

**Proposed starting place for rules committee to work on new Rules for SLPA – AFTER LEGISLATION PASSES at state level**

**16.26.2.18 PARAPROFESSIONAL LICENSURE AS A SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSISTANT (SLPA):**

**A. Prerequisite requirements:**

(1) Acceptance of a paraprofessional licensee as a speech-language pathology assistant is subject to board approval. Such licensees shall:

(a) certify that he/she is not guilty of any activities listed in Section 61-14B-21 of the Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Act; and

(b) provide proof of having met educational, supervision, and employment requirements.

(2) It is the responsibility of the SLPA and the supervising speech-language pathologist to insure the distinction between the roles of the speech-language pathology assistant and the speech language pathologist.

**B. Educational requirements:**

- (1) an associate's degree or certificate in a speech-language pathology assistant program from an accredited college or university OR
- (2) a baccalaureate degree in speech-language pathology or communication disorders from an accredited college or university OR
- (3) a baccalaureate degree in another field with thirty (30) semester hours of credit in speech-language pathology or communication disorders from an accredited college or university ; OR
- (4) enrolled in a master's degree program in speech-language pathology or communication disorders and completes a minimum rate of nine (9) semester hours per year of graduate courses in communication disorders per year and maintain a minimum of a 3.0 GPA in communication disorders course work and/or master's degree program.; or
  - a. if not accepted into a master's degree program in speech-language pathology or communication disorders, the applicant must be currently enrolled in nine (9) semester hours of graduate courses per year with at least three (3) hours in communication disorders, six (6) hours may be taken in a related field and maintain a minimum of a 3.0 GPA in communication disorders course work and/or master's degree program.; and;
- (5) In addition, the applicant must complete at least 100 clinical hours of supervised field work experience (if not already documented) under the direct supervision of a licensed Speech Language Pathologist as evidenced by documentation, within one year from date of license or the SLPA license will be terminated.

**C. Supervision requirements:**

(1) Work of the speech-language pathology assistant must be supervised by a speech-language pathologist licensed by this act and who has a minimum of two (2) years experience in the field after completion of the Clinical Fellowship.

(2) A speech-language pathologist may supervise a maximum of two (2) part time or full time SLPAs at one (1) time to provide a minimum of 30% supervision including 20% direct and 10% indirect supervision for the first 90 days. After the first 90 days, a minimum of 10% supervision must be direct and 10% indirect supervision.

(3) The supervising speech-language pathologist is expected to appropriately reduce their direct caseload for each assistant they supervise, ensuring the maintenance of high professional standards as stated in the code of ethics.

(4) SLPAs do not carry their own caseload

(5) Types of Supervision Required for Duties Performed by a Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (a) Duties performed by the speech-language pathology assistant that require immediate supervision may include, but are not limited to, any direct client activity involving medically fragile patients. In such instances, the speech-language pathology assistant shall act only under the direction of the supervisor. (b) Duties performed by the speech-language pathology assistant that require direct supervision may include, but are not limited to, any new screening or treatment activity that the assistant has been trained to perform by the supervisor, but has not yet been performed by the speech-language pathology assistant in direct client care. (c) Duties performed by the speech-language pathology assistant that require indirect supervision may include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) Screening or treatment activities where the supervisor has previously given instructions as to how to perform the task, has observed the assistant in the conduct of these activities, and is satisfied that the activities can be competently performed by the speech-language pathology assistant, i.e., repetitive drill exercises, generalization or carryover activities; (2) Clerical tasks such as record keeping, materials preparation, scheduling, equipment maintenance; and, (3) Other non-client care activities.

a. For SLP who are supervising licensees in their pursuit of 100 clinical hours, the speech-language pathology assistant must be supervised a minimum of 50% of the time. The patient/client contact refers to direct supervision of the speech-language pathology assistant student, which is defined as on-site, in-view observation and guidance.

**D. Employment requirements:**

(1) Terms of employment must require at least a paraprofessional license as a speech language pathology assistant.

(2) The role of the speech-language pathology assistant shall be determined in collaboration with the supervising speech-language pathologist (SLP) and the employer.

**E. Scope of Practice for Speech Language Pathology Assistant:**

(1) Scope of Practice must be limited to the following:

- (a) Assist the SLP with speech, language, and/or hearing screenings without clinical interpretation;
- (b) Follow documented treatment programs and procedures that are planned, selected and/or designed by the supervising SLP;
- (c) Prepare written daily plans based on the overall intervention plan designed by the supervising SLP;
- (d) Document student, patient, and client performance (e.g., tallying data for the SLP to use; preparing charts, records, and graphs) and report this information to the supervising SLP;
- (e) Maintain daily service/delivery treatment notes as required by supervising SLP;
- (f) Assist the speech-language pathologist during assessment of clients exclusive of administration and/or interpretation;
- (g) Assist with clerical duties, such as preparing materials and scheduling activities, perform checks and maintenance of equipment, and assist with departmental operations, as directed by the SLP;
- (h) Assist in programming and providing instruction in the use of augmentative and alternative communication devices;
- (i) Participate with the speech-language pathologist in research projects, in-service training, and public relations programs.

**2.** Employment duties must not include any of the following:

- (a) Represent himself or herself as an SLP;
- (b) Interpret data into diagnostic statements or clinical management strategies or procedures;
- (c) Select or discharge clients for services;
- (d) Interpret clinical information including data or impressions relative to client performance;
- (e) Treat clients without following the individualized treatment plan;
- (f) Write, develop, modify or sign a student's, patient's, or client's treatment plan/IEP/IFSP/, reimbursement form or reports in any way without the supervising SLP;
- (g) Refer a client to other professionals or agencies;
- (h) Provide client or family counseling;
- (i) Develop or determine the swallowing strategies or precautions for patients, family, or staff;
- (j) Treat medically fragile students/patients/clients independently;
- (k) disclose clinical or confidential information;

**F.** Documentation required: All applicants for paraprofessional license in speech-language pathology assistant are required to provide the following documentation to the board:

- (1) a completed board approved license application form;
- (2) the required license application fee; and
- (3) a completed board approved verification of education form verifying education and clinical hours (if Applicable) as outlined in 16.26.2.18B.(2)a-d:

[16.26.2.18 NMAC - Rp, 16 NMAC 26.2.15, 2/3/06; A, 11/29/08; A, 6/7/10; A, 1/29/15]

DEFINITIONS:

**Direct Supervision of SLPAs means on-site, in-view observation and guidance while a clinical activity is performed by an SLPA.**

**Speech Language Pathology Assistant**

SLPAs are individuals who, following academic course work, clinical practicum, and credentialing, can perform tasks prescribed, directed, and supervised by ASHA-certified SLPs.

Medically Fragile – is the term used to describe a student / patient / client who is acutely ill and / or in an unstable condition.

Continuing Education Units – The SLPA must obtain 20 hours of continuing education units every two (2) years.