



*Freda Reid, President*  
*Mary Alice Myers, President-Elect*  
*Patti Vickers, Secretary*  
*Scott Larson, Treasurer*

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## **Florida Association of School Psychologists Guidelines for Dual Practitioners**

The provision of school psychological services in the private sector significantly increases the autonomy of the school psychologist while expanding role diversity and providing additional opportunities to benefit students and families. The opportunity to engage in private practice potentially attracts new students to the field, thereby helping to address the growing shortage of school psychologists. However, school psychologists may face a higher potential for ethical conflicts in dual employment settings. Practice parameters for licensed school psychologists are clearly addressed in the Florida Statutes. One section of this chapter (490.0121) indicates that licensed school psychologists employed by a school district can also provide services in the private sector if the following conditions are met:

- (1) The parent, guardian, or adult client is informed in writing prior to provision of services of their eligibility for such free services from the school district.
- (2) The client is not a student of the schools to which the school psychologist is currently assigned.
- (3) The parent, guardian, or adult client is informed that, as a dual practitioner, the school psychologist may not function as an independent evaluator.
- (4) The school psychologist does not promise 24-hour service or on-call services and does not engage in private practice during the hours of contracted employment.
- (5) The school psychologist does not use his or her position within a school district to offer private services or to promote a private practice.
- (6) The school psychologist does not utilize tests, materials, or services belonging to the school district.

The Florida Association of School Psychologists also endorses the following guidelines to help avoid ethical concerns and “conflict of interest” issues:

- (1) Dual practitioners should inform their supervisor in writing regarding their establishment of a private practice or their maintenance of a private practice whenever they have a new supervisor. This document should contain information regarding the location of the private practice, affiliation with other mental health providers, the anticipated client base, and scope of service provision (e.g.: assessment, consultation, counseling). This written notice should be updated annually.
- (2) While each school district is encouraged to develop a list of community based mental health providers, any preference towards specific private practitioners should be avoided. Further, dual practitioners may not actively solicit referrals from school system employees within their district (e.g., other public school psychologists, guidance counselors, social workers, teacher, school nurses, etc.).
- (3) Each dual practitioner should develop a “Notice of Availability” form to document the full disclosure of school system services that may be available to the parent, guardian, or adult client at no cost. (see Appendix A). This signed document should also include components that address the inability of the dual practitioner to serve as an “independent evaluator.” The dual practitioner (subsequent to obtaining written permission to release records) should provide a copy of this document to the client’s school when the practitioner-generated psycho-educational assessment results are being considered by a staffing or Individual Educational Planning Team .
- (4) Dual practitioners should make reasonable efforts to determine whether any previous psychological/psycho-educational evaluations have been completed. If evaluations have occurred, then the practitioner should request all prior evaluation reports.
- (5) In accordance with FASP’s Ethical Guidelines (FASP, 1999), dual practitioners should not enter into any arrangements with school system employees within their district to generate referrals to their private practice (Section V (10)). Nor should they make reciprocal cross-referral arrangements with dual practicing school psychologists from other districts. In addition, dual practicing school psychologists should avoid any activities which give the appearance of impropriety, such as unnecessarily delaying in-school evaluations, accepting referrals from (a) school(s) served by a spouse or other relative, forming multi-practitioner partnerships which appear to be for the purpose of circumventing the prohibition against accepting clients from the schools to which one is currently assigned.

- (6) Dual practitioners should not access school system records (including computer data bases) of private practice clients without securing a written release of records statement from the client's parents/guardian. Further, any records release should proceed through the same process afforded any outside professional, and should not be completed directly by the dual practitioner.
- (7) Dual practitioners should not conduct any private practice activities during the course of scheduled school system employment. Such activities include, but are not limited to, direct contact with private clients, telephone calls related to private practice issues, scoring of assessment instruments, and generating psycho-educational reports.
- (8) The dual practitioner should refer clients to other professionals if situations arise that engender a conflict of interest.
- (9) Supervisors of psychological services, as well as certified and licensed school psychologists, are strongly encouraged to discuss any emerging ethical concerns directly with the involved school psychologist practitioner. If the concerns are not resolved, the concerned party should report any perceived violations to appropriate regulatory agencies.