



**AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION**

August 2026 Council Meeting Highlights

The American Psychological Association's Council of Representatives met Aug. 4-5 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 Shows Up](#)

Highlights of the actions of Council at this meeting follow.

PROPOSED ETHNIC PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION AFFILIATION WITH THE ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH PSYCHOLOGISTS

In June, the APA Board of Directors endorsed the proposal by the Association of Jewish Psychologists (AJP) to establish a formal affiliation with the APA Council of Representatives. Today, that request by AJP to affiliate with APA as an Ethnic Psychological Association was referred (108-53 with 3 abstentions) to a Council task force that will collaborate with AJP on the next steps in the process. Together they will develop a recommendation to address the agreed upon goal of Jewish representation on Council for consideration at the February 2027 Council meeting. The path to recognition by Council as an Ethnic Psychological Association has historically been a multi-year process for groups that make that request.

"Jewish psychologists are a critical and valuable part of our Council and our community," said Dr. Williams. "APA is committed to our Jewish members and to confronting antisemitism. We are already working to implement the concrete reforms the APA Board of Directors approved in June — including strengthening oversight, accountability, and member safety. These actions — and our continued commitment to eradicating antisemitism — are now and remain high priorities for the association. We will work diligently in the coming months to continue to advance this process and promote full inclusion of our Jewish members."

HUMAN RIGHTS AND WELL-BEING

RESOLUTION ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION-RELATED ENFORCEMENT, DETENTION, FORCED DEPORTATION, AND PERSECUTION

By a vote of 157-4 with 1 abstention, Council approved a resolution affirming the psychological and developmental harms associated with immigration enforcement, detention, family separation, and deportation.

The [*Resolution on the Psychological and Developmental Impacts of Immigration-Related Enforcement, Detention, and Forced Deportation*](#), which is grounded in established psychological science and builds directly on previous APA policy, includes recommendations focused on clinical practice, workforce training, research investment, and advocacy for humane, evidence-informed immigration governance.

SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT IN PSYCHIATRIC SETTINGS

Council voted 153-8 with 4 abstentions to adopt a policy and position statement calling for the reduction of seclusion and restraint in psychiatric and other care settings. The policy cites scientific evidence showing that seclusion and restraint lack an evidence base, cause significant harm, and are used disproportionately against people of color. It calls for advocacy at the state and federal level, better data collection, and expanded training in evidence-based alternatives, with a goal of measurable statistical reductions within five to seven years and further reductions within 10 to 15 years.

ADDRESSING HEALTH ACROSS SEX AND GENDER

ELIMINATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

Recognizing that gender-based violence, particularly intimate partner violence, is a persistent public health concern, Council adopted a [*Resolution to Prioritize the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence Against Women and Marginalized Populations*](#) by a vote of 157-5, with one abstention. The resolution highlights that existing reporting methods may undercount the true scope of sexual violence, particularly in especially high-risk populations, and advocates for increased visibility of resources on intimate partner violence in public spaces with the goal of creating safer communities. It also calls for the funding and reauthorizing of the Violence Against Women Act to strengthen federal structures for the safety of survivors of gender-based and/or intimate partner violence.

PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE REPORT ON WOMEN'S HEALTH AND WELL-BEING DURING MIDLIFE AND MENOPAUSE

Council voted to receive a report by an APA presidential task force seated by 2025 APA President Dr. Debra Kawahara on expanding women's access to evidence-based, comprehensive, and culturally responsive health care during midlife and menopause. The report includes a series of recommendations based on scientific research and clinical experience to improve understanding of women's health and well-being during midlife and menopause among key stakeholders such as policymakers, medical and behavioral health professionals, research funders, community organizations, and academic researchers, to ultimately improve systems of medical and mental health care.

The Council also voted to receive a report highlighting gaps in midlife and menopause research. The report recommendations include prioritization of further studies into mental health conditions that may be affected by the transition to menopause, rigorous trials of pharmacologic and behavioral treatments to improve mental health in midlife and menopausal women, and the positive aspects of midlife aging and menopause.

TASK FORCE ON VARIATIONS IN SEX CHARACTERISTICS

Council voted (158-3 with five abstentions) to receive a report from the APA Task Force on Variations in Sex Characteristics (VSC), which covers the psychology of individuals born with congenital differences in sex characteristics. The report is largely educational and provides guidance for psychologists working with this population.

GUIDELINES FOR THE PRACTICE OF PSYCHOLOGY

RESOLUTION ON FAMILY CAREGIVERS

Council voted via unanimous consent to update a resolution on family caregivers to help psychologists address the complex, evolving needs of family caregivers within healthcare, community, and social service systems. The [*2026 Resolution on Family Caregivers*](#) encourages policies and clinical training that will help psychologists support the needs of family caregivers, calls for further research into caregivers' experiences, and expresses support for the development of a national dataset to monitor caregiving as a measure of public health.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMPETENCIES FOR PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICE IN PRIMARY-CARE

Council approved via unanimous consent updated guidelines to help educators and training programs prepare students and trainees to provide psychological services in primary care. Complementing other APA education and training guidelines, the updated [*APA Guidelines for Education and Training Competencies for Doctoral-Level Psychology Practice in Primary Care Settings*](#) highlight 20 competencies students and trainees should develop to successfully integrate behavioral health into a rapidly changing primary care setting.

DIAGNOSING INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY IN FORENSIC SETTINGS

Council voted unanimously to adopt the Professional Practice Guidelines for psychologists conducting intellectual disability evaluations in forensic settings, including capital cases — the first guidelines APA has issued on this topic. The [*Professional Practice Guidelines for Intellectual Disability Evaluations in Forensic Settings*](#) address competence, ethical practice, assessment methodology, and the interpretation of test results, including how to handle multiple IQ scores, cultural and linguistic factors, and the challenges of retrospective evaluation in adult defendants. They are grounded in established diagnostic standards from the DSM-5-TR and the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and are directly relevant to Supreme Court decisions on intellectual disability in capital cases.

PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL-ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY CERTIFICATION

By a vote of 86-68, with 6 abstentions, Council voted to refer a proposed endorsement by the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology of a professional certification for industrial-organizational psychology practice to the Board of Professional Affairs (BPA), the Board of Educational Affairs (BEA), and the Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (CRSPPP) for consideration and feedback.

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

UPDATES ON APA ACCREDITATION

Council was provided with an update on APA accreditation status, highlighting recent actions by the U.S. Department of Education relevant to APA as a federally recognized program accreditor, including negotiated rulemaking, advantages of federal recognition, and upcoming hearing on re-recognition.

EXPENDITURE

Council voted 157-4 with 2 abstentions, to approve unbudgeted expenditure exceeding \$3 million in legal fees and related costs for federal investigations provided that they receive quarterly reports related to such expenditure.

BYLAWS AMENDMENT

Council voted 155-4 with 3 abstentions to forward a vote to all members of APA on an amendment to APA Bylaws Article IV, Section 3 that would require a majority of members of Council to approve a roll call vote.

PRESIDENTIAL CITATIONS

APA President Wendi Williams, PhD, presented a presidential citation to Kensa Gunter, PsyD, for her exceptional leadership and sustained contributions to advancing mental health, well-being, and equity within psychology and professional sport.

Dr. Williams also presented posthumous presidential citations to Frank H. Farley, PhD, and Florence Denmark, PhD, in recognition of their extraordinary leadership, scholarship, and lifelong service to psychology.

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.

7:00 p.m. EDT, August 5, 2026