**PsyPACT: How FPA got it Across the Finish Line**

A legislative effort that began in 2018 is now reality. Many of you may be wondering “what took so long?” To help with that understanding, I want to share with you what the process entails:

* Finding the right House and Senate sponsors- these are legislators who have the desire, ability, and power to get things done- and hopefully aren’t term limited before you get your legislation passed.
* Gaining the support of House and Senate leadership- this includes six committee chairs and the leaders of the House and Senate (which all change every 2 years) and the Governor.
* Assuring the legislation: (1) is drafted identically in the House and Senate: (2) follows the model language required by PsyPACT; and (3) has language that remains consistent in the House and Senate versions.
* Educating legislators and the Governor’s office on why PsyPACT is important for patient care continuity and how Florida standards are maintained
* Shepherding the bill through three House Committees and three Senate committees in a 2-month session. This requires constant contact with the Chairs of each of these committees.
* Lining up supporters for the legislation and making sure they are at the committee hearings, along with a representative of FPA.
* Developing strategy and actions to assure bills are heard and passed.
* Avoiding being lost in the process when other bills are more of a priority (which happened in 2022)

None of this happens with volunteers, staff, and financial resources.

FPA’s Legislative Advocacy and Public Policy Board (LAPPB) not only sets the legislative agenda, but works in concert with FPA staff and the contracted lobbyist to manage the annual FPA lobby day at the Capitol and sets strategy to help passage. The LAPPB meets weekly on Sunday afternoons in the weeks leading up to and through the legislative session.

FPA staff organize FPA lobby day, create lobby day materials (including legislator fact sheets and member training materials), attends legislative hearings to assure FPA’s voice is heard, drafts and sends out advocacy alerts, and then assures implementation of the legislation goes smoothly. Staff also educate the Board of Psychology, so they have an opportunity to weigh in on the legislation.

Financially, FPA and the Psychologists of Florida PAC have, over the years, spent in excess of $100,000 on the effort to pass PsyPACT including lobbying fees, staff time, printed materials, annual lobby day expenses, strategic political contributions, and communications to all of you. This doesn’t include the hours of member volunteer time. While all Florida psychologists receive the benefit of these efforts, only the members of FPA and contributed to the PAC (wh0 currently are all members of FPA) incur the expense.

**What’s next?**

Legislation allowing Florida psychologists to participate in [PsyPACT](https://psypact.org/) will be effective on 7/1/23. Florida psychologists may begin the process of applying to practice through PsyPACT at any time- but cannot start practicing until 7/1/23. Please note that psychologists are only able to practice in [OTHER PSYPACT STATES](https://psypact.org/mpage/psypactmap)- not all states.

To help facilitate the process, FPA will be offering a webinar with PsyPACT Executive Director, Janet Orwig, on June 23rd from 1-3 PM. This webinar will be free to all FPA members and open to non-members for a fee of $50. Go to [CE Events](https://flapsych.com/events) for details.

Why not [become an FPA member](https://flapsych.com/prospective-members) NOW and get this (and many other) CE for free! We are one of the few state psychological associations that rarely charge members fees for CEs! Become a part of an organization that protects psychologists’ professional interests here in Florida.

We also encourage you to [donate to the Psychologists of Florida PAC](https://flapsych.com/advocacy)- you need not be an FPA member to do so.