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# NATIONAL ACADEMY OF NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

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## The Role of the Neuropsychologist in Selecting Neuropsychological Tests in a Forensic Evaluation

*A Position Statement by the National Academy of Neuropsychology Policy & Planning Committee  
Approved by the Board of Directors 02/15/2018*

**Statement of Need:** The purpose of this statement is to clarify the role of neuropsychologists and third parties for test selection in forensic neuropsychological evaluations.

**Position Statement:** Neuropsychologists often conduct specialty evaluations and serve as experts in civil and criminal forensic matters. Prior to evaluation, third parties occasionally attempt to exert influence on test selection. Based on training, expertise, and experience, it is the responsibility and province of neuropsychologists to select appropriate tests for a neuropsychological evaluation. Neuropsychologists' expertise in this area is based upon their unique and extensive training in cognitive assessment and brain-behavior relationships, knowledge of psychological and neuropsychological tests and psychometrics, and expertise in accommodating an examinee's needs.<sup>1</sup> Requiring or precluding specific tests by third parties creates the ethical dilemma of allowing non-qualified individuals to influence the selection of neuropsychological tests without the training or expertise to do so. Selection of neuropsychological tests by third parties for a forensic neuropsychological evaluation has the potential to compromise the reliability, validity, thoroughness, and usefulness of the specialty evaluation.

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<sup>1</sup> AACN Board of Directors (2007). American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology (AACN) practice guidelines for neuropsychological assessment and consultation. *The Clinical Neuropsychologist*, 21, 209-231; Hannay, J., Bieliauskas, L., Crosson, B., Hammeke, T., Hamsher, K., & Koffler, S. (1998). Proceedings of the Houston Conference on Specialty Education and Training in Clinical Neuropsychology. *Archives of Clinical Neuropsychology*, 13, 157-250; NAN Policy & Planning Committee (2005). Independent and court-ordered forensic neuropsychological examinations: Official statement of the National Academy of Neuropsychology. *Archives of Clinical Neuropsychology*, 20, 997-1007.