

Scope of Practice and Supervision of SLPAs:
Excerpt from
REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PRACTICE OF AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH-
LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

VIRGINIA BOARD OF AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY
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Part V
Standards of Practice

18VAC30-21-140. Supervisory responsibilities; supervision of unlicensed assistants.

A. Responsibility of a licensee.

1. A licensed audiologist who supervises unlicensed assistants shall document such supervision, shall be held fully responsible for their performance and activities, and shall ensure that they perform only those activities that do not constitute the practice of audiology and that are commensurate with their level of training.

2. A licensed speech-language pathologist who supervises unlicensed assistants shall document such supervision, shall be held fully responsible for their performance and activities, and shall ensure that they perform only those activities that do not constitute the practice of speech-language pathology and that are commensurate with their level of training.

a. A speech-language pathologist shall not supervise an assistant without the speech-language pathologist's knowledge and consent by the assistant and the licensee documented prior to assumption of supervisory responsibilities.

b. The frequency in which the speech-language pathologist personally delivers treatment or services to a client who is receiving some services from an assistant shall be up to the professional judgment of the speech-language pathologist and shall be determined by the treatment needs of the client, the type of services being provided, and the setting in which the client is being served, but shall occur at least every 30 days.

3. The identity of the unlicensed assistant shall be disclosed to the client prior to treatment and shall be made a part of the client's file.

B. Qualifications of a speech-language pathologist assistant.

1. A person acting as a speech-language pathologist assistant shall have:

a. A bachelor's degree or associate's degree and documented training by a licensed speech-language pathologist in topics related to the client population to be served; or

b. Employment as a speech-language pathologist assistant in a United States jurisdiction within the last five years preceding July 27, 2016.

2. A speech-language pathologist supervising an assistant shall be responsible for determining that the knowledge, skills, and clinical experience of the assistant are sufficient to ensure competency to perform all tasks to which the assistant is assigned. The speech-language pathologist shall document competency after training and direct observation of the assistant's performance of such tasks, and a record of skills and competencies shall be maintained.

C. Scope of practice of a speech-language pathologist assistant. After demonstration and documentation of competency for the duties to be assigned, an assistant shall only engage in those duties planned, designed, and supervised by a licensed speech-language pathologist, to include the following:

1. Assist with speech, language, and hearing screenings without clinical interpretation of results.
2. Assist during assessment of a client exclusive of administration or interpretation.
3. Perform activities for each session that are routine and do not require professional judgment, in accordance with a plan developed and directed by the speech-language pathologist who retains the professional responsibility for the client.
4. Document a client's performance and report information to the supervising speech-language pathologist.
5. Assist with programming augmentative and alternative communication devices and assist the client in repetitive use of such devices.
6. Sign or initial informal treatment notes and, upon request, co-sign formal documents with the supervising speech-language pathologist.
7. Engage in the following activities:
 - a. Preparing materials;
 - b. Scheduling appointments and activities;
 - c. Preparing charts, records, or graphs and performing other clerical duties;
 - d. Performing checks and maintenance of equipment; and
 - e. Assisting a client with transitioning to and from therapy sessions.
8. Perform duties not otherwise restricted to the practice of speech-language pathology.

D. A speech-language pathologist assistant shall not engage in the practice of speech-language pathology, including the following:

1. Represent himself as a speech-language pathologist.
 2. Perform standardized or nonstandardized diagnostic tests or formal or informal evaluations.
 3. Perform procedures that require a professional level of clinical acumen and technical skill.
 4. Tabulate or interpret results and observations of feeding and swallowing evaluations or screenings performed by a speech-language pathologist.
 5. Participate in formal conferences or meetings without the presence of the supervising speech-language pathologist.
 6. Provide interpretative information to the client, the family of the client, or others regarding the client's status or service.
 7. Write, develop, or modify a client's treatment plan.
 8. Assist in or provide services as specified in subsection C of this section unless directed by the supervising speech-language pathologist.
 9. Sign any formal documents in lieu of the supervising speech-language pathologist.
 10. Select a client for service or discharge a client from service.
 11. Make a decision on the need for additional services or make referrals for service.
 12. Disclose clinical or confidential information either orally or in writing to anyone other than the supervising speech-language pathologist, unless mandated by law or authorized by the supervising speech-language pathologist.
 13. Develop or determine the swallowing or feeding strategies or precautions for a client or provide feeding or swallowing treatment.
- E. Supervision of an assistant in speech-language pathology.
1. The practice of an assistant shall only be supervised by a speech-language pathologist who retains full legal and ethical responsibility for the client. A speech-language pathologist shall only supervise the equivalent of two full-time assistants.
 2. The speech-language pathologist shall provide the level of supervision to the speech-language pathologist assistant necessary to ensure quality of care to include onsite supervision of at least two client sessions for each assistant being supervised every 30 days to directly observe and evaluate the performance of the assistant. The speech-language pathologist shall document such onsite observation and evaluation in the client record for each session.