

**Sixty-ninth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota
In Regular Session Commencing Tuesday, January 7, 2025**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1049
(Human Services Committee)

(At the request of the Board of Examiners on Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology)

AN ACT to amend and reenact subsection 2 of section 43-37-02 and sections 43-37-04 and 43-37-13 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to licensure requirements of a speech-language pathology licensed assistant, temporary licensure, and investigation of an alleged violation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT. Subsection 2 of section 43-37-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

2. "Audiology" means the application of principles, methods, and procedures of measurement, testing, evaluation, prediction, consultation, counseling, instruction, habilitation, or rehabilitation related to hearing and disorders of hearing including vestibular testing, for the purpose of evaluating, identifying, managing, preventing, ameliorating, or modifying such disorders and conditions in individuals or groups of individuals.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENT. Section 43-37-04 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

43-37-04. Eligibility for licensure.

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

1. ~~Be of good moral character.~~
2. Possess an appropriate degree from an educational institution recognized by the board.
 - a. An applicant for a speech-language pathologist license must possess at least a master's degree in speech-language pathology.
 - b. An applicant for an audiologist license must possess at least a doctorate degree in audiology.
 - c. An applicant for a speech-language pathology assistant license must possess ~~at least~~ one hundred hours of supervised clinical experience or fieldwork and:
 - (1) A certificate of completion for speech-language pathology paraprofessionals issued by the superintendent of public instruction prior to August 1, 2026;
 - (2) A bachelor's degree in speech-language pathology or communication disorders; or
 - (3) A two-year degree in speech-language pathology assistants program or a bachelor's degree in another field with coursework in the following areas:
 - (a) Introduction to communication disorders;
 - (b) Phonetics;
 - (c) Speech sound disorders;
 - (d) Language development;

(e) Language disorders; and

(f) Anatomy and physiology of speech and hearing mechanisms.

d. An applicant for a temporary license must show proof of active licensure within the past five years in the state or another jurisdiction. Limitations on temporary licensure length and qualifications to obtain full licensure must be prescribed by rules of the board.

~~3.2.~~ Submit evidence showing qualifications prescribed by rules of the board.

~~4.3.~~ Within one year of application an applicant for licensure as a speech-language pathologist, speech-language pathology assistant, or audiologist must pass any applicable examination prescribed by rules adopted by the board.

~~5.4.~~ Pay the prescribed fee.

SECTION 3. AMENDMENT. Section 43-37-13 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

43-37-13. Disciplinary actions.

1. The board may refuse to issue or renew a license, suspend or revoke a license, or take other disciplinary action against a licensee if the licensee or applicant for license engaged in unprofessional conduct. Unprofessional conduct includes:
 - a. Obtaining a license by means of fraud, misrepresentation, or concealment of material facts.
 - b. Engaging in unprofessional conduct, as defined by the rules adopted by the board, or violating the code of ethics adopted by the board by rule.
 - c. Being convicted of an offense if the acts for which that individual is convicted are determined by the board to have a direct bearing on that applicant's or licensee's ability to serve the public in the capacity of a speech-language pathologist, speech-language pathology assistant, or audiologist; or the board determines that applicant or licensee, following conviction of any other offense, is not sufficiently rehabilitated under section 12.1-33-02.1.
 - d. Violating an order or rule adopted by the board.
 - e. Violating this chapter.
 - f. Receiving remuneration of any kind from the sale of any type of hearing aid, unless licensed under chapter 43-33.
2. When conducting an investigation of an alleged violation of this chapter, the board may subpoena and examine records, including client or patient records, and may copy, photograph, or take samples of the records. The board may require a licensee to give statements under oath, submit to a physical or psychological examination, or both if the board reasonably believes an examination is in the best interests of the public. The client and patient records released to the board are not public records.
3. One year from the date of revocation of a license, the licensee may make application to the board for reinstatement. The board may accept or reject an application for reinstatement or may require an examination for reinstatement.

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

Secretary of the Senate

This certifies that the within bill originated in the House of Representatives of the Sixty-ninth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as House Bill No. 1049.

House Vote: Yeas 81 Nays 13 Absent 0

Senate Vote: Yeas 47 Nays 0 Absent 0

Chief Clerk of the House

Received by the Governor at _____ M. on _____, 2025.

Approved at _____ M. on _____, 2025.

Governor

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 2025,

at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State