

February 2026 Council Meeting Highlights

The American Psychological Association's Council of Representatives held a hybrid meeting Feb. 20-21, with in-person council members convening in Washington, D.C.

The Council of Representatives (Council) is the legislative body of APA and is the ultimate policymaking body for the association.

Council policies and APA's Council-approved Strategic Plan guide the work of the Association. See highlights from the past year: [When Psychology Leads, the World Benefits](#).

Highlights of the actions of Council at this meeting follow.

ANTISEMITISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

APA President Dr. Wendi Williams: "This weekend, the APA Council of Representatives took actions to address antisemitism directly, while safeguarding academic freedom across our discipline. These actions are part of our ongoing efforts to ensure that the field of psychology is inclusive and welcoming to all. Our membership is diverse and we are stronger as an association because of it. We pledge to continue listening and learning about the experiences of our Jewish members and their allies, and we will not desist from pursuing inclusion of all voices.

To be clear, APA has no tolerance for antisemitism or hate against individuals or groups in any form, and we stand resolute in our commitment to preserving a psychology and an environment that upholds the inherent dignity of all people. As a field, as a community, and as individuals committed to the work, we will always stand for the right of all people to live free of being targeted for who they are."

2026 Resolution on Antisemitism

By a vote of 127-37 with five abstentions, Council adopted as policy a *2026 Resolution on Antisemitism*. The resolution updates the 2007 APA Resolution on Anti-Semitic and Anti-Jewish Prejudice, strengthening APA's policy framework to reflect developments since 2007. The new policy includes a robust set of action items to materially enhance APA's response and education efforts to address the dramatic rise and evolving forms of antisemitism. It incorporates contemporary scholarship, addresses current manifestations of antisemitism, and affirms APA's resolve to ensure that Jewish members can participate fully and safely in the profession.

Proposed APA Ethnic Psychological Association Affiliation with the Association of Jewish Psychologists

Council voted 137-17 to defer to Council's next meeting in August 2026 a decision on APA affiliation with the Association of Jewish Psychologists as a recognized ethnic psychological association.

"The deferral gives council members time for robust discussion and critical deliberation about how best to ensure that all voices are heard and represented and that any action taken would be as effective as possible to address antisemitism," said Dr. Williams.

Reaffirming APA's Commitment to Human Rights and Free Speech

Council voted 146-5 (with three abstentions) to adopt a policy reaffirming APA's commitment to human rights and freedom of expression. The resolution condemns bigotry in all its forms and opposes efforts aimed at silencing or punishing non-violent advocacy directed toward safeguarding human life and upholding human dignity and human rights.

ACCREDITATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

Standards of Accreditation for Programs in Health Service Psychology

Council voted 156-4 (with two abstentions) to adopt as APA policy the revised *Standards of Accreditation for Programs in Health Service Psychology*. The revisions went through three public comment periods to allow input by APA members and other psychologists, as well as the public. In updating its standards, the Commission on Accreditation continues to serve as a leading resource for standards and evidence-informed guidelines in the field of graduate-level psychology education.

Policies for APA Approval of Sponsors of Continuing Education for Psychologists

Council unanimously approved a revision of the *Policies and Procedures Manual for APA Approval of Sponsors of Continuing Education for Psychologists*. The revised manual improves the audit process for annual reports for APA-approved sponsors, eliminates the term "co-sponsorship" but allows for continued collaborations, discontinues draft application reviews, and introduces the "Sponsors with Distinction" designation to recognize sponsors committed to continuous learning. The revised manual will reduce administrative burdens for the sponsors and support the development of high-quality continuing education.

SUPPORT FOR UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES

Integrating Psychological Science into Natural Disaster Response

Council voted to receive a report by an APA presidential task force seated by 2025 APA President Dr. Debra Kawahara on disaster preparedness, response, and recovery that emphasizes the psychological and physical risk natural disasters pose to communities and the role of psychological science in strengthening national disaster resilience.

Based on the findings in the report, Council also adopted (by a vote of 146-1) a policy that calls for a national effort to increase research and partnerships among emergency management agencies, mental health organizations, and community health providers to improve coordination of disaster response efforts.

Expanding Access to Mental Healthcare in Rural Communities

By a vote of 166-0, with one abstention, Council approved a policy to acknowledge the unique challenges faced by rural communities and increase support for policies and adequate funding for programs to increase access to mental health care in rural communities. The new policy also advocates for expanding services to increase safe housing, food access, support for youth in juvenile justice and child protective systems, resources on domestic and intimate partner violence, maternal mental health care, elder abuse prevention and response, and suicide prevention, to help rural communities contend with unique structural and economic disadvantages.

Global Perspectives in Psychology

Recognizing the importance of diverse, global perspectives for a comprehensive understanding of psychology, Council via unanimous consent adopted an updated *2026 Resolution on Promoting Global Perspectives in U.S. Psychology*. The policy calls on psychologists to examine psychological concepts based on U.S. research that are assumed to be universal; encourage assessment, intervention, and education that respects local communities; and promote international partnerships and initiatives to ensure global knowledge sharing.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Promoting Comprehensive Sexual Health Education

Council voted 145-3 (with two abstentions) to update a resolution on sexual health education to promote developmentally appropriate, comprehensive, and inclusive sexual health education. Acknowledging significant changes in technology and an increased

understanding of sexuality and gender diversity, the resolution aims to ensure youth have access to accurate and appropriate sexual health information and to promote inclusion and equity for sexual and gender diverse communities.

Revised Resolution on Palliative Care

Council (via unanimous consent) approved an updated resolution on palliative care and end-of-life issues intended to emphasize the often underutilized but vital role of psychologists in palliative care systems. The *2026 Resolution on Palliative Care and End-of-Life Issues* outlines a framework for implementation that includes developing practice guidelines for palliative and end-of-life care, increasing research and education that supports mental health in palliative and end-of-life care, and endorsing public policies that provide behavioral health services for patients and their caregivers across the lifespan.

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

Update on Executive Leadership

Council voted 129-15 (with two abstentions) to receive a report by March 1, 2026, to assist Council in advising on the executive leadership direction of the association.

Presidential Citations

APA President Wendi Williams, PhD, presented a presidential citation to members of the APA Rural Health Caucus, the Committee on Rural Health, the Division 31 Rural Health Section, and all psychologists leading in advocacy for rural communities, for strengthening rural behavioral health systems by addressing the challenges created by workforce shortages, geographic isolation, and limited infrastructure.

Dr. Williams also presented a presidential citation to members of Division 22 (Rehabilitation Psychology), 25 (Behavior Analysis), and 33 (Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities/Autism Spectrum Disorder), and other psychologists serving patients with autism, their families, and their caregivers. The citation recognizes their profound work to shape our understanding of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and strengthen the support available to autistic individuals, their families, and their communities.

Policies are in the process of being copy-edited before being posted online in the [Council Policy Manual](#). Links to the policies not yet posted will be added to this summary when available.

8:00 p.m. EST, February 21, 2026