



Frequently Asked Questions about Speech-Language Pathology Assistants

Any information contained in this document should not be construed as legal advice and is not intended to be a substitute for legal counsel on any subject matter. All individuals who wish to verify legal requirements of license holders should consult the practice act and all relevant regulatory chapters for the practice of Speech-Language Pathology.

1. What are the supervision requirements of Speech-Language Pathology Assistants?

The licensed SLP Assistant (SLPA) must work with supervision requirements as laid out in the practice act and the regulations from the licensing board. These regulations were updated in May 2022. It is critical that both SLP Assistants *and* their supervising SLP(s) are aware of, and following, these updated regulations.

SC SLP and Audiology Practice Act: <https://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t40c067.php>

SC SLP and Audiology Regulations:
<https://www.scstatehouse.gov/coderegs/Chapter%20115.pdf>

2. Can SLPAs have their own caseload?

No. Because the SLPA works under the direction of the SLP, they are treating the SLP's caseload. They may treat clients/patients independently as long as they abide by supervision requirements as described in Chapter 115. The SLPA will have their own schedule for seeing patients. Additionally, the SLPA must track when supervisory visits are required for each client/patient to ensure they abide by requirements for general and direct supervision in regulation.

3. Can an SLPA work if their supervisor is not on site and in person?

Because direct, in-person supervision is required for *one of every seven visits* with a client/patient per Chapter 115 regulations, the supervisor must be in person *for those specific visits*. Outside of supervisory visits, the SLPA does see clients/patients independently. The supervisor must be immediately available by electronic means at a minimum during the times that the SLPA is seeing clients/patients independently.

4. Can the SLPA continue to work when their supervisor is changing?

No. Because the SLPA's license is dependent upon a signed supervisory agreement, the SLPA's license becomes void when their supervisor is no longer available for supervision. Because they would need to file a new supervisory agreement with the licensing board and gain approval, the SLPA is unable to work without an active supervisory agreement in place. The practice of speech-language pathology in South Carolina requires an active license issued by LLR.

5. Are SLP Assistants required to obtain certification from ASHA?

Some SLPA's may have an ASHA Certification as an SLPA, which is abbreviated as C-SLPA. ASHA Certification is *one* pathway to apply for a license in South Carolina but is not the *only* pathway to apply for a license; see Chapter 115-2(C).

ASHA Certification for SLPAs: <https://www.asha.org/certification/apply-for-slp-assistants-certification/>

6. Can SLP Assistants bill insurance when they provide treatment for clients/patients?

All documentation is signed by the SLPA and co-signed by the supervising SLP. Billing would be credited to the supervising SLP's credentials or National Provider Identifier (NPI) number, with the SLP co-signing all treatment notes. Some insurers allow SLPAs to provide services and some do not. SLPAs cannot provide treatment to clients/patients under the Medicare system. Individuals should check the speech therapy credentialing processes for each payer source when new providers are added to the group and verify billing capabilities when attempting to bill insurance for speech services.

7. What is the scope of practice of the SLP Assistant?

In South Carolina, the SLP and Audiology practice act states the following: "A speech-language pathology assistant may adhere to the responsibilities within the scope for speech-language pathology assistants set forth by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. A speech-language pathologist supervising a speech-language pathology assistant may adhere to the guidelines for supervision of a speech-language pathology assistant set forth by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association." (SC §40-67-75)

ASHA Scope of Practice for SLPAs: <https://www.asha.org/policy/slpa-scope-of-practice/>