



# Avoiding Common Pitfalls in Supervision: Legal and Ethical Considerations

Peter Wilson, EdD &  
Susan Lahey, PhD



# Our Concerns

- In attending licensure board meetings several problematic issues related to the supervisor/supervisee relationship has surfaced. Our goal is to address these concerns directly to those of you who are supervisors for those post-master applicants pursuing licensure.

# Objectives

1. Stress the importance of supervisors to **closely** monitor supervisees.
2. Inform supervisors of **common pitfalls that supervisors can make** in their work as supervisors.
3. Provide a **greater understanding of the statutes and rules** governing the supervision of post-master's applicants for LPC-MHSP licensure.



# Objective One

Stress the importance of supervisors to closely monitor supervisees.

# Scenario #1

- You recently agreed to supervise a post-master's graduate seeking to obtain their required 3,000 hours. The recent graduate applied for their temporary license and is in the process of setting up their practice. They are renting space from a licensed psychologist who has agreed to do some group supervision with the applicant as a supplement to your weekly individual supervision. As the supervisor of this post-master's graduate, do you have any concerns?





# Scenario #2

You recently agreed to supervise a post-master's graduate seeking to obtain their required 3,000 hours. The applicant graduated seven years ago. Immediately after graduating they started seeing clients in an agency setting where supervision was provided. During the first year after graduating, they saw clients and accumulated 1,234 hours of which 900 were in direct contact with clients. After a year of working in the agency the applicant decided to take a break from working in the field due to an aging family member who required significant care. The break from practice lasted longer than expected. The applicant is now ready to accumulate the balance of the required hours.

# Scenario #2 (Cont.)

- The applicant tells you that they lack 1,766 overall hours of which 600 need to be in direct contact with clients. You are pleased to see that the previous supervise signed off on the hours accumulated during the year after graduating and agree to work with this supervisee.



# Scenario #3

- You have been supervising an applicant pursuing licensure as an LPC-MHSP. You have been meeting the applicant regularly over the past three years. In a recent supervision session, the applicant informs you that they are nearing the required post-master hours as well as the required supervision hours and that they will be filling out the required LPC VERIFICATION OF SUPERVISED POST-MASTERS EXPERIENCE form for you to sign. You are surprised that the supervisee is that close to completing their hours, but you admit you have done a poor job in documenting these hours yourself.





# Scenario #3 (Cont.)

- You assumed that the supervisee was maintaining their hours although it had been several months since the supervisee had asked you to sign off on their hours. Without evidence to the contrary, you agreed to sign off on the hours since you know the supervisee to be an honest person.



# Objective Two

Inform supervisors of common pitfalls that supervisors can make in their work as supervisors.

# Scenario #4

- You have had your LPC-MHSP for ten years. After five years of being licensed you went through the process of becoming an approved supervisor. You did this by completing a two-day, twelve-hour training on clinical supervision. You have mentored several applicants since becoming an approved supervisor. A recent graduate of a CMHC program, heard from others that you are an excellent supervisor and has contacted you about your availability to supervise them. The supervisee has checked the licensure verification link on the board's website and sees that you are designated as an approved supervisor.

# Scenario #4 (Cont.)

- Before signing the supervisor/supervisee contract you provide, the potential supervisee has a final request. The request is for you to provide documentation that you have been receiving the required three hours of CE training every two years required of an approved supervisor. You have never been asked for that kind of documentation in the past. How do you feel about the request and what do you do?



# Scenario #5

- You have been supervising an applicant pursuing licensure as an LPC-MHSP. You have been meeting the applicant regularly, maintaining good documentation of the supervisee's hours and of your supervision hours. The supervisee provides you with the LPC VERIFICATION OF SUPERVISED POST-MASTERS EXPERIENCE form. To make it easier for you, the supervisee fills out the form. All you need to do is look it over and sign it. On the surface everything looks good with the hours reported, but after the form is submitted to the board, the supervisee realizes that the hour total is incorrect. With your permission, the supervisee sends to

# Scenario #5 (Cont.)

- the board the original form with the correct, updated hours, striking through the incorrect hours and placing their initials where the correction was made.





# Objective Three

Provide a greater understanding of the statutes and rules governing the supervision of post-master's applicants for LPC-MHSP licensure.



# Summary

It is a privilege to supervise applicants pursuing licensure as LPC-MHSPs. Supervisees keep us mentally sharp and growing. It is serious business, however, and supervisees deserve supervisors who are knowledgeable of what is expected of applicants and willing to ask the hard questions.



# Thank You

