

Federal Policy Updates October 24, 2025

Hill & Budget Updates

The federal government shutdown has now stretched into its third week with little movement toward a funding deal.

- Moderate House Republicans are pressing Speaker Mike Johnson for commitments on Affordable Care Act tax credit extensions.
- Efforts in the Senate, led by Republican Leader John Thune, have not advanced.
- A looming Nov. 1 cutoff for SNAP and WIC benefits is expected to increase pressure on negotiators.

APA Advocacy Focus:

- Timely resumption of peer review and research funding.
- Stability for graduate and early career training.
- Restoration of Medicare telehealth coverage rules that expired Oct. 1.
- Permanent repeal of the in-person visit requirement.

APA Policy Updates

Psychological Research & Regulatory Environment

APA and the Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences met with the House Science, Space & Technology Committee to address major changes to the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP). These changes could significantly disrupt the pipeline of clinical psychologists and reduce funding opportunities.

- Clinical psychology programs are no longer eligible.
- Only first-year graduate students can apply (ending second-year eligibility).

Practice of Psychology & Workforce

APA signed a letter urging House Energy & Commerce leadership to advance the Sickle Cell Disease Comprehensive Care Act (S. 721 / H.R. 5178).

- This bipartisan bill would expand Medicaid Health Home programs, ensuring individuals with SCD have coordinated clinical, mental health, and support services.
- SCD affects ~100,000 people in the U.S., disproportionately impacting Black and Hispanic communities.

APA also highlighted the importance of protecting the VA's integrated health system, emphasizing:

- VA psychology training programs.
- Groundbreaking PTSD and TBI research.
- Adequate funding and staffing to support veterans' mental health care.

Population Health & Education

Ahead of November 3 negotiations on the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, APA is:

- Advocating for health service psychology doctoral programs to be included in the professional degree designation for federal loan limits.
- Joining the health professions community in urging DHS to exempt psychology and other health fields from the new \$100,000 H-1B visa fee which would harm healthcare access in rural and underserved communities.

