

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007**

**HOUSE BILL 892
RATIFIED BILL**

**AN ACT TO UPDATE THE LICENSURE ACT FOR SPEECH AND LANGUAGE
PATHOLOGISTS AND AUDIOLOGISTS.**

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 90-293 reads as rewritten:

"§ 90-293. Definitions.

As used in this Article, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (1) "Audiologist" means any person who engages in the practice of audiology. A person is deemed to be an audiologist if he offers services to the public under any title incorporating the terms of "audiology," "audiologist," "audiological," "hearing clinic," "hearing clinician," "hearing therapist," or any similar title or description of service.
- (2) "Board" means the Board of Examiners for Speech and Language Pathologists and Audiologists.
- (3) "License" means a license issued by the Board under the provisions of this Article, including a temporary license.
- (4) "Person" means an individual, organization, or corporate body, except that only individuals can be licensed under this Article.
- (5) "Speech and language pathologist" means any person who represents himself or herself to the public by title or by description of services, methods, or procedures as one who evaluates, examines, instructs, ~~or counsels~~ counsels, or treats persons suffering from conditions or disorders affecting speech and ~~language~~ language or swallowing. A person is deemed to be a speech and language pathologist if ~~he~~ the person offers such services under any title incorporating the words "speech pathology," "speech pathologist," "speech correction," "speech correctionist," "speech therapy," "speech therapist," "speech clinic," "speech clinician," "language pathologist," "language therapist," "logopedist," "communication disorders," "communicologist," "voice therapist," "voice pathologist," or any similar title or description of service.
- (6) "The practice of audiology" means the application of principles, methods, and procedures of measurement, testing, evaluation, prediction, consultation, counseling, instruction, habilitation, or rehabilitation related to ~~hearing and disorders of hearing and vestibular disorders~~ disorders for the purpose of identifying, preventing, ameliorating, or modifying such disorders and conditions in individuals ~~and/or~~ or groups of individuals. For the purpose of this subdivision, the words "habilitation" and "rehabilitation" shall include auditory training, speech reading, aural rehabilitation, hearing aid use evaluation and recommendations, and fabrication of earmolds and similar accessories for clinical testing ~~purposes only purposes~~.
- (7) "The practice of speech and language pathology" means the application of principles, methods, and procedures for the

measurement, testing, evaluation, prediction, ~~counseling, counseling, treating,~~ instruction, habilitation, or rehabilitation related to the development and disorders of speech, voice, ~~or language~~language, and swallowing for the purpose of identifying, preventing, ameliorating, or modifying such disorders.

(8) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 665, s. 1.

(9) "Accredited college or university" means an institution of higher learning accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Universities, or accredited by a similarly recognized association of another locale."

SECTION 2. G.S. 90-294(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) The provisions of this Article do not apply to:

(1) The activities, services and use of an official title by a person employed by an agency of the federal government and solely in connection with such employment.

(2) The activities and services of a student or trainee in speech and language pathology or audiology pursuing a course of study in an accredited college or university, or working in a training center program approved by the Board, if these activities and services constitute a part of such person's course of study.

(3) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 665, s. 2.

(4) A person who holds a valid and current credential as a speech and language pathologist or audiologist issued by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction or who is employed by the North Carolina Schools for the Deaf and Blind, if such person practices speech and language pathology or audiology in a salaried position solely within the confines or under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Instruction or the Department of Health and Human Services respectively.

~~(5) A physician licensed to practice medicine.~~

~~(6) Persons performing audiometric screenings and whose work is under the supervision of a licensed physician, or licensed audiologist.~~

~~(7) Persons who are now or may become engaged in counseling or instructing laryngectomees in the methods, techniques, or problems of learning to speak again."~~

SECTION 3.(a) G.S. 90-294(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) Nothing in this Article shall apply to a physician licensed to practice medicine, or to any person employed by ~~such a physician~~ licensed to practice medicine in the course of ~~his the physician's~~ practice of medicine."

SECTION 3.(b) G.S. 90-294 is amended by adding a new subsection to

read:

"(i) Nothing in this Article shall apply to a licensed physical therapy or occupational therapy practitioner providing evaluation and treatment of swallowing disorders, cognitive/communication deficits, and balance functions within the context of his or her licensed practice."

SECTION 4. G.S. 90-295 reads as rewritten:

"§ 90-295. Qualifications of applicants for permanent licensure.

(a) To be eligible for permanent licensure by the Board as a speech and language ~~pathologist or audiologist,~~pathologist, the applicant must:

(1) Possess at least a master's degree in speech and language pathology ~~or audiology~~ or qualifications deemed equivalent by the Board under ~~regulations~~ rules duly adopted by the Board under this Article. ~~Such~~ The degree or equivalent qualifications shall be from an accredited institution.

- (2) Submit transcripts from one or more accredited colleges or universities presenting evidence of the completion of ~~60-75~~ semester hours constituting a well-integrated program of course study dealing with the normal aspects of human communication, development thereof, disorders thereof, and clinical techniques for evaluation and management of such disorders.
- a. ~~Twelve-Fifteen~~ of these ~~60-75~~ semester hours must be obtained in courses that provide information that pertains to normal development and use of speech, language and hearing.
 - b. ~~Thirty-Thirty-six~~ of these ~~60-75~~ semester hours must be in courses that provide information relative to communication disorders and information about and training in evaluation and management of speech, language, and hearing disorders. At least 24 of these 30 semester hours must be in courses in ~~the professional area (speech and language pathology or audiology) for which the license is requested, and no less than six semester hours may be in audiology for the license in speech and language pathology or in speech and language pathology for the license in audiology.~~ Moreover, ~~no more than six semester hours may be in courses that provide credit for clinical practice obtained during academic training.~~ speech and language pathology.
 - c. Credit for study of information pertaining to related fields that augment the work of the clinical practitioner of speech and language pathology ~~and/or~~ audiology may also apply toward the total ~~60-75~~ semester hours.
 - d. ~~Thirty-Thirty-six~~ of the total ~~60-75~~ semester hours that are required for a license must be in courses that are acceptable toward a graduate degree by the college or university ~~in-at~~ which they are taken. Moreover, 21 of those ~~30 semester hours must be within the 24 semester hours required in the professional area (speech and language pathology or audiology) for which the license is requested or within the six semester hours required in the other area.~~ semester hours must be in graduate level courses in speech and language pathology.
- (3) Submit evidence of the completion of a minimum of ~~300-400~~ clock hours of supervised, direct clinical experience with individuals who present a variety of communication disorders. This experience must have been obtained within the training institution or in one of its cooperating ~~programs.~~ programs in the following areas: (i) Speech – Adult (200 diagnostic and 200 therapeutic); Children (200 diagnostic and 200 therapeutic); or (ii) Language – Adult (200 diagnostic and 200 therapeutic); Children (200 diagnostic and 200 therapeutic). Each new applicant must submit a verified clinical clock hour summary sheet signed by the clinic or program director, in addition to completion of the license application.
- (4) Present written evidence ~~from a licensed and/or American Speech and Hearing Association certified speech and language pathologist or audiologist supervisor of nine months of full-time professional experience in which bona fide clinical work has been accomplished in the major professional area (speech and language pathology or audiology) in which the license is being sought, of nine months of full-time professional experience in which bona fide clinical work has been accomplished in speech and language pathology. The professional work must have been supervised by a speech and~~

language pathologist who is State-licensed or certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. This experience must follow the completion of the requirements listed in subdivisions (1), (2) and (3). Full time is defined as at least nine months in a calendar year and a minimum of 30 hours per week. Half time is defined as at least 18 months in two calendar years and a minimum of 20 hours per week. The supervision must be performed by a person who holds a valid license under this Article, or certificate of clinical competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, in the specific area for which licensure is sought.speech and language pathology.

(5) Pass an examination established or approved by the Board.

(b) To be eligible for permanent licensure by the Board as an audiologist, the applicant must:

(1) Possess a doctoral degree in audiology or qualifications deemed equivalent by the Board under rules duly adopted by the Board under this Article. The degree or equivalent qualifications shall be from an accredited institution.

(2) Persons who were engaged in the practice of audiology and do not possess a doctoral degree in audiology before October 1, 2007, shall be exempt from the degree requirement in subdivision (1) of this subsection provided those persons remain continuously licensed in the field.

(3) Submit transcripts from one or more accredited colleges or universities presenting evidence of the completion of 90 semester hours constituting a well-integrated program of course study dealing with the normal aspects of human communication, the development of human communication, the disorders associated with human communication, and the clinical techniques for evaluation and management of such disorders.

(4) Present written evidence documenting 1,800 clock hours of professional experience directly supervised by an audiologist who is State-licensed or certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association or other Board-approved agency. The clock hours of professional experience must be with individuals who present a variety of communication and auditory disorders and must have been obtained within the training program at an accredited college or university or in one of its cooperating programs.

(5) Pass an examination established or approved by the Board."

SECTION 5. G.S. 90-303(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) There shall be a Board of Examiners for Speech and Language Pathologists and Audiologists, which shall be composed of seven members, who shall all be residents of this State. Two members shall have a paid work experience in audiology for at least five years and hold a ~~certificate of clinical competence in audiology of the American Speech and Hearing Association.~~North Carolina license as an audiologist. Two members shall have paid work experience in speech pathology for at least five years and hold a ~~certificate of clinical competence in speech pathology of the American Speech and Hearing Association.~~North Carolina license as a speech and language pathologist. One member shall be a physician who is licensed to practice medicine in the State of North Carolina. Two members shall be appointed by the Governor to represent the interest of the public at large. These two members shall be neither licensed speech and language pathologists nor audiologists. These members shall be appointed not later than July 1, 1981; one shall be initially appointed for a term of two years; the other shall be appointed for a term of three years. Thereafter all public members shall serve three-year terms."

SECTION 6. G.S. 90-304(a)(3) reads as rewritten:

"(a) The powers and duties of the Board are as follows:

...

(3) To adopt responsible rules ~~and regulations~~ including ~~but not limited to regulations which~~ rules that establish ethical standards of practice and require continuing professional education and to amend or repeal the same."

SECTION 7. Section 4 of this act becomes effective October 1, 2007. The remaining sections are effective when this act becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 24th day of July, 2007.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

Joe Hackney
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved _____ .m. this _____ day of _____, 2007