

**SENATE BILL NO. 2172**

Introduced by

Senators Oban, Anderson, Poolman

Representatives Rohr, Schreiber-Beck, Guggisberg

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 43-37 of the North Dakota  
2 Century Code, relating to licensure of speech-language pathology assistants; to amend and  
3 reenact sections 43-37-02, 43-37-03, 43-37-04, 43-37-04.1, 43-37-05, 43-37-06, 43-37-08,  
4 43-37-09, 43-37-13, and 43-37-18 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the state board  
5 of examiners on audiology and speech-language pathology and the regulation of  
6 speech-language pathology assistants; to repeal section 43-37-01 of the North Dakota Century  
7 Code, relating to legislative intent; to provide a penalty; and to provide an effective date.

8 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

9 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-37-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
10 amended and reenacted as follows:

11 **43-37-02. Definitions.**

12 As used in this chapter, unless the context or subject matter otherwise requires:

- 13 1. "Audiologist" means ~~a person who practices an individual licensed by the board to~~  
14 practice audiology and ~~who holds out to the public by any title or description of~~  
15 ~~services incorporating the words audiologist, hearing clinician, hearing therapist, or~~  
16 ~~any similar title or description of service. A person may not use the term "audiologist"~~  
17 ~~in a personal reference unless all the requirements of this chapter pertaining to~~  
18 ~~audiology are met.~~
- 19 2. "Audiology" means the application of principles, methods, and procedures of  
20 measurement, testing, evaluation, prediction, consultation, counseling, instruction,  
21 habilitation, or rehabilitation related to hearing and disorders of hearing including  
22 vestibular testing, for the purpose of evaluating, identifying, preventing, ameliorating,  
23 or modifying such disorders and conditions in individuals or groups of individuals.

- 1       3. "Board" means the state board of examiners on audiology and speech-language  
2            pathology.
- 3       4. "Habilitation" and "rehabilitation" include hearing aid evaluation and recommendation,  
4            auditory training, and speech reading.
- 5       5. ~~"Person"~~ "Licensee" means ~~a human being an~~ audiologist, speech-language  
6            pathologist, or speech-language pathology assistant.
- 7       6. ~~"Speech-language pathologist" means a person who practices~~ an individual licensed  
8            by the board to practice speech-language pathology ~~and meets all requirements of this~~  
9            ~~chapter pertaining to speech-language pathology.~~
- 10      7. "Speech-language pathology" means the application of principles, methods, and  
11            procedures for measurement, testing, evaluation, identification, prediction, counseling,  
12            or instruction related to the development and disorders of speech, language, voice,  
13            cognitive-communication, swallowing, and augmentative alternative communication for  
14            the purpose of identifying, evaluating, preventing, managing, habilitating or  
15            rehabilitating, ameliorating, or modifying such disorders and conditions in individuals  
16            or groups of individuals.
- 17      8. "Speech-language pathology assistant" means an individual licensed by the board to  
18            assist in the practice of speech-language pathology.

19       **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-37-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
20 amended and reenacted as follows:

21       **43-37-03. License required - Exceptions.**

- 22      1. A person may not practice audiology or speech-language pathology, assist in the  
23            practice of speech-language pathology, or represent that the person is an audiologist  
24            or, speech-language pathologist, or speech-language pathology assistant in this state  
25            unless licensed annually in accordance with this chapter. ~~However, this~~
- 26      2. A person may not hold out to the public by any title, abbreviation, or description of  
27            services incorporating the words audiologist, hearing clinician, hearing therapist,  
28            speech-language pathologist, speech-language pathologist assistant, or any similar  
29            title, abbreviation, or description of service unless licensed in accordance with this  
30            chapter.
- 31      3. This chapter does not prevent or restrict:



- 1 any calendar year and in cooperation with an audiologist or speech-language  
2 pathologist licensed under this chapter.
- 3 8. ~~g.~~ g. ~~Any person~~An individual holding a valid credential as a teacher of the  
4 hearing-impaired issued by the council on education of the deaf from engaging in  
5 the practice of habilitation and rehabilitation of individuals who are  
6 hearing-impaired ~~persons~~.
- 7 9. ~~h.~~ h. ~~Any person~~An individual possessing a valid certificate as a certified audiometric  
8 technician recognized by the state board as meeting council for accreditation in  
9 occupational hearing conservation standards appendix II or its equivalent from  
10 providing audiometric testing if such service is performed in cooperation with  
11 either an audiologist licensed under this chapter or a licensed physician.
- 12 10. ~~i.~~ i. ~~Any person~~An individual providing hearing screening services as part of a public  
13 service project solely intended for the purposes of identification of hearing  
14 impairment if such services are performed in cooperation with an audiologist  
15 licensed under this chapter who is directly responsible for:
- 16 a. (1) The training of ~~said person~~this individual;
- 17 b. (2) The administration of hearing screening procedures;
- 18 c. (3) The interpretation of testing results; and
- 19 d. (4) Assuring appropriate referral and followup of the identified population.

20 **SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-37-04 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
21 amended and reenacted as follows:

22 **43-37-04. Eligibility for licensure.**

23 To be eligible for licensure by the board as an audiologist ~~or~~, speech-language pathologist,  
24 or speech-language pathology assistant, an applicant shall meet all the following requirements:

- 25 1. Be of good moral character.
- 26 2. Possess an appropriate degree from an educational institution recognized by the  
27 board.
- 28 a. An applicant for a speech-language pathologist license ~~shall~~must possess at  
29 least a master's degree in speech-language pathology.
- 30 b. An applicant for an audiologist license ~~shall~~must possess at least a doctorate  
31 degree in audiology.

1           c. An applicant for a speech-language pathology assistant license must possess at  
2           least a bachelor's degree in speech-language pathology or communication  
3           disorders.

4           3. Submit evidence showing qualifications prescribed by rules of the board.

5           4. ~~Pass an examination approved by the board within~~Within one year of application an  
6           applicant for licensure as a speech-language pathologist, speech-language pathology  
7           assistant, or audiologist must pass any applicable examination prescribed by rules  
8           adopted by the board.

9           5. Pay the prescribed fee.

10          **SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-37-04.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
11 amended and reenacted as follows:

12          **43-37-04.1. Licensing of out-of-state practitioners.**

13          1. The board may adopt rules establishing licensure requirements for applicants who  
14          hold a current license in good standing to practice as an audiologist ~~or,~~  
15          speech-language pathologist, or speech-language pathology assistant in a state or  
16          jurisdiction other than this state and who are not the subject of a pending disciplinary  
17          action in any state or jurisdiction.

18          2. Notwithstanding section 43-37-04, as it relates to the licensure eligibility of an  
19          out-of-state audiologist ~~or,~~ speech-language pathologist, or speech-language  
20          pathology assistant, the board's rules may allow for:

21           a. Waiver of the examination requirement if the applicant meets the requirements  
22           established by the board.

23           b. Consideration of education and experience in order to meet the education  
24           requirements.

25          **SECTION 5.** A new section to chapter 43-37 of the North Dakota Century Code is created  
26 and enacted as follows:

27          **Speech-language pathology assistant - Supervising speech-language pathologist.**

28          A speech-language pathology assistant is licensed by the board to work under the  
29          supervision of a speech-language pathologist. A speech-language pathology assistant's scope  
30          of practice is limited to tasks the supervising speech-language pathologist delegates. The  
31          supervising speech-language pathologist shall assess the speech-language pathology

1 assistant's training and skills in determining which tasks may be delegated. The supervising  
2 speech-language pathologist shall limit the delegated tasks to specific components of a speech  
3 and language program as set forth in treatment plans developed by the supervising speech-  
4 language pathologist.

5 **SECTION 6. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-37-05 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
6 amended and reenacted as follows:

7 **43-37-05. Board of examiners on audiology and speech-language pathology.**

- 8 1. The board of examiners on audiology and speech-language pathology is hereby  
9 established.
- 10 2. The board ~~must be~~ is composed of eight members appointed by the governor.  
11 Appointees must be residents of this state for at least one year immediately preceding  
12 their appointment and, except for the consumer member, must be engaged in  
13 rendering services to the public, ~~in~~ teaching, or ~~in~~ research in audiology or  
14 speech-language pathology for at least three years preceding their appointment. Two  
15 board members must be audiologists, four must be speech-language pathologists, one  
16 must be an otolaryngologist, and one must be a consumer.
- 17 3. Each board member shall hold office for three years and until a successor is appointed  
18 and qualified. The terms must be arranged so ~~that~~ no more than four terms expire on  
19 July first of each year. The governor shall fill vacancies for an unexpired term. ~~No~~  
20 ~~person~~An individual may not serve more than two successive terms.
- 21 4. The board shall meet at least twice each calendar year. Special meetings may be  
22 convened at the call of the chairman or at the written request of any three board  
23 members.
- 24 5. Five members of the board constitute a quorum. When an application for licensure is  
25 received, one member of the quorum must be engaged in the profession for which a  
26 license is sought. In the case of an application for licensure as a speech-language  
27 pathology assistant, a speech-language pathologist must be a member of the quorum.

28 **SECTION 7. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-37-06 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
29 amended and reenacted as follows:

1       **43-37-06. Powers and duties of the board.**

2       The board may ~~employ persons~~hire employees to assist the board in carrying out ~~its~~the  
3 board's duties under this chapter and may adopt rules for:

- 4       1.   ~~Licensing~~Annual licensure.
- 5       2.   Licensing fees not to exceed one hundred dollars per year.
- 6       3.   Ethical standards of conduct.
- 7       4.   Continuing competency and education.
- 8       5.   License suspension ~~f~~ or revocation.
- 9       6.   Carrying out the purposes of this chapter.

10       **SECTION 8. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-37-08 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
11 amended and reenacted as follows:

12       **43-37-08. Compensation of board members.**

13       Board members ~~shall~~are entitled to receive compensation per day in the amount provided  
14 for members of the legislative management under section 54-35-10 and ~~shall~~are entitled to be  
15 reimbursed for mileage and travel expenses necessarily incurred in the conduct of board  
16 business at the same rate as state employees.

17       **SECTION 9. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-37-09 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
18 amended and reenacted as follows:

19       **43-37-09. License examination.**

- 20       1.   A separate examination ~~must be~~is required for licensure in speech-language pathology  
21       or audiology. ~~Any person~~An individual may be licensed in both areas if that  
22       ~~person~~individual meets the respective qualifications of each area.
- 23       2.   The speech-language pathology examination and the audiology examination are  
24       examinations offered by organizations approved by the board. The board shall  
25       maintain proof ~~that~~ all licensees have passed the required examination. The  
26       examination is not required for renewal of licenses, except as required by board rules.

27       **SECTION 10. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-37-13 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
28 amended and reenacted as follows:

29       ~~**43-37-13. Suspension and revocation of license**~~**Disciplinary actions.**

- 30       1.   The board may refuse to issue or renew a license, ~~or may suspend,~~ or revoke a  
31       license, or take other disciplinary action against a ~~license~~licensee if the licensee or

- 1 applicant for license ~~has~~ engaged in unprofessional conduct. ~~Such-~~  
2 ~~unprofessional~~Unprofessional conduct ~~may include~~includes:
- 3 a. Obtaining a license by means of fraud, misrepresentation, or concealment of  
4 material facts.
- 5 b. Engaging in unprofessional conduct, as defined by the rules ~~established~~adopted  
6 by the board, or violating the code of ethics adopted ~~and published~~ by the board  
7 by rule.
- 8 c. ~~Conviction~~Being convicted of an offense if the acts for which that ~~person~~individual  
9 is convicted are determined by the board to have a direct bearing on ~~such~~that  
10 applicant's or licensee's ability to serve the public in the capacity of a  
11 speech-language pathologist, speech-language pathology assistant, or  
12 audiologist; or the board determines that ~~such~~ applicant or licensee, following  
13 conviction of any other offense, is not sufficiently rehabilitated under section  
14 12.1-33-02.1.
- 15 d. ~~Violation of any~~Violating an order or rule adopted by the board.
- 16 e. ~~Violation of~~Violating this chapter.
- 17 f. Receiving remuneration of any kind from the sale of any type of hearing aid,  
18 unless licensed under chapter 43-33.
- 19 2. One year from the date of revocation of a license, the licensee may make application  
20 to the board for reinstatement. The board may accept or reject an application for  
21 reinstatement or may require an examination for reinstatement.

22 **SECTION 11. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-37-18 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
23 amended and reenacted as follows:

24 **43-37-18. Penalty.**

25 Any person ~~who~~that violates this chapter is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

26 **SECTION 12. REPEAL.** Section 43-37-01 of the North Dakota Century Code is repealed.

27 **SECTION 13. EFFECTIVE DATE.** This Act becomes effective January 1, 2018.