

Code of Virginia

Chapter 26 of Title 54.1 – Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology

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§ 54.1-2600. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Audiologist" means any person who engages in the practice of audiology.

"Board" means the Board of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology.

"Practice of audiology" means the practice of conducting measurement, testing and evaluation relating to hearing and vestibular systems, including audiologic and electrophysiological measures, and conducting programs of identification, hearing conservation, habilitation, and rehabilitation for the purpose of identifying disorders of the hearing and vestibular systems and modifying communicative disorders related to hearing loss, including but not limited to vestibular evaluation, limited cerumen management, electrophysiological audiometry and cochlear implants. Any person offering services to the public under any descriptive name or title which would indicate that audiology services are being offered shall be deemed to be practicing audiology.

"Practice of speech-language pathology" means the practice of facilitating development and maintenance of human communication through programs of screening, identifying, assessing and interpreting, diagnosing, habilitating and rehabilitating speech-language disorders, including but not limited to:

1. Providing alternative communication systems and instruction and training in the use thereof;
2. Providing aural habilitation, rehabilitation and counseling services to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families;
3. Enhancing speech-language proficiency and communication effectiveness; and
4. Providing audiologic screening.

Any person offering services to the public under any descriptive name or title which would indicate that professional speech-language pathology services are being offered shall be deemed to be practicing speech-language pathology.

"Speech-language disorders" means disorders in fluency, speech articulation, voice, receptive and expressive language (syntax, morphology, semantics, pragmatics), swallowing disorders, and cognitive communication functioning.

"Speech-language pathologist" means any person who engages in the practice of speech-language pathology.

1972, c. 181, § 54-83.1:5; 1974, c. 534; 1988, c. 765; 1992, c. 706; 2014, c. [327](#); 2019, c. [288](#).

§ 54.1-2601. Exemptions.

This chapter shall not:

1. Prevent any person from engaging, individually or through his employees, in activities for which he is licensed or from using appropriate descriptive words, phrases or titles to refer to his services;
2. Prevent any person employed by a federal, state, county or municipal agency, or an educational institution as a speech or hearing specialist or therapist from performing the regular duties of his office or position;
3. Prevent any student, intern or trainee in audiology or speech-language pathology, pursuing a course of study at an accredited university or college, or working in a recognized training center, under the direct supervision of a licensed or certified audiologist or speech-language pathologist, from performing services constituting a part of his supervised course of study;
4. Prevent a licensed audiologist or speech-language pathologist from employing or using the services of unlicensed persons as necessary to assist him in his practice;
5. Authorize any person, unless otherwise licensed to do so, to prepare, order, dispense, alter or repair hearing aids or parts of or attachments to hearing aids for consideration. However, audiologists licensed under this chapter may make earmold impressions and prepare and alter earmolds for clinical use and research.

(1972, c. 181, § 54-83.1:7; 1978, c. 34; 1988, c. 765; 1992, c. 706.)

§ 54.1-2602. Board membership; officers; duties of Director of Department.

The Board of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology shall consist of seven members as follows: two licensed audiologists, two licensed speech-language pathologists, one otolaryngologist, and two citizen members. The terms of Board members shall be four years. All professional members of the Board shall have actively practiced their professions for at least two years prior to their appointments.

The Board shall elect annually a chairman and a vice-chairman.

The Board shall be authorized to promulgate canons of ethics under which the professional activities of persons regulated shall be conducted.

(1972, c. 181, §§ 54-83.1:8, 54-83.1:10; 1978, c. 34; 1979, c. 296; 1981, c. 447; 1987, c. 686, § 54-83.1:8.1; 1988, c. 765; 1992, c. 706; 2013, c. [436](#).)

§ 54.1-2603. License required.

A. In order to practice audiology or speech pathology, it shall be necessary to hold a valid license.

B. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision 2 of § 54.1-2601, the Board of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology may license as school speech-language pathologists any person who holds a master's degree in speech-language pathology. The Board of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology shall issue licenses to such persons without examination, upon review of credentials and payment of an application fee in accordance with regulations of the Board for school speech-language pathologists.

Persons holding such licenses as school speech-language pathologists, without examination, shall practice solely in public school divisions; holding a license as a school speech-language pathologist pursuant to this section shall not authorize such persons to practice outside the school setting or in any setting other than the public schools of the Commonwealth, unless such individuals are licensed by the Board of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology to offer to the public the services defined in § 54.1-2600.

The Board shall issue any person licensed as a school speech-language pathologist a license that notes the limitations on practice set forth in this subsection.

Persons who hold licenses issued by the Board of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology without these limitations shall be exempt from the requirements of this subsection.

(1979, c. 408, § 54-83.1:011; 1988, c. 765; 1999, cc. 967, 1005; 2014, c. 781.)

§ 54.1-2604. Provisional license in audiology or speech-language pathology.

The Board may issue a provisional license to an applicant for licensure in audiology or speech-language pathology who has met the educational and examination requirements for licensure, to allow for the applicant to obtain clinical experience as specified in the Board's regulations. However, a person practicing with a provisional license in audiology shall practice only under the supervision of a licensed audiologist and a person practicing with a provisional license in speech-language pathology shall practice only under the supervision of a licensed speech-language pathologist in accordance with regulations established by the Board.

(2006, c. [97](#); 2013, c. [436](#).)

§ 54.1-2605. Practice of assistant speech-language pathologists.

A person who has met the qualifications prescribed by the Board may practice as an assistant speech-language pathologist in accordance with regulations of the Board and may perform limited duties that are otherwise restricted to the practice of a speech-language pathologist under the supervision and direction of a licensed speech-language pathologist.

2014, c. 661; 2016, c. 77.