



## Support HB 1017

Representative Michaelson Jenet and Representative Landgraf  
 Senator Gardner and Senator Fenberg

### Overview

In February 2015, the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Board of Directors approved the creation of a Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) to facilitate telehealth and temporary in-person, face-to-face practice of psychology across state boundaries. The board created the compact to help increase access to mental health services, especially in rural areas, and to ensure in our increasingly mobile society, psychologist and their clients are able to maintain continuity of care despite being temporarily or permanently outside the state boundaries.

### What This Bill Does?

HB 1017 authorizes Colorado to join PSYPACT as founding member. Psychologists who practice under PSYPACT will be eligible to obtain an E.Passport Certificate for telepsychology as well as an Interjurisdictional Practice Certificate (IPC) for temporary in-person, face-to-face practice. Psychologists with an E.Passport are not only required to meet licensing standards but also required to be knowledgeable of the best practice standards for electronic delivery of care, which is consistent with current policy in Colorado regarding distance therapy. PSYPACT states will communicate and exchange information including verification of licensure and disciplinary sanctions. In the event a consumer complaint is filed against a Colorado psychologist, the Board of Psychologist Examiners will consider the complaint and take appropriate action.

### The Benefits of PSYPACT

Telehealth is being utilized more as a method to reach underserved and unserved areas of our state including rural populations who need access to mental health services. Joining PSYPACT will not only help fill this void but also ensure those delivering telehealth services are abiding by the highest practice standards. Additional benefits of PSYPACT include:

- Assisting with continuity of care when a client relocates or travels
- Provides a mechanism for psychologist to practice electronically across state lines
- Certifies psychologist meet acceptable standards of practice while also reducing regulatory burdens on the profession
- Promotes cooperation and communication between compact states in areas of licensure and consumer complaints while also offering consumers protection when psychological services are provided electronically across state lines

The Colorado Legislature has recognized the importance of telehealth practice by enacting legislation in 2015 expanding coverage for telehealth by requiring health insurers to provide reimbursement for telehealth services at the same level as in-person services in urban as well as rural areas beginning in 2017. PSYPACT is another important step in advancing the practice of telehealth and expanding access to care for Coloradans.

Joining PSYPACT is a win for Colorado psychologists, Colorado consumers, and the geographically isolated areas of Colorado that need more options for mental health delivery of services!

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## Interstate Compacts to Support License Portability

*States are considering licensure compacts for several occupations. Compact drafters are now recognizing military-specific needs as part of the compact provisions.*

**KEY MESSAGE:** Occupational licensure compacts provide consistent rules that allow licensed members to work in other states through “privilege to practice policies” or to more easily transfer their license to a new state. The military provisions added to these compacts assist Service members and their spouses to participate in these occupational compacts.



### DISCUSSION POINTS:

- Professional associations and related licensing boards are considering interstate compacts as a way for states to maintain control while developing processes to support the mobility of licensed professionals.
- The Defense – State Liaison Office (DSLO) is currently assisting the respective national state board and membership associations for physical therapy, nursing, emergency medical services (EMS) and psychology in educating legislators on the benefits of their license compacts to their occupation and to the military community.
- For example these compacts provide the following benefits to members of the military community:
  - The Physical Therapy Licensure Compact (PTLC) allows military spouses to designate a home state for their license and use the “privilege to practice” provision in the compact to work in any other member state without obtaining another license.<sup>1</sup>
  - The Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact (ENLC) allows military spouses to use their state of legal residence as their home state for privilege to practice. When tied to the Military Spouse Residency Relief Act, spouses can maintain one license in one state.
  - The Interstate Compact for EMS (REPLICA) simplifies endorsement requirements for transferring a license.
  - The Interjurisdictional Compact for Psychology (PSYPACT) supports tele-practice and temporary practice (30 days). This provides an opportunity to improve access to mental health services by military families and also allows military spouses who are psychologists to sustain a counseling practice through telecommunications in compact states.
- DSLO intends to work with other occupations to ensure provisions such as those found in PTLC are included. DSLO has been invited to participate in the drafting of the Speech, Language and Hearing Licensure Compact.

An increasing number of occupations are exploring the potential of establishing interstate compacts to support:

- Common understanding of standards.
- Mechanisms for states to share authority and responsibility to oversee occupational practice.
- “Privilege to practice” policies that allow members in compact states to work in other compact states.
- Improved methods for allowing endorsements when members need to transfer a license, primarily based upon changing legal residence.
- Tele-practice opportunities using technology to work across state boundaries.

<sup>1</sup> As part of the privilege to practice provision, states have the option of charging a fee and requesting licensees comply with state jurisprudence requirements.