

What Happens at a Board Meeting

Did you know that the North Carolina Psychology Board meetings are largely public affairs?

The Board typically meets in person four times per year. Three of the meetings are typically held in Greensboro, given its central location in the state. One meeting per year is required by statute to be held in Raleigh. Sometimes a meeting may be held in a different location in the state due to the matters being considered at the meeting or due to a disciplinary hearing.

Board meetings are divided between open and closed session business. Open session items comprise the majority of the agenda and members of the public are welcome to attend the open session parts of the meeting. Closed session business is confidential and only open to Board members and staff.

The meetings typically follow a predictable format, with both an open and a closed session component. The open session typically including considering minutes and unfinished business from the previous meeting, new licensure applications that have been reviewed and approved by both a staff member and Board member between meetings are listed for review, approved supervision changes are listed for review, and questions that staff are unable to answer or with which they request assistance from the Board that have come into the Board office between meetings are discussed. The questions cover a great deal of territory, and may include inquiries about patient records and other types of documentation requirements, recommendations that should be made to patients, new programs that agencies plan to offer, concerns about the way that others practice, the practice of professionals in other disciplines that may be encroaching on the practice of psychology as defined by law, and other related issues.

The closed session includes review and discussion of material that is confidential and not subject to public disclosure, including reports on complaints against psychologists that have been investigated and do not require further action, and discussion of specific applicants for licensure. Some of this material will become public record at a later date.

Although it does not happen at every meeting, hearings, when they occur, are usually held during regularly scheduled Board meetings. These hearings allow applicants to present additional evidence, for example, to show why they should be permitted, following the proposed denial of their application, to sit for licensure. For psychologists licensed by the Board who have been sent a statement of charges which alleges potential violations of the Psychology Practice Act and/or the APA Code of Ethics for Psychologist, the Board hears the evidence and determines the outcome of the matter. Board members are not privy to information about the disciplinary cases prior to a hearing so that we can listen to evidence objectively and utilize it to reach fair and impartial decisions.

Please note that the open session portion of Board meetings is not the same as an open forum. The public is welcome to observe the open session, but not participate. There is no discussion with the public at an open meeting, but psychologists and members of the public who have a particular issue to discuss are welcome to submit information and make a request for time on the agenda for the Board to consider.

If you wish to attend a Board meeting, you can find a schedule at the following link - <http://www.ncpsychologyboard.org/important-dates/>. As meeting locations are subject to change, you can find information about specific meeting times and locations by contacting the Board office at info@ncpsychologyboard.org.