

Minneapolis VA Health Care System Psychology Practicum Training Online Brochure



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The VA HCS Psychology staff currently consists of approximately 80 doctoral psychologists, nearly all of whom hold clinical faculty positions at the University of Minnesota and are involved in training. Each psychologist works in one or more of the specialized treatment units and acts as a member of a multidisciplinary treatment team and/or as a consultant to programs within that setting. The Psychology staff hold diverse interests, theories, and techniques in psychology and work in widely varied programs with different kinds of patients. More information about the program's commitment to training in diversity can be found by clicking on the following link ([Diversity](#)).

Training Opportunities

The Minneapolis VA HCS offers practicum training opportunities working with a wide range of psychological issues across different settings. Practicum placements are not decided by rotation or training experience but rather a match between students' interests and experience and supervisors' expertise and their availability to take on a practicum student for that year. The exact placements vary from year to year; however, the program seeks to place practicum students within clinics and rotations that afford our postdoctoral residents an opportunity to provide supervision to practicum students. The following is a list of typical practicum sites at our main facility: Mood and Anxiety Disorders, Neuropsychology, Trauma Services - Team L, Primary Care/Health Psychology, Rehabilitation Psychology, and Serious Mental Illness. Please note that the Neuropsychology placement is the only placement that is assessment only; all other placements are mostly clinical/intervention, with some opportunities for assessment that vary based on supervisor and rotation.

Possible practicum placements through the Minneapolis VA include:

Neuropsychology (Minneapolis facility) (1-2 students) Flexible, comprehensive testing batteries with a variety of patients (dementia, strokes, TBI, tumors, seizures, MS, etc.)

Team L (PTSD team) (Minneapolis facility) Assessment and treatment of patients with a variety of acute and chronic trauma-related disorders

Primary Care MH Integration (PCMHI) / Team L (PTSD team) (Minneapolis facility)
Integration of MH with primary care, and training in Time-Limited Dynamic Psychotherapy (TLDP)

Rehabilitation Psychology (Minneapolis facility) Assessment, intervention, and consultation with veterans with physical disabilities (spinal cord injury, stroke, cancer, amputation, hospice, etc.)

Team Z (SMI team) (Minneapolis facility) Assessment and treatment of patients with psychotic disorders including bipolar disorder

Team B (Mood team) (Minneapolis facility) Diagnostic interviewing, psychological assessment, and psychological intervention, specializing in mood disorders and general psychiatric patients

Maplewood Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (Maplewood, MN) Broad Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PCMHI) training with an available emphasis on trauma and PTSD

The following link will connect you to our Psychology doctoral internship brochure listing [internship](#) which will provide more detailed explanations of these training opportunities. The same page also has a link to a PDF listing of supervisors detailing their credentials, clinical interests and research/academic experience: [Supervisors](#).

In addition to the above training experiences, the Minneapolis VA HCS may be able to offer training experiences with several other community-based treatment programs and outpatient clinics located throughout Minnesota. These include: the Northwest Metro Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC; 7545 Veterans Drive, Ramsey, MN 55303) and the Twin Ports VA clinic (3520 Tower Avenue, Superior, WI 54880).

Practicum Structure

Practicum training at the Minneapolis VAHCS begins in early September and goes through late April or May. There is also an option to stay through the summer. In terms of hours, practicum students need to dedicate at least 1.5 days to on-site practicum training. Total on-site hours typically range from 10 to 16 per week. Some supervisors may also require offsite work consisting of readings relevant to the practicum.

Although graduate programs often desire students to complete either an "assessment" or an "intervention" practicum, many of the training experiences at the Minneapolis VA do not lend themselves to doing just assessment. As mentioned above, Neuropsychology is the only placement that is assessment only. Therefore, some flexibility in terms of graduate program and practicum student expectations is needed.

The COVID-19 Impact on Training

The COVID-19 pandemic has created numerous personal and professional challenges for us all. One of these challenges is uncertainty about what will happen next week, next month, and especially one year from now.

The Minneapolis VA HCS psychology training program has prided itself on its transparency, providing detailed and accurate information about our program and training opportunities. With COVID, transparency means we cannot definitively predict how specific rotations or adjunctive training opportunities may evolve for the 2024/2025 training year.

With confidence, we can say that there will likely be more utilization of telehealth and technology-based delivery platforms than there had been prior to COVID. We do not expect there to be any significant changes to the base clinical services or populations served through rotations and adjunctive experiences described in our materials.

Our dedication to high-quality clinical care and psychology training, and our dedication to the trainees themselves, has never been stronger. These will always be cornerstone elements of the Minneapolis VAHCS psychology programs. This we can predict!

We will update our public materials as we know more about what will be for the 2024/2025 training year. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions. Contact information can be found at the bottom of the page.

Prerequisites

Applicants must meet the following to be considered for our program:

1. Doctoral student in clinical or counseling psychology program accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA), the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA), or PCSAS (Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System). Please note that we can only take applicants from schools with which the Minneapolis VA has an affiliation agreement (typically Minneapolis or St Paul graduate programs).
2. Practicum students are subject to fingerprinting, background checks, and urine drug screens. Placement decisions are contingent on passing these screens.
3. Practicum students are also required to meet the essential functions (physical and mental) of the training program and immunized following current Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and VHA policy for healthcare workers to protect themselves, other employees and patients while working in a healthcare facility. This requirement is met by verification of the intern's doctoral program Director of Clinical Training or designee. The DCT must verify that the student has...

- Satisfactory health to perform the duties of the clinical training program
- Recent TB screen
- Hepatitis B vaccination or have signed declination waivers
- COVID vaccination

Application Process

1. Please email the following items to Amanda.Ferrier-Auerbach@va.gov. The subject line of the email should read "Practicum Application MVAHCS 2024/2025."
 - Vita or résumé
 - Letter of recommendation describing your readiness for practicum by a clinical supervisor or, if there has been no previous clinical training, by a faculty member who is familiar with your academic work.
2. Please complete the online Practicum Application:
https://umn.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3CYdtbFlqny0ITw

Important dates for the 2024/2025 academic year:

Applications due	2/4/24 between 12:01am and 11:59pm
Applications reviewed by VA staff	2/5/24
Interviews extended to selected applicants	2/5/24 through 2/9/24
Applicants notified if not selected	2/9/24 at the latest
Interviews occur (virtual)	2/12/24 9-11am OR 2/13/24 1-3pm
Offers extended for practicum positions	2/19/24 or later

Please note that interviews will occur during the times listed above. If you are interested in practicum at the Minneapolis VAHCS, please ensure that you are available during one of those two dates.

If you receive another offer for practicum and the Minneapolis VA HCS is your preferred site, we ask that you contact Dr. Ferrier-Auerbach (contact information is below). Depending on where we are in the selection process and your application's relative standing, we may be able to make you an offer at that point.

Further information regarding Psychology Practicum Training at the Minneapolis VAHCS may be obtained by contacting: Amanda Ferrier-Auerbach, Ph.D., ABPP
 Assistant Director of Training Telephone: (612) 467-2195
 E-mail: Amanda.Ferrier-Auerbach@va.gov

Applicants selected for practicum placement will need to complete the following prior to orientation in order to begin practicum on time:

1. Complete fingerprinting
2. Provide documentation of a tuberculosis screening consistent with CDC/VA standards
3. Provide documentation of hepatitis B and COVID vaccinations (or have signed a declination waiver). Please contact Dr. Ferrier-Auerbach (info above) for details.