



March 4, 2022

The Honorable Judy M. Burges
1700 West Washington Street
Capitol Complex - House, Room 130
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2890

RE: Assistant HB 2612

Dear Representative Burges:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I write to express support for HB 2612 with amendments, which clarifies language regulating speech-language pathology assistants (SLPAs).

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 218,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Audiologists specialize in preventing and assessing hearing and balance disorders as well as providing audiologic treatment, including hearing aids. Over 3,300 ASHA members reside in Arizona.¹

In Section 36-1940.04. Speech-language pathology assistants (SLPAs); licensure requirements; scope of practice; supervision, ASHA recommends deleting the underlined language below and substituting it the with educational options below in red, which would enable an assistant to apply for certification under ASHA's SLPA program:

- (a) An approved training program for speech-language pathology assistants or the equivalent from a nationally or regionally accredited college or university that consisted of a minimum of sixty semester credit hours of coursework with the following curriculum content:
- (i) Twenty to forty semester credit hours of general education or a bachelor's degree.
 - (ii) Twenty to forty semester credit hours of speech-language pathology technical coursework.

Completion of an SLPA program degree (2-year minimum) from a regionally or nationally accredited institution; or

Receipt of a bachelor's degree in communication sciences and disorders from a regionally or nationally accredited institution; or

Receipt of a college degree (2-year minimum) and successful completion of coursework from a regionally or nationally accredited college institution in all areas below

- Introductory or overview course in communication disorders
- Phonetics
- Speech sound disorders
- Language development
- Language disorders
- Anatomy and physiology of speech and hearing mechanisms.

ASHA also recommends that b of this section below be amended to read as follows:

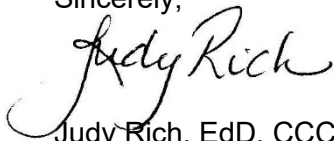
- (b) A minimum of one hundred hours of clinical interaction that does not include observation, under the supervision of a licensed master's level speech-language pathologist possessing the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) and who has the equivalent of a minimum of 9 months of full-time clinical experience after being awarded the CCC-SLP, and who has completed a minimum of 2 hours of professional development/continuing education in clinical instruction/supervision.

We recognize the 2-year requirement is currently in Section F.

This amendment will also enable an SLPA to apply for ASHA's certification program. ASHA certification establishes a benchmark for uniform standards for the knowledge/skill levels expected of assistants and ensures that all certified assistants meet the same rigorous requirements via the passing of a national exam. Certification also defines the roles and responsibilities of an SLPA. ASHA certified assistants are bound by the ASHA Assistants Code of Conduct.

Thank you for considering ASHA amendments to HB 2612. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Eileen Crowe, ASHA's director, state association relations, at ecrowe@asha.org.

Sincerely,



Judy Rich, EdD, CCC-SLP, BCS-CL
2022 ASHA President

¹ American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2021). *Arizona* [Quick Facts]. <https://www.asha.org/siteassets/uploadedfiles/arizona-state-flyer.pdf>.