**Arkansas State Hospital (ASH)/University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Postdoctoral Fellowship in SMI and Forensic Psychology**

The goal of the ASH/UAMS fellowship training program is to provide specialty training in the area of Serious Mental Illness (SMI) and Forensic Psychology. We emphasize APA’s three core competencies for postdoctoral fellowships: Science and Practice, Diversity, and Ethics and Legal. Simultaneously, the training focuses heavily on education and clinical work that is consistent with the [APA Division 18 Competencies for SMI Postdoctoral Residency Programs](http://www.psychtrainingsmi.com/docs/guidelines.pdf) and the [Forensic Specialty Council Education and Training Guidelines for Forensic Psychology](https://www.umassmed.edu/globalassets/forensic-psychology/documents/et-guidelines-final.pdf). The model we follow outlines specific key elements of an SMI curriculum and a Forensic curriculum as well as specific assessment procedures and interventions essential for competence working with this population. Fellows are expected to work with the Training Director to ensure they have secured training (whether didactic or direct clinical experience) in the listed areas. At the completion of the training year, our fellows are expected to have developed independent-practice level skills in diagnosis, assessment, professional documentation (including report-writing and charting), application of statutes and case law, individual and group therapy, research and scientific contributions, presenting for colleagues and direct-care staff, clinical supervision, and functioning in an interdisciplinary system. Satisfactory completion of the fellowship meets the postdoctoral supervised practice requirements for licensure in Arkansas. The forensic portion of the fellowship requires that fellows see 18-24 defendants who may require fitness to proceed to trial and/or criminal responsibility evaluations.

The opportunities afforded at ASH include working with adults and adolescents who present with a range of behavioral and mental health issues. Common presenting issues at the hospital and in forensic examinations include acute and chronic psychotic disorders, behavioral disorders, trauma and stressor-related disorders, developmental disabilities, personality disorders, malingering, and various adjustment reactions.

ASH is a facility located within a larger medical community (including the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences [UAMS] and the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System) in midtown Little Rock, Arkansas. As ASH is a training facility, didactics and practice will occur alongside practicum students, pre-doctoral psychology interns, forensic psychiatry fellows, and medical students in addition to social work interns, nursing students, and psychology practicum students.

**Clinical Experiences**

The training week is divided into various types of clinical work on different inpatient units. While the fellow will be based out of a selected adult unit, he or she will also have clinical and programmatic experience on other units.

**Adult SMI Training:**Training takes place on the hospital’s adult inpatient units which treat patients with forensic commitment orders receiving psychiatric treatment. The treatment focus on these units is more serious psychopathological conditions. An emphasis is placed on psychological assessment and group and individual therapy techniques. Fellows will participate in treatment planning meetings; co-leading group therapy with their supervisors; conducting comprehensive psychological evaluations, neurocognitive screeners, and violence risk assessments; collaborating on scholarly projects; teaching competency restoration; and developing individualized behavior modification plans. Neuropsychological testing is conducted from referrals throughout the hospital.

**Forensic Training:** Fellows will see a minimum of 18 defendants per year. Each defendant may have 1-2 separate orders/reports, and trainees with a special interest in evaluations can see as many as 24 defendants. The evaluations are primarily focused on competency to stand trial and criminal responsibility. Trainees will have the opportunity to attend the annual Arkansas Forensic Examiner training and receive certification. Additionally, fellows will have a weekly Forensic Lecture Series didactic trainings.

**Adolescent Training:**Select training takes place on the Adolescent Inpatient Treatment units. On these units, fellows could potentially be involved in the following clinical activities: psychological assessments, individual therapy, milieu therapy, competency restoration, offender treatment, and behavior modification plans.

**Other Opportunities for Exposure:** ASH also offers opportunities to get exposure to health psychology interventions, more intensive research projects, treatment of individuals with sexually-abusive behaviors, family psychoeducation, Illness Management and Recovery, Social Skills Training, substance abuse treatment, trauma-focused work, evidence-based trauma therapy certification, and other related interventions.

**Didactic Seminars**

Fellows are required to attend at least 8 hours of didactics each month. While there will be specific didactics for the fellows (SMI Lecture Series and Forensic Lecture Series), the SMI fellow can also achieve these requirements from a combination of Intern Seminars, Forensic Psychiatry Lectures, Psychopharmacology Conferences, Psychiatry Resident Lectures, and UAMS Grand Rounds. Additionally, fellows will be expected to present at the Psychology Department meeting, the Intern Seminar, and the ASH Psychopharmacology Conference. In the Fellowship Lectures Series, Psychology Department staff members present on a wide variety of professional and clinical topics. At times, external psychologists and ASH psychiatrists will also contribute. These presentations provide more in-depth information on important professional issues such as Ethics and Legal Aspects of Practice, Diversity, Evidence-Based Treatment, Research, and Supervision in addition to other clinical and legal topics. Further, fellows will receive other training experiences through co-leading at least two groups per week and observing supervisors when opportunities exist.

**Supervision**

Fellows are assigned a primary training supervisor on each unit where they are receiving clinical training. Fellows also have a long-term supervisor with whom they meet for one hour weekly throughout the year to discuss professional development and individual therapy clients. The fellow will receive a minimum of two hours of individual supervision per week. Additional supervision can take various forms including co-therapy and co-assessment with supervisors, review of test data and written reports, working on research projects with a supervisor, feedback based on observation, and modeling by the supervisor.

Feedback on performance is a continuous part of the supervision process. At 2 months, 6 months, and 12 months, an evaluation of the fellow will be completed and reviewed with the fellow. The fellow will also provide written and oral feedback for each training experience, including the supervision received during the rotation. The program is committed to considering feedback and incorporating suggested changes to improve the training quality and fellowship experience.

Most supervisors are eclectic in orientation. See the link below for a list of current psychology supervisors with their areas of special interests and competencies. Not all supervisors are directly involved in the fellowship but may be available for other shadowing or training exposure.

**For a list of Psychology Supervisors click**[**Psychology Supervisors**](https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/PSYCHOLOGY-FACULTY-2022-2023.docx)

**Stipends and Benefits**

The stipend for the 12-month, UAMS appointment from 2023-2024 is $56,880. Benefits include 11 holidays, 22.5 vacation days, 12 sick leave days as needed, and optional health insurance and retirement plans. Insurance coverage is effective from the first day of employment until the last day of employment, unless the fellow elects to have COBRA). More information is available at the [UAMS Human Resources website](https://hr.uams.edu/). A limited number of educational leave days can also be negotiated with the Training Director for EPPP, conference attendance, and other relevant professional activities. UAMS employees are paid on the last day of each month.

**Eligibility and Application**

To be considered a postdoctoral fellow, the individual must have met all requirements for their doctoral degree, including successful defense of the doctoral dissertation (which includes submission and final approval by the dissertation committee of any changes requested at the time of the dissertation defense). The fellow must also obtain provisional licensure status with the Arkansas Psychology Board. Because this can be a lengthy process, it is highly recommended that the incoming fellow begin this process once he or she has accepted the fellowship position. Hour accrual and clinical contact does not begin until the provisional license is granted. Credentialing within the hospital is another condition of employment.

Applicants are required to have completed their training at APA-accredited doctoral programs and predoctoral internships. Clinical or Counseling Psychology backgrounds are preferred. The deadline for submitting applications is January 10, 2025. Applicants anticipating not having all materials available by that deadline should make contact with the Training Director. Applicants will be notified of their status regarding an interview on or before January 17. Zoom interviews may be arranged as an alternative to in-person visits.

Fellowship applicants should submit 1) a cover letter, 2) graduate school transcripts, 3) three letters of recommendation, 4) a curriculum vita, and 5) a deidentified psychological report. Applicants are accepted regardless of race, color, religion or creed, sex, gender, gender identity, pregnancy, national or ethnic origin, non-disqualifying disability, age, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, veteran status, political beliefs or affiliations. All persons selected for new employment or a change in employment within DHS must submit to a drug test, a criminal background check, and a maltreatment history check, as a pre-condition of employment.

The training year will begin September 1, 2025, and conclude August 30, 2026.

**Contact Info**

| **Name** | **Title** | **Phone** | **Email** |
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