

Proposal Summary/ Overview

To be completed by proposal sponsor. (500 Word Count Limit for this page)

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Is this proposal regarding:

- *New or increased regulation of an existing profession/occupation? If so, complete this form, Questionnaire A.*
- *Increased scope of practice or decreased regulation of an existing profession? If so, complete Questionnaire B.*
- *Any other change to regulation or scope of practice? If so, please contact the Committee Administrator to discuss how to proceed.*

1) State the profession/occupation that is the subject of the proposal.

Occupation: Speech-Language Pathology

Subject: Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA) licensure

2) Briefly describe the proposed change.

Makes clarifying change to supervision requirement for Speech Language Pathology Assistants and requests appropriation to cover MDH costs for establishment of licensing system.

3) If the proposal has been introduced, provide the bill number and names of House and Senate sponsors. If the proposal has not been introduced, indicate whether legislative sponsors have been identified. If the bill has been proposed in previous sessions, please list previous bill numbers and years of introduction.

2025: SF1534 (Bolden)/HFXXXX (Reyer, Backer) – to be introduced on March 3, 2025

Questionnaire A: New or increased regulation (adapted from Mn Stat 214.002 subd 2 and MDH Scope of Practice Tools)

This questionnaire is intended to help legislative committees decide which proposals for new or increased regulation of health professions should receive a hearing and advance through the legislative process. It is also intended to alert the public to these proposals and to narrow the issues for hearing.

This form must be completed by the sponsor of the legislative proposal. The completed form will be posted on the committee's public web page. At any time before the bill is heard in committee, opponents may respond in writing with concerns, questions, or opposition to the information stated and these documents will also be posted. The Chair may request that the sponsor respond in writing to any concerns raised before a hearing will be scheduled.

A response is not required for questions which do not pertain to the profession/occupation (indicate "not applicable"). Please be concise. Refer to supporting evidence and provide citation to the source of the information where appropriate.

New or increased regulation of health professions is governed by Mn State 214. Please read and be familiar with those provisions before submitting this form.

While it is often impossible to reach complete agreement with all interested parties, sponsors are advised to try to understand and to address the concerns of any opponents before submitting the form.

1) Who does the proposal impact?

a. Define the occupations, practices, or practitioners who are the subject of this proposal.

Speech-Language Pathologists and Speech-Language Pathology Assistants.

b. List any associations or other groups representing the occupation seeking regulation and the approximate number of members of each in Minnesota.

MN Speech Language Hearing Association (MNSHA), which has a membership of approximately 360 members.

According to MDH licensing lookup, there are 2110 licensed speech-language pathologists.

Describe the work settings, and conditions for practitioners of the occupation, including any special geographic areas or populations frequently served.

Acute care and rehabilitation hospitals, outpatient clinics, nursing homes, private pediatric practices, private practice, autism programs, other medical facilities, and education settings

Speech-language pathologists treat individuals with a wide variety of communication disorders including disorders that are acquired (for example, from stroke, traumatic brain injury, and ALS), degenerative (for example, from dementia), or developmental (for example,

articulation disorders, language delays, stuttering, autism spectrum disorder).

c. Describe the work duties or functions typically performed by members of this occupational group and whether they are the same or like those performed by any other occupational groups.

A speech-language pathology assistant provides services to remediate communication issues related to articulation, language stuttering, or voice impairment under the supervision of a licensed speech-language pathologist. The work is supportive of, and therefore similar to, work completed by a speech-language pathologist.

2) Specialized training, education, or experience (“preparation”) required to engage in the occupation.

a. What preparation is required to engage in the occupation? How have current practitioners acquired that preparation?

[MN Statute 148.5181](#) governs speech language pathologist assistant licensure.

To be eligible for this license:

(1) an associate degree from a speech-language pathology assistant program that is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges or its equivalent as approved by the commissioner; or

(2) a bachelor's degree in the discipline of communication sciences or disorders with additional transcript credits and instruction in assistant-level service delivery practices and completion of at least 100 hours of supervised field work experience as a speech-language pathology assistant student.

Alexandria Technical and Community College offers an online training program for speech-language pathology assistants, which began in August 2013. Since its inception, this program has graduated eight classes of speech-language pathology assistants.

b. Would the proposed regulation change the way practitioners become prepared? If so, why, and how? Include any change in the cost of entry to the occupation. Who would bear these costs?

No.

c. Is there an existing model of this change being implemented in another state? Please list state, originating bill and year of passage?

Not applicable.

d. If current practitioners in Minnesota lack any training, education, experience, or credential that would be required under the new regulation, how does the proposal address that lack.

Minnesota has an online training program currently in place at Alexandria Technical and Community College.

e. Would new entrants into the occupation be required to provide evidence of preparation or be required to pass an examination? If not, please explain why not. Would current practitioners be required to provide such evidence? If not, why not?

Yes, current law requires assistants to provide evidence of successfully completing an associate degree from a speech-language pathology assistant program accredited by the Higher Learning Commission or a bachelor's degree in the discipline of communications sciences or disorder and a speech-language pathology assistant certification program.

3) Supervision of practitioners

a. How are practitioners of the occupation currently supervised, including any supervision within regulated institution or by a regulated health professional? How would the proposal change the provision of supervision?

[M.S. 148.5192](#) allows a licensed speech-language pathologist to delegate duties to a speech-language pathology assistant and specifies requirements for speech-language pathologists regarding supervision of a speech-language assistant.

This proposal makes one change to clarify that a speech language pathologist licensed under the Public Education Licensing Standards Board can supervise and speech language pathology assistant working in a school setting.

b. Does a regulatory entity currently exist or does the proposal create a regulatory entity? What is the proposed scope of authority of the entity? (For example, will it have authority to develop rules, determine standards for education and training, assess practitioners' competence levels?) Has the proposed change been discussed with the current regulatory authority? If so, please list participants and date.

A speech-language pathology assistant is licensed under the MN Department of Health.

c. Do provisions exist to ensure that practitioners maintain competency? Describe any proposed change.

Speech-language pathology assistants are required to follow and track continued education unit hour the same as speech-language pathologists.

4) Level of regulation (See Mn Stat 214.001, subd. 2, declaring that “no regulations shall be imposed upon any occupation unless required for the safety and well-being of the citizens of the state.” The harm must be “recognizable, and not remote.” Ibid.)

Not applicable.

a. Explain why existing civil or criminal laws or procedures are inadequate to prevent or remedy any harm to the public.

Not applicable.

- b. Explain why the proposed level of regulation has been selected and why a lower level of regulation was not selected.

Not applicable.

5) Implications for Health Care Access, Cost, Quality, and Transformation

- a. Describe how the proposal will affect the availability, accessibility, cost, delivery, and quality of health care, including the impact on unmet health care needs and underserved populations. How does the proposal contribute to meeting these needs?

Not applicable.

- b. Describe the expected impact of the proposal on the supply of practitioners and on the cost of services or goods provided by the occupation. If possible, include the geographic availability of proposed providers/services. Cite any sources used.

Not applicable.

- c. Does the proposal change how and by whom the services are compensated? What costs and what savings would accrue to patients, insurers, providers, and employers?

It does not change how and by whom the services are compensated.

- d. Describe any impact of the proposal on an evolving health care delivery and payment system (e.g., collaborative practice, innovations in technology, ensuring cultural competency, value-based payments)?

Not applicable.

- e. What is the expected regulatory cost to state government? Is there an up-to-date fiscal note for the proposal? How are the costs covered under the proposal?

The cost for establishing the new SLPA licensing system is covered under the cost of the SLPA license fee. The bill would help offset those costs, and we are working with the Minnesota Department of Health, which is the regulatory authority over SLPs and SLpas to determine what that total cost would be.

This would be a one-time appropriation from the general fund, but ongoing costs would be paid for by SLPA licensure fees. MDH would provide an updated fiscal note when the bill is scheduled for a hearing.

6) Evaluation/Reports

Describe any plans to evaluate and report on the impact of the proposal if it becomes law,

including focus and timeline. List the evaluating agency and frequency of reviews.

Not applicable.

7) Support for and opposition to the proposal

- a. What organizations are sponsoring the proposal? How many members do these organizations represent in Minnesota?

MN Speech Language Hearing Association, which has a membership of approximately 360.

- b. List organizations, including professional, regulatory boards, consumer advocacy groups, and others, who support the proposal.

Minnesota Speech-Language-Hearing Association (MNSHA)

- c. List any organizations, including professional, regulatory boards, consumer advocacy groups, and others, who have indicated concerns/opposition to the proposal or who are likely to have concerns/opposition. Explain the concerns/opposition of each, as the sponsor understands it.

We are not aware of any opposition to the bill.

- d. What actions has the sponsor taken to minimize or resolve disagreement with those opposing or likely to oppose the proposal?

The MN Speech Language Hearing Association is working with the MN Department of Health (MDH) to clarify any questions. MDH has committed to providing technical feedback which will be considered for incorporation once we've had a chance to review it.

Should opposition arise, supporters of the legislation will work to address concerns.