

## Board of Counseling

### Summary of Public Comment on Regulations

#### 18VAC115-80-10 et seq. Regulations Governing Registration of Qualified Mental Health Professionals

Proposed regulations to replace emergency regulations were published on February 4, 2019 with comment requested until April 5, 2019. A public hearing was conducted on February 8, 2019.

The following comment was received at the public hearing:

Commenters	Comment
Dianne Simons Joni Watlings	Requested that proposed regulations be amended to allow a person to qualify for registration as a QMHP-A or QMHP-C if he/she holds licensure as an occupational therapist by the Board of Medicine with a master's or doctoral degree, and an internship or practicum of at least 500 hours with persons with mental illness or one year of experience in a mental health setting.
Judith Coleman	Commented that she had been registered as a QMHP by the Board, but in a recent audit, DBHDS cited her agency because she did not have the proper degree.

The following comments were received by email or posted on the Virginia Regulatory Townhall:

Commenters	Comment
81 persons	Requested that proposed regulations be amended to allow a person to qualify for registration as a QMHP-A or QMHP-C if he/she holds licensure as an occupational therapist by the Board of Medicine with a master's or doctoral degree, and an internship or practicum of at least 500 hours with persons with mental illness or one year of experience in a mental health setting.
5 persons	Requested generally that the hours of mental health experience be reduced for occupational therapists
6 persons	Commented that requirement for supervision of a trainee by a licensed mental health professional was too burdensome and will result in a reduction in the supply of QMHPs. Several suggested the Board should allow a QMHP with experience (one commenter recommended four years) to supervise a QMHP trainee.
3 persons	Commented that all graduates with human services degrees should have the same requirements for 500 hours of experience. (Proposed regulations specify 500 hours for degrees in specific to mental health, such as psychology, but 1,500 hours of experience for other "human services" degrees). One person also expressed concern about the requirement that the hours of experience be within the preceding five years prior to applying for registration.

One person	Commented that sociology should be accepted as a human services degree
One person	Questioned how the Board can monitor the level of supervision specified for training of person qualifying as a QMHP-A or QMHP-C since there is discretion on the part of the supervisor whether the training must be on-site.
Virginia Chapter, National Association of Social Workers	Amend regulation to state that the activities of a QMHP are within the scope of practice of a social worker licensed by the Board of Social Work and such licensure qualifies them for registration as a QMHP.

Comments will be considered at the Regulatory Committee of the Board on May 30, 2019; the Committee will make recommendations to the full Board for adoption of final regulations on May 31, 2019.