's in the meeting. If non-trainees are present, their participation should be limited and their presence must not inhibit discussion or interfere with participation by trainees.

**Group Supervision Restrictions.** The amount of group supervision may not exceed the amount of individual supervision in a given supervisory period. In other words, supervision may be conducted in groups for no more than half of the total supervised hours in each supervisory period.

**Observation with Client Requirements.** The trainee must be observed working with a client in the natural environment during each supervisory period by at least one supervisor. In-person, on-site observation is preferred. However, the observation may be conducted using asynchronous (e.g., recorded video) or synchronous (e.g., live video conference) formats.

**Supervision Contract.** The trainee and supervisor must develop and sign a written contract at the outset of the supervisory relationship. The purpose of the contract is to protect all involved parties and align experience activities with the purpose of supervision. The contract should include:

- The responsibilities of the supervisor and trainee, including the completion of the 8-hour supervision training by the supervisor and the adherence of both parties to the Experience Standards;
- A description of the appropriate activities and training objectives individualized to the trainee;
- The objective and measurable circumstances under which the supervisor will not sign the trainee's Monthly and Final Experience Verification Form;
- The consequences if the parties do not adhere to their responsibilities (including proper termination of the relationship);
- A statement requiring the trainee to obtain written permission from the trainee's on-site employer or manager when applicable; and
- An attestation that both parties will adhere to the Code.

The trainee and supervisor are responsible for retaining and providing a copy of the contractual agreement and supervision documentation to the BACB, if requested. These documents should be retained for at least 7 years from the date of the final supervision meeting.

**Disputes about the supervisory relationships should first be addressed directly between the supervisor and the trainee.** If there is an ethical violation related to the experience (e.g., Code sections 10.05 or 5.04), the matter may be reported to the BACB by filing a [Notice of Alleged Violation](#) (NAV). Trainees may file a NAV against the supervisor when there is a refusal to sign the Final Experience Verification Form even though all of the supervision-contract terms have been met. In the event of a contractual dispute, issues may need to be addressed through an appropriate independent legal process.

**Multiple Supervisors/Settings.** It is permissible to use multiple supervisors and settings in order to meet the experience requirements. In such cases, all parties must take care to ensure that the supervision contract includes all relevant parties and clearly defines all roles and responsibilities. In cases where multiple supervisors share responsibility for a trainee's experience, the [Monthly and Final Experience Verification Forms](#) for Multiple Supervisors at One Organization should be used to document the experience.

# EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

## Experience Requirements

**Onset of Experience.** Trainees may not start accumulating experience hours until they have:

- Started qualifying coursework (they may begin accruing hours after attending the first class meeting); and
- Secured a qualified supervisor (see Supervisor Qualifications above).

**Duration of Experience.** The timeframe of the experience may not exceed 5 continuous years (e.g., May 2015 to May 2020).

**Experience Types.** There are three experience Types: Supervised Independent Fieldwork, Practicum, and Intensive Practicum.

- **Supervised Independent Fieldwork.** This experience type requires that trainees secure an appropriate experience placement and obtain the necessary supervision.
- **Practicum.** This experience type provides a pathway for individuals to complete their experience in fewer hours and with more supervision than Supervised Independent Fieldwork. This experience type is only available within a VCS with Verified Experience.
- **Intensive Practicum.** This experience type provides a pathway for individuals to complete their experience in fewer hours and with more supervision than Supervised Independent Fieldwork and Practicum. This experience type is only available within a VCS with Verified Experience.

The tables below illustrate the requirements for each category.

## BCBA

	Supervised Independent Fieldwork	Practicum	Intensive Practicum
Experience Hours Required to Qualify	1500	1000	750
Experience Hours per Supervisory Period	min of 20 hrs. - max of 130 hrs.		
Supervisory Period	1 calendar month		
Minimum Number of Supervisor-Trainee Contacts per Supervisory Period	2 contacts	4 contacts	8 contacts
Observations of Trainee with Client per Supervisory Period	2 observations	4 observations	4 observations
Supervision Hours per Supervisory Period	5% of hours	7.5% of hours	10% of hours
Course Grade	N/A	Official documentation reflecting a passing grade (C or better) in all Verified Experience courses	

# EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

## BCaBA

	Supervised Independent Fieldwork	Practicum	Intensive Practicum
Experience Hours Required to Qualify	1000	670	500
Experience Hours per Supervisory Period	min of 20 hrs. - max of 130 hrs.		
Supervisory Period	1 calendar month		
Minimum Number of Supervisor-Trainee Contacts per Supervisory Period	2 contacts	4 contacts	8 contacts
Observations of Trainee with Client per Supervisory Period	2 observations	4 observations	4 observations
Supervision Hours per Supervisory Period	5% of hours	7.5% of hours	10% of hours
Course Grade	N/A	Official documentation reflecting a passing grade (C or better) in all Verified Experience courses	

**Combination of Experience Types.** Trainees may accrue hours in a single category or may combine any of the types above to meet the experience requirement, with experience hours for Practicum having 1½ times the temporal value of Supervised Independent Fieldwork, and experience hours for Intensive Practicum having 2 times the temporal value of Supervised Independent Fieldwork. Trainees must meet all other supervision requirements independently for each experience type. For example, the required percentage of supervision, number of observations, and number of contacts must be met independently for each experience type.

**Accrual of Experience.** No fewer than 20 hours but no more than 130 hours of experience may be accrued per month. Experience hours include independent hours (supervisor not present) and supervised hours (supervisor present).

**Partial Months.** Some experience requirements (e.g., number of contacts) may need to be prorated in instances where a trainee does not work a full calendar month (e.g., 4 contacts were required but only 2 weeks of experience were accrued within the month). The BACB does not provide formulas for prorating every instance where there may be a deviation in the calculation of the supervisory period. Instead, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to determine how best to prorate the experience. In the event of an audit, the BACB will require evidence of how the supervisor prorated the experience (and all associated requirements) to ensure the partial experience was compliant with these standards.

**Clients.** Any person (or groups of people) for whom behavior-analytic services are appropriate may be a client. However, the trainee may not be related to the client, be the client's primary caregiver, or be related to the client's primary caregiver. Trainees must work with, be observed with, and receive feedback from their supervisor about more than a single client during the experience.

# EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

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**Acceptable Activities.** The trainee's primary focus should be on acquiring the skills necessary to demonstrate competence of relevant tasks on the applicable [BCBA/BCaBA Task List](#) and the skills necessary to interact effectively with consumers, supervisors, families, and others.

The supervisor will be responsible for determining whether activities qualify for accruing experience hours consistent with the standards in this document.

Trainees are strongly encouraged to have multiple experiences (e.g., different settings, populations) with multiple supervisors and from each of the areas of activity below:

- Conducting assessments related to the need for behavioral intervention (e.g., stimulus preference assessment, functional assessment, staff performance assessment) or for evaluating behavioral interventions
- Designing, implementing, and systematically monitoring skill-acquisition and behavior-reduction programs
- Writing behavior/treatment plans, progress summaries, clinical notes, transition summaries, and professional correspondence
- Overseeing the implementation of behavior-analytic programs by others
- Training others, designing behavioral systems, and performance management
- Communicating and collaborating effectively with caregivers and other professionals
- Other activities normally performed by a behavior analyst that are directly related to behavior analysis such as attending planning meetings regarding the behavior-analytic program and researching the literature that is relevant to a current client's programming

**Restricted Activities.** There is a restriction on the delivery of therapeutic and instructional procedures to ensure that experiences include the development and design of programs and systems for others to implement. Restricted activities may comprise no more than 50% of the total experience hours (i.e., not individual supervisory periods). Please note that this restriction does not necessarily refer to all time spent working with clients (see Unrestricted Activities below).

**Unrestricted Activities.** Activities that are unrestricted are those that best exemplify the work of a behavior analyst who develops programs and systems for others to implement. Unrestricted activities must comprise *at least* 50% of the total experience hours (i.e., not individual supervisory periods). Examples of unrestricted activities include (but are not limited to):

- Observation and data collection
- Training staff and caregivers on behavior-analytic programs or content
- Conducting assessments related to the need for behavioral intervention
- Meeting with clients about behavior-analytic programming and services
- Conducting behavior-analytic assessments (e.g., functional analyses, stimulus preference assessments)
- Data graphing and analysis
- Researching the literature relevant to a current client's programming
- Writing and revising behavior-analytic programs

# EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

**Unacceptable Activities.** Only behavior-analytic activities may be counted toward experience requirements. Non-behavior-analytic activities, while valuable, may not be counted. Examples of activities that will not count as experience include (but are not limited to):

- Attending meetings with little or no behavior-analytic content
- Providing interventions that are not based in behavior analysis
- Performing nonbehavioral administrative activities
- Non-behavior-analytic trainings related to service delivery (e.g., crisis management, CPR, billing systems)
- Completing nonbehavioral assessments (e.g., diagnostic assessments, intellectual assessments), paperwork, documentation, billing, or any other activities that are not directly related to behavior analysis
- Attending professional conferences, workshops, or university courses
- Didactic-course assignments

## Documentation of Ongoing Supervision and Experience

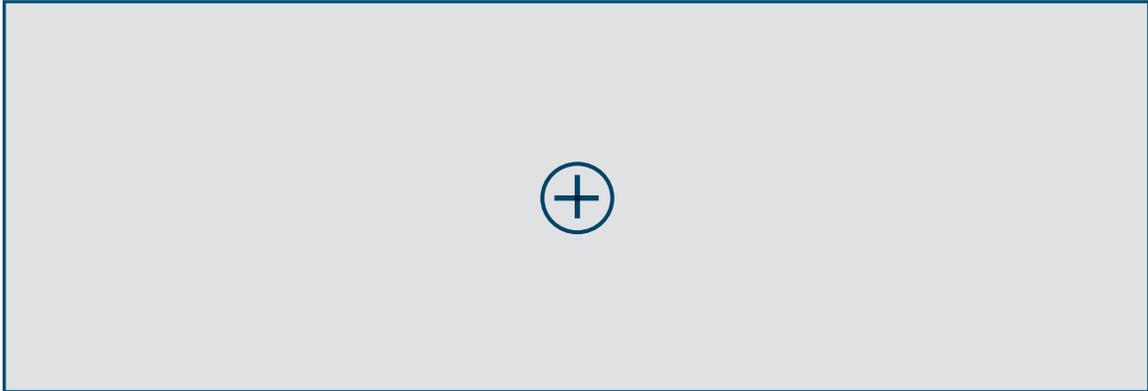
**Unique Documentation System.** Because experience varies across settings and practice areas, the BACB is granting supervisors and trainees the flexibility to develop their own system for documenting ongoing supervision and experience in a way that demonstrates adherence to all the standards in this document and the Code. Documentation must include the following:

Independent Hours	Supervised Hours
<p><i>For each session, document:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date</li> <li>• Start Time</li> <li>• End Time</li> <li>• Experience Type</li> <li>• Setting Name</li> <li>• Supervisor Name</li> <li>• Activity Category: Restricted or Unrestricted</li> </ul>	<p><i>For each contact, document:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date</li> <li>• Start Time</li> <li>• End Time</li> <li>• Format (e.g., in person, online)</li> <li>• Experience Type</li> <li>• Supervision Type: Individual or Group</li> <li>• Activity Category: Restricted or Unrestricted (when supervision involves observing the trainee in an activity as opposed to a meeting)</li> <li>• Summary of Supervision Activity</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><i>For each supervisory period, document:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total Hours of Individual and Group Supervision</li> <li>• Total Number of Contacts</li> <li>• Total Number of Observations of the Trainee with Clients</li> </ul>

# EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

**Experience Forms.** Supervisors and trainees are required to use two forms to document experience:

- Monthly Experience Verification Form (M-EVF) — must be submitted upon request
- Final Experience Verification Form (F-EVF) — must be submitted in the application



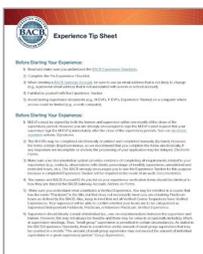
Two versions of each form are available and should be selected based upon the supervisory structure (i.e., one individual supervisor; multiple supervisors at one organization). Non-BACB forms will not be accepted.

These documents be signed in accordance with the [Acceptable Signatures Policy](#). The M-EVF must be signed by the last day of the calendar month following the month of supervision and we recommend that the F-EVF be signed at the end of a supervisory experience. Both parties must retain a copy of completed experience forms for at least 7 years.

## Optional Resources

**Pre-Experience Checklist.** The Pre-Experience Checklist provides guidance on important tasks that should be completed prior to beginning an experience. The BACB strongly encourages the trainee to complete this checklist and share it with the responsible supervisor at each experience setting.

**Experience Tracker.** The Experience Tracker allows the trainee to enter their experience and supervision hours to assess whether experience requirements are being met.



**Experience Tip Sheet.** The Experience Tip Sheet provides a quick-reference guide for documenting and completing the trainee experience.

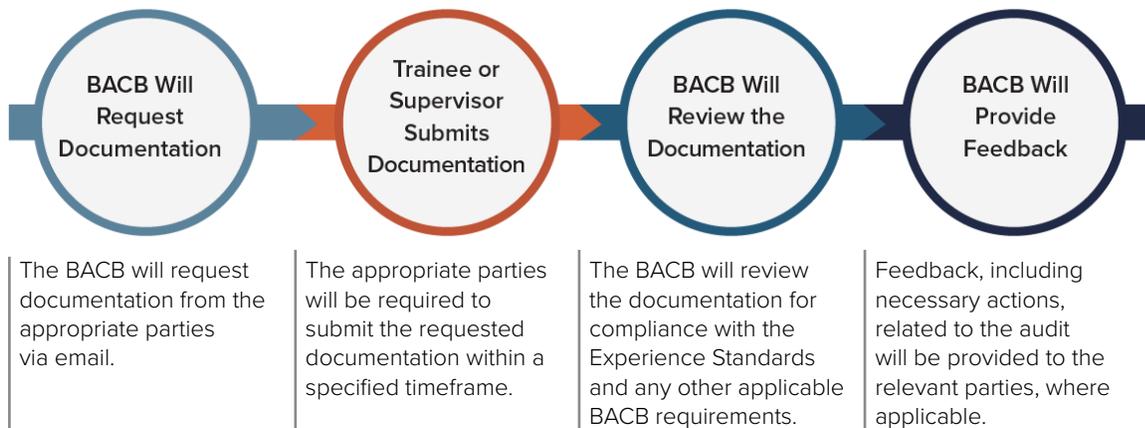
## Experience Audits

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. **Any experience that is not in compliance with the Experience Standards will be disqualified.** Information or documentation may be requested from the trainee or the supervisor during this process. Examples of when an audit may be performed include (but are not limited to):

- Ongoing quality assurance audits
- [Administrative appeals](#) related to experience
- [Disciplinary matters](#) related to experience

## Audit Process

In the event of an audit:



Note: If the BACB concludes that the experience is not in compliance with the BACB Experience Standards or any other applicable BACB requirements, all or a portion of the experience may be deemed unacceptable.

In the event of an audit, the following documentation may be requested:

- The trainee and supervisor's unique system for documenting experience
- Monthly Experience Verification Forms
- The Experience Tracker

If audited, the relevant party may be required to submit the M-EVFs and the completed Experience Tracker within seven (7) business days. Thus, it is strongly recommended that the trainee complete the Experience Tracker as experience hours are being obtained, rather than entering the data retroactively.

# EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

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## Glossary of Terms

### **Certification Application**

Any initial application for a BACB certification (e.g., BCBA, BCaBA).

### **Client**

Any person (or groups of people) for whom behavior-analytic services are appropriate.

### **Experience**

The applied and supervision activities one engages in as part of the eligibility requirements for attaining a BACB certification.

### **Experience Verification Forms**

The forms used by the supervisor and trainee to document experience hours each month (the Monthly Experience Verification Form) and at the end of the experience (the Final Experience Verification Form). Versions of the forms are provided for individual supervisors as well as organizations with multiple supervisors.

### **Group Supervision**

An interactive supervision meeting that includes no fewer than 2 and no more than 10 trainees. The number of trainees in a group meeting may not exceed 10 at any time, regardless of the number of BCBA's in the meeting.

### **Independent Hours**

Experience hours that are accrued when a supervisor is not present.

### **Responsible Supervisor**

A supervisor that signs a BACB experience form on behalf of an organization where multiple supervisors are providing supervision for one trainee.

### **Restricted Activities**

The delivery of therapeutic or instructional procedures to a client. Note: not all time spent working with a client is considered restricted. For example, a number of unrestricted activities may involve the trainee working directly with a client (see below).

### **Supervisor**

An individual who is qualified as a supervisor (see Supervisor Qualifications) for trainees who are accruing experience hours towards a BACB certification.

### **Supervision Hours**

Experience hours that are accrued when a supervisor is present. These may include restricted or unrestricted activities being observed by a supervisor or individual or group meetings with the supervisor.

### **Trainee**

Any individual accruing experience toward fulfilling eligibility requirements for BCBA or BCaBA certification.

### **Unrestricted Activities**

Activities that best exemplify the work of a behavior analyst who develops programs and systems for others to implement, including conducting assessment procedures, staff training, developing behavior plans, among others.



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