APA's 2026 CHATBOTS AND MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Participants and Recruitment

This study was conducted online within the United States by the American Psychological Association (APA) between April 9 and April 26, 2026. The target population was derived from two primary sources: state licensing board lists obtained from the National Center for the Analysis of Healthcare Data, and the APA membership database.

To establish the sampling frame, the combined dataset was filtered to include only doctoral-level practitioners who had not opted out of APA communications. From this initial aggregate pool, a random sample of 30,000 practitioners had been selected to participate in a prior survey conducted in 2025. The remaining **22,455** licensed clinical practitioners who were not selected for the 2025 sample were invited to participate in the current 2026 study.

All invitations were distributed via email. Following the exclusion of **2,650** bounced emails and **78** duplicate entries, the final eligible recruitment pool consisted of **19,727** practitioners. To maximize participation, up to five email reminders were sent on April 14, 16, 20, 22, and 23, 2026. Ultimately, **1,242** completed responses were received, yielding an adjusted response rate of **6.3%** (and a crude response rate of **5.5%** based on the initial 22,455 invitations).

Inclusion and Screening Criteria

To participate in the survey, respondents were required to meet the following predefined inclusion criteria:

- Licensure: Hold a valid license to practice in at least one U.S. state.
- Clinical Practice: Be currently engaged in providing direct patient or client care.
- Education: Possess a doctoral degree.
- Eligible employment statuses: full-time, part-time, postdoctoral training, or retired but actively practicing.

Online screening questions were utilized at the beginning of the survey; respondents who did not meet the inclusion criteria were automatically screened out, notified of their ineligibility, and thanked for their interest.