



**Palm Beach County  
Youth Services Department  
Brochure**

**Doctoral Internship in Psychology  
2025-2026**



APPIC Program Code  
**142811**

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<http://pbcgov.com/youthservices/EducationCenter>  
<http://highridgecenter.com>



## **Youth Services Department**

*Mission Statement:* Growing brighter futures by providing quality services, education, and access to resources and opportunities.

*Vision:* Empowering youth and families to realize their full potential and be the driving force of a thriving community.

*Values:* Diversity & Equity, Compassion & Empathy,  
Open-mindedness, Commitment, Respect

The Doctoral Internship at the Youth Services Department is offered through the Residential Treatment and Family Counseling Division, whose mission is to provide free, accessible, professional trauma-informed mental health services and educational programs to youth and families in Palm Beach County to support healthy development and promote overall wellbeing. The Division is committed to fostering healthy individual and family functioning in families where youth have been exposed to various forms of danger, harm, or loss. Without adequate resilience and other protective factors, these youth are often at higher risk of trauma and toxic stress, that if left unaddressed, may lead to increased use of unhealthy behaviors, which in turn increases their risk of entering the juvenile justice system, dropping out of school, getting involved with gangs, running away from home, substance use, and entering the child protective system. This goal is accomplished through family, group, and individual therapy, psycho-education, parent training, psychological evaluation, consultative services, and community outreach offered across community-based, office, and residential settings. Services are provided free to Palm Beach County residents.

The Division employs psychologists, clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, mental health counselors, residential counselors, and nurses. The agency is also an interdisciplinary training site for psychology postdoctoral fellows, psychology doctoral interns, psychology practicum students, social work interns, mental health counseling interns, and marriage and family therapy interns.

### **APPIC Membership Status**

The Youth Services Department doctoral psychology internship was created and became an Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) member in 2002, when the first class of 2 interns matriculated into the program. Each year, a cohort of 2 interns has participated in the internship, which in 2018 increased to a cohort of 4 interns participating in the program.

### **APA Accreditation Status**

The Youth Services Department doctoral psychology internship was awarded initial APA accreditation by the American Psychological Association, effective November 2016. The accreditation extends for a full seven years. The self-study for re-accreditation was submitted in September 2023, with a site visit expected during the spring of 2025.

\*Questions related to the program's accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation American Psychological Association  
750 1st Street NE, Washington, DC 20002  
Phone: (202) 336-5979 / E-mail: [apaaccred@apa.org](mailto:apaaccred@apa.org)  
Web: [www.apa.org/ed/accreditation](http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation)

## **Training Model**

The internship integrates a practitioner-scholar model with psychological training and service delivery that is sequential, cumulative, and graded in complexity. The practitioner-scholar training model emphasizes the integration and application of critical thinking and skillful reflection across a broad range of experiential activities. By the end of the internship year, interns are prepared with the knowledge, awareness, and skills of a practitioner specializing in youth and families. Our interns are well prepared for professional careers working with children and their families in a residential or outpatient setting who present with a wide range of concerns.

All training activities are structured according to a developmental model, with interns initially provided with closer and more detailed supervision as appropriate, with opportunities to master fundamentals in assessment, intervention, supervision/consultation, and ethics. In all training experiences, interns are challenged to build on their past experiences and to think autonomously.

### **Aim and Competencies of the Internship**

The overall aim of the doctoral psychology internship program at the Youth Services Department is to support the development of graduate student psychology interns into professional psychologists by focusing on each of the nine broad profession-wide competency areas. Psychology interns will develop fundamental skills consistent with the mission of the Youth Services Department. The internship program incorporates a developmental training model and a strengths-based perspective, which has been a cornerstone in the Division's philosophy of training as well as prevention and intervention work with children, adolescents, parents, and families. Additionally, Palm Beach County is a culturally, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse area, and psychology interns will have opportunities to work with a range of diverse populations with a variety of presenting issues.

By the end of the internship year, interns are expected to achieve competence appropriate to their professional developmental level. Specific elements associated with each competency are enumerated on the internship evaluation form.

#### Competency 1: Evidence-based practice in intervention

Achievement of competence in the following broad areas is expected:

- Case conceptualization and treatment planning
- Implementation of therapeutic interventions
- Crisis intervention
- Therapeutic skills

#### Competency 2: Evidence-based practice in assessment

Achievement of competence in the following broad areas is expected:

- Diagnostic skill
- Instrument selection, administration, and scoring
- Test interpretation
- Clinical formulation
- Report writing
- Communicating results

Competency 3: Interprofessional and interdisciplinary consultation

Achievement of competence in the following broad areas is expected:

- Multidisciplinary collaboration
- Theories and methods of consultation

Competency 4: Supervision

Achievement of competence in the following broad areas is expected:

- Theories and methods of supervision
- Effective use of supervision
- Develop knowledge and skills providing clinical supervision

Competency 5: Individual and cultural diversity

Achievement of competence in the following broad areas is expected:

- Cultural awareness
- Effects of cultural considerations on clinical activities
- Evidence-informed approach to cultural considerations

Competency 6: Research

Achievement of competence in the following broad areas is expected:

- Application of scientific knowledge to practice

Competency 7: Ethical and legal standards

Achievement of competence in the following broad areas is expected:

- Knowledge of ethical, legal, and professional standards
- Adherence to ethical principles and guidelines

Competency 8: Professional values and attitudes

Achievement of competence in the following broad areas is expected:

- Professional awareness
- Interpersonal relationships
- Self-awareness
- Clinical documentation
- Case management

Competency 9: Communication and interpersonal skills

Achievement of competence in the following broad areas is expected:

- Provides clear and effective written communication
- Exemplifies respectful and professional interpersonal skills
- Presents scholarly information to an audience

### **Internship Expectations**

The Youth Services Department's internship is a year-long, full-time experience. Interns are expected to complete a minimum of 2,000 hours of training during the year. Interns are also expected to achieve competence in each of the profession-wide competencies and to abide by the APA Code of Ethics, the Florida Board of Psychology's laws and rules, the requirements and expectations of the training program as listed in the Handbook, and the policies and procedures of the Youth Services Department.

### **RTFC Division Structure**

The Residential Treatment and Family Counseling Division (RTFC) is comprised of three sections: Highridge Family Center (residential), Education & Training (outpatient, training, and outreach), and Youth and Family Counseling (outpatient and school-based). Doctoral internship rotations only take place at Highridge Family Center and the Education & Training Center.

#### Highridge Family Center

Highridge Family Center is a 60-bed residential facility serving Palm Beach County youth between the ages of 11-16 and their families through the Sanctuary Model of trauma-informed care. Typically, the families seeking services through Highridge have been struggling with conflicted family relations, poor academics, disruptive school behavior, drug experimentation, poor peer group choices, minor law infractions, and/or emotional difficulties. In conjunction with the School District of Palm Beach County, residents of Highridge are provided alternative education while they are enrolled in the program. Referral sources include schools, parents, prevention and diversion programs, as well as former clients. The facility is divided into five (three male and two female) dormitory-style "houses," each with the capacity for 12 residents. The youth live at the facility Monday through Friday, returning to their homes on weekends and school holidays to practice newly learned skills with their families. A therapist provides family, group, and individual therapy, and three residential counselors (two day shift, one night shift) provide structure and therapeutic milieu activities for the youth on each dorm.

#### Education & Training

The Education & Training Center is a community resource for primary prevention through education, training, and professional development, providing free services to parents, children, families, school personnel, and mental health professionals in Palm Beach County. Clinical services may be provided via telemental health or in-person. Clinical staff includes licensed psychologists.

The Education & Training Center serves as a training site for doctoral interns, postdoctoral fellows, and doctoral level practicum trainees. Families seek services to address many concerns, including behavioral disorders, school/academic problems, parent-child relational problems, adjustment to parental separation or divorce, grief/loss issues, abuse or neglect, and/or to fulfill requirements for diversionary programs. Family and individual (only ages 18-22) therapy services are offered to families and youth up to age 22 utilizing brief therapy models. Younger children, between the ages of 2 and 8, may also receive Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT). Parenting is also offered in individual and group formats. In addition, psychological evaluations may be provided to youth already involved in the agency's clinical services or referred through select agency partners.

The Education & Training Center trainees and staff are also responsible for developing and implementing trainings, workshops, and community outreach activities and are approved to offer continuing education units to licensees in various mental health and nursing disciplines. Trainings are

provided to schools, community agencies, as well as Bachelor's level counselors, Master's level therapists, and Psychologists from Youth Services offices located throughout the county.

To learn more about the Palm Beach County Youth Services Department's Residential Treatment and Family Counseling Division, please access the following link: <http://www.pbcgov.com/youthservices/counseling>. Additional information on the training programs can be found by visiting <http://www.pbcgov.com/youthservices/EducationCenter>.

## **Internship Rotations**

The internship offers 4 one-year, full-time placements, beginning on August 4, 2025, and continuing for one year. All psychology interns complete a minimum of 2000 hours, including a minimum of 500 hours of direct clinical contact, 100 hours of individual supervision, 100 hours of group and/or additional individual supervision, and 100 hours of didactic training. Two hours of weekly individual supervision are provided by licensed psychologists. A minimum of two hours of weekly group supervision is also provided. Interns typically spend at least 30 percent of their time in direct clinical contact. Psychology interns integrate theoretical, clinical, and professional issues in psychology into the service delivery model at the rotation sites within the Youth Services Department's Residential Treatment and Family Counseling (RTFC) Division.

RTFC is comprised of three sections: Highridge Family Center (residential), Education & Training (outpatient, training, and outreach), and Youth & Family Counseling (outpatient and school-based). Each intern will complete a *six month residential rotation at Highridge Family Center* and a *six month outpatient rotation at Education & Training*, which together provide a range of clinical and didactic experiences that represent the necessary depth and breadth required for future professional independent practice. Formal evaluation of the intern occurs every six months.

### Highridge Family Center – Residential Rotation

During the residential rotation at Highridge Family Center, interns, under the supervision of licensed psychologists, are responsible for providing family, group, individual, and milieu therapy to residents of Highridge, working in the same capacity as staff therapists. Additionally, the intern participates in weekly multidisciplinary treatment team meetings, case conferences, staff consultations, and presentations to parents.

### Education and Training - Outpatient Rotation

During the outpatient rotation at the Education & Training Center, interns are responsible for providing short-term (3-4 months) family therapy, individual therapy (only ages 18-22), intake assessments, provisional diagnosis, treatment planning and implementation, consultation, and case management. Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT; ages 2-8) may also be provided under the direction of a Certified PCIT Therapist. Interns also complete psychological evaluations, provide parent education/support/training, and conduct outreach activities, including presentations to staff, schools, and community agencies.

## **Training Activities**

### Therapy

Therapy is provided throughout the Division in a variety of treatment modalities, including family therapy, individual therapy, group therapy, and milieu therapy. Therapy takes place in outpatient (Education & Training Center) and residential (Highridge) settings and includes individuals from a diverse range of ages, racial and ethnic groups, and socioeconomic levels. Individual therapy is reserved for youth between the ages of 18-22 in the outpatient office setting. Trainees will develop treatment plans with specific goals and objectives for each of their therapy cases. Telemental health services may be provided when appropriate.

### Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)

The Education & Training Center offers PCIT, an evidenced-based dyadic treatment, to select families with children between the ages of 2 and 8. Internet (I-PCIT) services may be offered when appropriate. Interns may have the opportunity to shadow a PCIT case. Under some circumstances, interns may be involved in PCIT training in order to work towards certification as a PCIT Therapist.

### Parenting

The Youth Services Department offers parenting services that can be provided via an individual or group format. At the outpatient sites, curriculums developed from evidence-supported programs aimed at helping caregivers raise children in a safe, stable, and healthy environment may be utilized (i.e., STEP, ACT). Parent support groups are also offered depending on need. At the residential setting, psychoeducation on parenting and parent groups are provided on a monthly basis.

### Psychological Evaluation

Referrals for psychological testing come from within the Division and from select agencies that receive funding from the Department. Trainees may also make referrals for their therapy clients to be tested. Full batteries include clinical interviews and assessment of intellectual, behavioral, and personality/social functioning. Psychoeducational testing may also be included in the full assessment batteries. With supervisor approval, less inclusive partial batteries determined by the needs of the family may be completed. The evaluation process involves consultation with referring therapists, administering and scoring measures, obtaining peer review of scoring accuracy, writing integrated reports, and holding feedback sessions in a timely manner.

### Intake Assessment

Intake assessments involve developing interviewing skills and gathering pertinent biopsychosocial and clinical information during intake interviews. All clients are seen for an initial intake interview to assess their eligibility and need for services and/or to make appropriate referrals.

### Risk Assessment, Abuse Reporting, Crisis Intervention, and Safety Planning

With close supervision, trainees will facilitate risk assessments and treatment of crisis situations. Safety planning and abuse reports will be implemented when necessary. Interns may also be involved in the initiation of involuntary hospitalization (Bake Act) as applicable to clients on their caseload.

### Multidisciplinary Consultation

Consultation takes place on an ongoing basis with staff, administrators, the Division's collaborative organizations, school personnel, case managers, psychiatrists, and/or other collateral sources. During the Residential rotation, multidisciplinary treatment teams meet regularly to discuss client care. Onsite consultation at the Highridge School is also performed regularly.



### Case Management

Ongoing case management is provided for all families/clients served, as determined by each family's or individual's needs.

### Didactic Activities

Didactic activities include attending and presenting at weekly YSD formal trainings, primarily attended virtually. Trainings take various forms, including lecture and demonstration, formal continuing education workshops, and presentations from practitioners and agencies that work in collaboration with the YSD. The goals of these trainings are to maintain awareness of recent empirical literature, to inform clinical practice with evidence based findings, and to develop skills in making professional case presentations. The didactic training schedule is intended to compliment clinical supervision and assist with professional development. A tentative schedule is distributed at the beginning of the training year and updated periodically. Some topics include laws and ethics, professional development, intervention strategies, diagnostic issues, psychological testing, child maltreatment, domestic violence, diversity considerations, and supervision. Many of the trainings offer continuing education units because YSD is an approved CEU sponsor of the American Psychological Association (APA), the State of Florida Department of Health's Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling, and the Florida Department of Health's Board of Nursing. Opportunities to attend and present at local workshops and conferences are also available.

### Community Outreach

Opportunities to present trainings on a variety of mental health topics arise and involve developing and providing such presentations at county-sponsored events as well as various community agencies. Developing and recording social media posts and writing articles on mental health topics is also considered an outreach activity. Outreach may also include discussing the services offered at the Youth Services Department at resource events/fairs in the community.

### Supervision

Interns may provide mentorship to practicum trainee(s) as needed. Interns will also provide peer supervision to another intern. A psychologist licensed in the state of Florida provides individual supervision to psychology doctoral trainees of all levels. Moreover, a minimum of 2 additional hours is provided weekly in a group supervision format with the clinical team at each office location. Interns are expected to present and discuss therapy and evaluation cases at group supervision meetings. Interns are expected to present session audio/video recordings during these presentations and, at times, be observed through a one-way mirror.

### **Youth Services Department Licensed Psychologists**

Shayna Ginsburg, Psy.D., Training Director/Chief of Clinical Services, Education & Training

Amanda Terrell, Psy.D., Chief of Residential Clinical Services, Highridge Family Center

Lynn Hargrove, Psy.D., Psychologist, Highridge Family Center

Rachelle Sosu, Psy.D., Psychologist, Education & Training

Twila Taylor, Psy.D., Division Director, Residential Treatment & Family Counseling

\*All psychologists are licensed in the state of Florida.

### **Stipend, Benefits, and Resources**

The Youth Services Department has been a training facility for doctoral and master's degree students for 20+ years. The Department supports internship accreditation by the American Psychological Association in an effort to continue improving the quality of training for graduate students and the quality and quantity of services provided to clients. The Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners has authorized the Department to budget funds for the stipend of four interns.

Before the start of the internship, Youth Services Department interns must pass a Level 2 background check [[Statutes & Constitution: View Statutes: Online Sunshine \(state.fl.us\)](#)] with fingerprints (paid for by the county) and submit proof of liability insurance (purchased at the intern's expense) with the signed contract. Once cleared, interns are considered Independent Contractors with Palm Beach County.

The internship annual stipend is \$30,900, paid biweekly (payable at \$15.45 per hour). In order to earn the full stipend, interns must work a total of 2,000 hours during their one-year/52 week placement. Two weeks (80 hours) of that time may be used for leave (holiday/vacation/sick). Any additional leave time taken outside of the 80 hours, including days not worked due to county closure for holidays (13 government holidays), must be made up to ensure the 2000 hours requirement is met. Interns may take up to an additional 20 hours of vacation and 100 hours of sick time if needed or extended parental or family medical leave with approval from the Training Director and with the understanding that the minimum 2000 hours must be worked (so time taken in excess must be made up). Professional development leave to attend conferences or presentations may be granted. Typical work week shifts are 10 hours long with a 30 minute lunch break, Monday through Thursday, with occasional variance in schedule for other activities. A one-time health insurance stipend of \$1,000 is paid to the fellow after 6 months in the program.

Interns with the Youth Services Department have access to numerous resources. Interns are provided access to current testing materials and manuals, computerized scoring programs, as well as therapy toys/games and testing tools/books. Interns may also access full-text books and journals through the Youth Services Department's subscription to the American Psychological Association's PsychNET Gold Database. Interns may utilize the one-way mirror and recording devices, as well as the PCIT bug-in-the-ear and microphone equipment for live coaching. Additional materials that may be needed can be purchased with county funds with approval from the Training Director. Additionally, each intern has access to an office with a desktop computer, phone, and voicemail. Interns may utilize office printers, scanners, and fax machines, as well as administrative and technical support. Interns are provided with their own email address, Zoom accounts, and computer network account. Clerical support is available to assist with scheduling. In the event of health and safety concerns, masks, face shields, plexiglass barrier, gloves, and hand sanitizer are available for all staff, interns, clients, and visitors upon request.

## **Intern Selection and Academic Preparation Requirements Policy**

### ***Application Process***

To be considered for the Youth Services Department internship program, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Must be a doctoral candidate in an APA-accredited clinical or counseling psychology program.
- At least three years of graduate education in psychology must be completed by the start of internship.
- A minimum of 1000 hours of training must be completed prior to internship, which may include practica as well as other clinical or work experience.
- A minimum of 400 intervention hours and 100 assessment hours by the start of internship.
  - If the applicant expects to earn additional direct service hours after the application is submitted, this information should be specifically broken down by intervention and assessment and noted on the AAPI in the section asking for anticipated hours prior to internship.
- Comprehensive Exams must be passed prior to applying for internship.
- Dissertation proposal must be completed prior to the start of internship.
- Before the start of the internship, Youth Services Department interns must complete a Level 2 background check with fingerprints. Disqualifying offenses are listed in the Florida statutes under Chapter 435.04(2). The following is a link to this statute for reference: [Statutes & Constitution: View Statutes: Online Sunshine \(state.fl.us\)](#).

Students interested in applying for the internship program should submit an online application through the APPIC website ([www.appic.org](http://www.appic.org)). A complete application consists of the following materials:

- A completed Online AAPI (APPIC's standard application)
- Cover letter (as part of AAPI)
- Current Curriculum Vitae (as part of AAPI)
- Three Letters of Recommendation, two of which must be from persons who have directly supervised your clinical work (as part of AAPI). Please submit no more than three references.
- Official transcripts of all graduate coursework (as part of AAPI)
- A de-identified child or adolescent psychological evaluation report, preferably non-neuro (as a supplement to the AAPI)

All application materials must be received by the date noted in the current APPIC directory listing in order to be considered. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

### ***Application Screening and Interview Processes***

The Youth Services Department Internship Program will base its selection process on the entire application package noted above. Preference will be given to applicants whose credentials include:

- Extensive experience working with children, adolescents, and families
- Extensive training and/or classes in family and systemic theory
- Extensive psychological/psychoeducational testing experience
- Experience in both outpatient AND residential settings
- *Individuals with Spanish or Haitian Creole bilingual skills are strongly encouraged to apply*

All applications are evaluated by the Youth Services Department Training Committee for potential goodness-of-fit with the internship program. We look for interns with training goals aligned with the training that we offer. The program looks not only at the total number of practicum hours, but the quality of training in terms of the type of setting and population, as well as experience with evidence-based practice. We prefer interns who have training and experience in working with youth and families and those who, based on their experience, demonstrate cultural sensitivity working with diverse populations. However, we will consider candidates with gaps in this training who demonstrate great potential and an eagerness to learn based on strong letters of recommendation, essays, and interviews.

***\*\*\*Underrepresented groups and those who speak Spanish and/or Haitian Creole are particularly encouraged to apply because we seek to recruit diverse interns in order to better meet the needs of our diverse client population.\*\*\****

All applications are screened by the Youth Services Department Training Committee using a standard Application Rating Scale, and evaluated for potential goodness of fit with the internship program. The Training Committee will hold a selection meeting to determine which applicants to invite for interviews based upon the results of this screening process. All applicants are notified by email of a decision regarding an invitation to interview on the date indicated in the current APPIC directory. Interviews are scheduled during the month of January and will occur remotely via Zoom videoconference with members of the Training Committee.

Interviews entail a half-day experience involving various activities. Specifically, on the day of the interview, a small group of intern applicants (typically 3-5) will meet with the internship's Training Director and other supervising psychologists for introductions, a pre-recorded overview of the site and various training opportunities, and a virtual tour of both internship rotations. As a group, prospective interns will also be given a clinical scenario and asked to discuss the scenario in a group format in front of the supervising psychologists. Subsequently, prospective interns will meet individually with outpatient and residential supervising psychologists as well as postdoctoral fellows during which interviews will be conducted using a standard set of interview questions, although members of the Training Committee may ask additional interview questions of applicants as appropriate. Applicants will also be afforded an opportunity to ask questions during their group meeting and individual interview times. As a group, applicants will also meet with current interns as another opportunity to ask questions and learn about the training experience. The Youth Services Department agrees to abide by the APPIC policy that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept, or use any rank information from any internship applicant.

### ***Participation in the Match***

The Training Committee will hold a meeting within two weeks of the final interviews being completed in order to determine applicant rankings. The full application package and information gathered from the interview process will be utilized to determine applicant rankings. As a member of APPIC, Youth Services will participate in the national internship matching process by submitting its applicant rankings to the National Matching Service, which can be reached at the following website: [www.natmatch.com/psychint](http://www.natmatch.com/psychint). Applicants and their graduate program Directors of Clinical Training are contacted accordingly following release of computer match results.

### ***Application Due Date and Interview Notification Date***

All application materials must be submitted through the AAPI online portal by **November 11<sup>th</sup>** in order to be considered for our program. All applicants will be notified by email of a decision regarding an invitation to interview on or before **December 20<sup>th</sup>**. Interviews will be scheduled in January and will occur remotely with members of the Training Committee.

Questions regarding any part of the internship selection process or the Youth Services Department's academic preparation requirements may be directed to the Training Director.

**Training Director Contact Information**

Shayna Ginsburg, Psy.D.

Phone: (561) 233-4460/Fax: (561) 233-4475

Email: [sginsbur@pbcgov.org](mailto:sginsbur@pbcgov.org)

Website: <http://www.pbcgov.com/youthservices/EducationCenter>

Program Website: <https://www.pbcgov.org/youthservices/Pages/Doctoral-Internship.aspx>