

MEMORANDUM

TO: Special Education Directors
Human Resource Directors

FROM: Peter Keup
Director, Office of Special Education Services

DATE: April 21, 2026

RE: Speech-Language Pathology Assistants

This memorandum provides information related to the employment of Speech-Language Pathology Assistants (SLP Assistants). South Carolina does not require teacher certification for SLP Assistants. All criteria for employment and scope of practice for SLP Assistants are governed by the laws and regulations as overseen by the South Carolina Labor, License, and Regulation Board (SC LLR).

State laws and regulations regarding Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) Assistants apply whether they are directly hired by a district or contracted through a third-party vendor. Districts must ensure that SLP Assistants operate within their legal scope of practice. Key regulations highlight that SLP Assistants cannot manage their own caseloads and can only provide services under the direction of a licensed Speech-Language Pathologist, who is responsible for additional tasks like meetings, evaluations, and IEP writing. For further details, these laws can be reviewed on the South Carolina Labor, Licensing, and Regulation [website](#).

Employment of an SLP Assistant

An SLP Assistant cannot start working directly with clients until they receive written approval of their supervisory agreement and training plan from the board. Their license becomes void if their authorized supervisor is unavailable, but it can be reactivated with a new approved supervisory agreement. Only licensed individuals can practice speech-language pathology, and SLP Assistants must work under the direct supervision of a licensed speech-language pathologist.

Supervision of an SLP Assistant

A speech-language pathology assistant (SLPA) can only be supervised by a licensed speech-language pathologist (SLP) who has at least three years of experience. An SLP can supervise up to two full-time or three part-time SLPAs, and they are responsible for all clinical services provided by the SLPAs. SLPAs cannot perform tasks if the SLP is unreachable.

Direct supervision requires that the SLP visually supervises at least one out of every seven therapy sessions per patient, and this supervision must be documented. Additionally, indirect supervision is necessary for a minimum of 5% of the workweek, which may involve reviewing records and evaluating recorded sessions. The supervising SLP is also required to conduct quarterly performance reviews of the SLPAs.

Scope of Practice of an SLP Assistant

1. Conduct speech-language or hearing screenings (without interpreting results) according to protocols set by the SLP.
2. Provide direct treatment assistance to patients/clients as directed by the SLP.
3. Implement documented treatment plans or protocols developed by the SLP.
4. Document patient/client progress toward established objectives in the treatment plan.
5. Sign treatment notes, which must be reviewed and co-signed by the supervising SLP.

Prohibited Activities of an SLP Assistant

1. Perform diagnostic tests or evaluations or interpret test results.
2. Participate in conferences or meetings discussing diagnostic information or treatment plans without the supervising speech-language pathologist (SLP).
3. Write, develop, or modify treatment plans.
4. Sign any formal documents without the SLP's signature.
5. Interpret or elaborate on information in reports by licensed SLPs.
6. Disclose confidential information without authorization.
7. Misrepresent themselves as a speech-language pathologist.
8. Engage in feeding or swallowing activities as outlined by ASHA guidelines.
9. Treat medically fragile individuals as defined by ASHA standards.

The provisions outlined are essential for districts to consider when hiring or contracting SLP Assistants. If you have any additional questions regarding this memo, please contact Angie Neal (aneal@ed.sc.gov).