

# forensic psychology { defined:

## The American Board of Forensic Psychology (ABFP)

originated from a Specialty Certification Study Committee of the American Psychology-Law Society. ABFP was established in 1978 to protect consumers of forensic psychological services by establishing, promoting, and revising the standards and qualifications for those who practice forensic psychology and certifying as specialists in Forensic Psychology those voluntary applicants who qualify under the standards established by the board. The ABFP operates as a specialty of the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP).

## Forensic Psychology

Forensic Psychology is a distinct specialty pertaining to the interface of psychology and the law. The ABFP defines the specialty broadly as the application of the science and profession of psychology to the questions and issues relating to the law and the legal system. Some practice areas include, but are not limited to: Forensic Examination, Treatment/Direct Services, workplace issues, Arbitration and Mediation Services, Consultation, Litigation Support, Research in Forensic Psychology and Teaching in Forensic Psychology.

## Foundation Areas in Forensic Psychology

Research Design, Methodology, and Statistical Analysis applied to forensic areas

Ethical Issues in Assessment, Treatment, Consultation, Research, and Program Evaluation related to forensic issues

Fundamentals of Law

Application of Psychology in Legal Contexts  
Law Affecting Psychological Practice

Testimonial Accuracy

## ABPP Central Office

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## Requirements for Board Certification

Board certification assures the public and the profession that the forensic psychologist specialist has successfully completed the educational, training, and experience requirements of the specialty.

Organizations other than ABFP/ABPP also have been known to offer "Board Certification" or some related designation in the specialty of Forensic Psychology. It is the position of ABFP, however, that certain substantive and procedural elements are necessary to maintain integrity and quality control in a legitimate certification process in a psychological specialty.

## General Eligibility Requirements

To attain ABPP board certification in a specialty an applicant must hold a doctoral degree from a program in professional psychology which, at the time the degree was granted, was accredited by the APA, CPA, or was listed in the publication Doctoral Psychology Programs Meeting Designation Criteria. Applicants credentialed in the most recent directory of the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology or the Canadian Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology qualify as meeting the doctoral degree requirements as well as those holding the Certificate of Professional Qualification in Psychology (CPQ).

All ABPP candidates in the U.S., its territories or Canada must be licensed as a psychologist for independent practice at the doctoral level in a jurisdiction in the U.S., its territories or Canada.

## Specialty Specific Eligibility Requirements

At least 100 hours of formal education, direct supervision or continuing education in forensic psychology; and

At least 1000 hours of experience in forensic psychology obtained by (a) completion of a full-time [at least one year] formal postdoctoral training program in forensic psychology, approved by ABFP, OR (b) practice over a minimum period of four post-doctoral years.

*"As someone who recently completed the board certification process, I can unequivocally state that it was a very enriching process...The process provides you with a sense of validation by your peers and helps the public clearly identify who has met the requirements of certification...When I finished I did not feel like I had passed one test—I felt I had completed a comprehensive process designed to assess my competence. There were anxieties along the way—"what if I fail"—but then I decided I would just take what I learned and build on it to improve myself. I highly suggest going for the boards."*

- Dominic A. Carone, Ph.D, ABPP

## Fees

\$125 fee for application and credential review to establish candidacy.  
\$250 fee for the practice sample review and establishment of the oral examination team.  
\$200 for the written exam. \$450 for the oral examination.

These fees are due sequentially over the time span necessary to complete all of the candidacy and examination steps. Upon granting Board certification a yearly fee of \$185 is assessed to support the many services of the ABPP and the representation of the organization to the public and the profession.