

# Jesse Brown VA Medical Center

## Clinical Psychology Internship Application Process

PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS MAY CHANGE AT ANY TIME ACCORDING TO CHANGES IN VA OR APPIC POLICIES, NMS PROCEDURES, OR LOCALLY AVAILABLE RESOURCES. REFER BACK TO THE TRAINING PROGRAM WEBSITE HOSTED BY VA OR THE SITE'S PAGE IN THE APPIC DIRECTORY FOR THE MOST RECENT UPDATES.

### Qualifications/Eligibility

#### **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR VA HEALTH PROFESSIONS TRAINEE PROGRAMS**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) adheres to all Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action policies. As a Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Health Professions Trainee (HPT), you will receive a Federal appointment, and the following requirements will apply prior to that appointment

1. **U.S. Citizenship.** HPTs who receive a direct stipend (pay) must be U.S. citizens. Trainees who are not VA paid (without compensation-WOC) who are not U.S. citizens may be appointed and must provide current immigrant, non-immigrant or exchange visitor documents.
2. **U.S. Social Security Number.** All VA appointees must have a U.S. social security number (SSN) prior to beginning the pre-employment, on-boarding process at the VA.
3. **Selective Service Registration.** Male applicants born after 12/31/1959 must have registered for the Selective Service by age 26 to be eligible for U.S. government employment, including selection as a paid or WOC VA trainee. For additional information about the Selective Service System, and to register or to check your registration status visit <https://www.sss.gov/>. Anyone who was required to register but did not register before the age of 26 will need to apply for a Status Information Letter (SIL) and request a waiver. Waivers are rare and requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the VA Office of Human Resources Management. This process can take up to six months for a verdict.
4. **Fingerprint Screening and Background Investigation.** All HPTs will be fingerprinted and undergo screenings and background investigations. Additional details about the required background checks can be found at the following website: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/10450.html>.
5. **Drug Testing.** Per Executive Order 12564, the VA strives to be a Drug-Free Workplace. HPTs are not drug-tested prior to appointment, however are subject to

random drug testing throughout the entire VA appointment period. You will be asked to sign an acknowledgement form stating you are aware of this practice. See item 8 below.

6. **Affiliation Agreement.** To ensure shared responsibility between an academic program and the VA there must be a current and fully executed Academic Affiliation Agreement on file with the VHA Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA). The affiliation agreement delineates the duties of VA and the affiliated institution. Most APA-accredited doctoral programs have an agreement on file. More information about this document can be found at <https://www.va.gov/oaa/agreements.asp> (see section on psychology internships). Post-degree programs typically will not have an affiliation agreement, as the HPT is no longer enrolled in an academic program and the program is VA sponsored.
7. **TQCVL.** To streamline on-boarding of HPTs, VHA Office of Academic Affiliations requires completion of a Trainee Qualifications and Credentials Verification Letter (TQCVL). An Educational Official at the Affiliate must complete and sign this letter. For post-graduate programs where an affiliate is not the program sponsor, this process must be completed by the VA Training Director. Your VA appointment cannot happen until the TQCVL is submitted and signed by senior leadership from the VA facility. For more information about this document, please visit <https://www.va.gov/OAA/TQCVL.asp>
  - a. **Health Requirements.** Among other things, the TQCVL confirms that you, the trainee, are fit to perform the essential functions (physical and mental) of the training program and immunized following current Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and VHA policy. This protects you, other employees and patients while working in a healthcare facility. Required are annual tuberculosis screening, Hepatitis B vaccine as well as annual influenza vaccine. *Declinations are EXTREMELY rare.* If you decline the flu vaccine you will be required to wear a mask while in patient care areas of the VA.
  - b. **Primary source verification of all prior education and training** is certified via the TQCVL. Training and Program Directors will be contacting the appropriate institutions to ensure you have the appropriate qualifications and credentials as required by the admission criteria of the training program in which you are enrolled.
8. **Additional On-boarding Forms.** Additional pre-employment forms include the Application for Health Professions Trainees (VA 10-2850D) and the Declaration for Federal Employment (OF 306). These documents and others are available online for review at <https://www.va.gov/oaa/app-forms.asp>. Falsifying any answer on these required Federal documents will result in the inability to appoint or immediate dismissal from the training program.
9. **Proof of Identity per VA.** VA on-boarding requires presentation of two source documents (IDs). Documents must be unexpired and names on both documents must match. For more information visit: <https://www.oit.va.gov/programs/piv/media/docs/IDMatrix.pdf>

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**  
**(WITH HYPERLINKS)**

- Trainees receive term employee appointments and must meet eligibility requirements for appointment as outlined in VA Handbook 5005 Staffing, Part II, Section B. Appointment Requirements and Determinations.  
[https://www.va.gov/vapubs/viewPublication.asp?Pub\\_ID=646&FType=2](https://www.va.gov/vapubs/viewPublication.asp?Pub_ID=646&FType=2)
- Selective Service website where the requirements, benefits and penalties of registering vs. not registering are outlined: <https://www.sss.gov/Registration/Why-Register/Benefits-and-Penalties>

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SPECIFIC SUITABILITY INFORMATION**  
**FROM TITLE 5 (REFERENCED IN VHA HANDBOOK 5005 –**  
**HYPERLINKS INCLUDED):**

(b) *Specific factors.* In determining whether a person is suitable for Federal employment, only the following factors will be considered a basis for finding a person unsuitable and taking a suitability action:

- (1) Misconduct or negligence in employment;
- (2) Criminal or dishonest conduct;
- (3) Material, intentional false statement, or deception or fraud in examination or appointment;
- (4) Refusal to furnish testimony as required by § 5.4 of this chapter;
- (5) Alcohol abuse, without evidence of substantial rehabilitation, of a nature and duration that suggests that the applicant or appointee would be prevented from performing the duties of the position in question, or would constitute a direct threat to the property or safety of the applicant or appointee or others;
- (6) Illegal use of narcotics, drugs, or other controlled substances without evidence of substantial rehabilitation;
- (7) Knowing and willful engagement in acts or activities designed to overthrow the U.S. Government by force; and
- (8) Any statutory or regulatory bar which prevents the lawful employment of the person involved in the position in question.

(c) *Additional considerations.* OPM and agencies must consider any of the following additional considerations to the extent OPM or the relevant agency, in its sole discretion, deems any of them pertinent to the individual case:

- (1) The nature of the position for which the person is applying or in which the person is employed;
- (2) The nature and seriousness of the conduct;
- (3) The circumstances surrounding the conduct;
- (4) The recency of the conduct;
- (5) The age of the person involved at the time of the conduct;
- (6) Contributing societal conditions; and
- (7) The absence or presence of rehabilitation or efforts toward rehabilitation.

### **ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP**

An internship applicant also must meet these criteria to be considered for this VA Psychology Internship Program:

1. Be a doctoral student in good standing at an APA-accredited graduate program in clinical or counseling psychology. Persons with a doctorate in another area of psychology who meet the APA criteria for respecialization training in clinical or counseling psychology are also eligible.
2. Be approved for internship status by their graduate program training director.

## Application Instructions

The application deadline is **11:59 p.m. Central Time on November 1, 2020**. Jesse Brown VAMC is an APPIC member program and thus uses the AAPI Online service for internship applications. Please see <http://appic.org/> for information. Your completed AAPI Online must be received by the date listed above for your application to be considered.

Please do not call or email to check on the status of your application if the invitation date for interviews has not yet passed. It takes us a while to get all of the information collated, organized, and reviewed. The AAPI Online service will be considered authoritative on whether your application was submitted on time with the correct documentation.

Ask for letters of reference and order transcripts well before the above deadline to ensure prompt arrival.

Please have all materials sent via the AAPI Online service to the attention of our director of training (see contact information below). If there is any confusion about what to send to our site via this system, simply follow the suggested APPIC guidelines.

If you have specific questions about the online system as it applies to our setting, feel free to email the Director of Training at [VHACHSPsychologyTraining@va.gov](mailto:VHACHSPsychologyTraining@va.gov).

Below are the match codes that will be used during the 2020-2021 match year process. Please ensure that these codes are used during the National Matching Services ranking procedure to ensure that you are ranking the correct program. **Additionally, when submitting your AAPI Online, please ensure that you indicate for which track(s) you would like your application considered, both in the AAPI's track designation and within the cover letter. Applications will not be considered for any track not so designated.**

126811 – GENERAL INTERNSHIP  
126812 – NEUROPSYCHOLOGY  
126813 – HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY  
126814 – ACUTE CRISIS INTERVENTION

## **Selection Procedures**

Each application is reviewed by at least two psychologists involved in our training program. All applications are reviewed by at least one individual associated with the track for which the applicant is applying. All of the application materials are considered important by the reviewers, who have the sole responsibility for selecting who is interviewed. Applicants who are offered interviews will be called or emailed on Friday, December 11, 2020. Please do not call to check on your interview status before the end of that day (i.e., 11:59 p.m.).

All VA psychology internship programs are members of (or are in the process of applying for membership in) the Association of Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and agree to follow APPIC and the National Matching Service's policies and procedures regarding internship selection and the match process. No person at VA internship programs will solicit, accept, or use any ranking-related information from any intern applicant.

All applicants must submit the APPIC Application for Psychology Internship (AAPI) as per APPIC procedures. The Application Checklist below lists the necessary materials to include in the AAPI beyond the standard application form. Any clinical work samples that are included must be de-identified of client or patient identifying information.

Please consult the description of the Jesse Brown VAMC Psychology Internship Program in the APPIC directory for details related to the interview process. For Phase I applicants, in-person interviews are mandatory.

## **Nondiscrimination Policy**

The JBVAMC Psychology Internship abides by APPIC's policy on nondiscrimination: "Training agencies have practices which are nondiscriminatory in regard to race/ethnic background, gender, age, sexual orientation, lifestyle, and disabilities." We also adhere to Federal Executive Order 13160, "Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Race, Sex, Color, National Origin, Disability, Religion, Age, Sexual Orientation, and Status as a Parent in Federally Conducted Education and Training Programs." In addition to abiding by these non-discrimination policies, the Psychology Internship Program strongly seeks and values individuals with diverse experiences and backgrounds as the foundation of a rich training environment. Our program emphasizes respect for trainees, staff members, and patients representing all forms of diversity, and prohibits discrimination based on the aforementioned identities as well as gender identity, marital status, socioeconomic status, Veteran status, indigenous heritage, and political affiliation. All applicants are entitled to equal treatment in the selection process and freedom from discrimination and harassment. Our training program seeks to obtain an intern class that represents diverse identities,

while selecting the most qualified candidates. Individuals with minoritized identities are strongly encouraged to apply. Jesse Brown VA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and our training program follows all institutional guidelines in this regard.

## **Application Checklist**

- AAPI Online for Psychology Internship available through [www.appic.org](http://www.appic.org). Please complete the application in full, even though your vita may furnish some of the information.
- Your Curriculum Vita—via the AAPI Online service
- Graduate Transcripts—via the AAPI Online service  
Official copies of graduate transcripts from all institutions attended for at least 2 semesters
- Letters of reference—via the AAPI Online service  
Three letters of reference are required. At least two of these letters must be from clinical supervisors. The other letter may be from a clinical supervisor or a faculty member of your graduate program.
- De-identified neuropsychology sample report (optional but encouraged)—via the AAPI Online service, for Neuropsychology specialty track applicants only

## **Characteristics of a Good Match**

Applicants often ask what the characteristics of a good match are with our site. In addition to the typical factors evaluated by most sites (graduate grades, honors, letters of recommendation, etc.) there are some characteristics of a good match to Jesse Brown VA. Please note that these characteristics are not uniformly to be considered “requirements,” but are merely guidelines designed for helping potential applicants determine if they might find our program to be a good fit for their experiences and qualifications.

- Three or more practica or other clinical experiences, with at least one of the practica focusing on psychological or neuropsychological testing, or the applicant should have significant testing or interviewing experiences in 2 or more practica
- Over 1500 practicum hours
- Dissertation is proposed, with a reasonable plan in place for completing data collection by late August of the internship year
- Substantial, if not most, clinical experience with adults
- Demonstrated interest (obvious through the applicant’s clinical and/or research experience) in at least one major clinical training area available at JBVAMC
- Clinical and/or research experience in working with disadvantaged populations
- Clinical and/or research experience with racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations
- Clinical experience and coursework appropriate for the track of interest
- Adequate experience in administration of MMPI-2, MCMI-III and WAIS-III or IV

- Adequate experience in writing psychological testing reports, preferably with at least 10 integrated adult reports for General Track applicants

## **Program Point of Contact**

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