

RCW 18.35.010 Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Assistive listening device or system" means an amplification system that is specifically designed to improve the signal to noise ratio for the listener, reduce interference from noise in the background, and enhance hearing levels at a distance by picking up sound from as close to source as possible and sending it directly to the ear of the listener, excluding hearing instruments as defined in this chapter.

(2) "Audiology" means the application of principles, methods, and procedures related to hearing and the disorders of hearing and to related language and speech disorders, whether of organic or nonorganic origin, peripheral or central, that impede the normal process of human communication including, but not limited to, disorders of auditory sensitivity, acuity, function, processing, or vestibular function, the application of aural habilitation, rehabilitation, and appropriate devices including fitting and dispensing of hearing instruments, and cerumen management to treat such disorders.

(3) "Board" means the board of hearing and speech.

(4) "Department" means the department of health.

(5) "Direct supervision" means the supervising speech-language pathologist, hearing aid specialist, or audiologist is on-site and in view during the procedures or tasks. The board shall develop rules outlining the procedures or tasks allowable under direct supervision.

(6) "Establishment" means any permanent site housing a person engaging in the practice of fitting and dispensing of hearing instruments by a hearing aid specialist or audiologist; where the client can have personal contact and counsel during the firm's business hours; where business is conducted; and the address of which is given to the state for the purpose of bonding.

(7) "Facility" means any permanent site housing a person engaging in the practice of speech-language pathology and/or audiology, excluding the sale, lease, or rental of hearing instruments.

(8) "Fitting and dispensing of hearing instruments" means the sale, lease, or rental or attempted sale, lease, or rental of hearing instruments together with the selection and modification of hearing instruments and the administration of nondiagnostic tests as specified by RCW 18.35.110 and the use of procedures essential to the performance of these functions; and includes recommending specific hearing instrument systems, specific hearing instruments, or specific hearing instrument characteristics, the taking of impressions for ear molds for these purposes, the use of nondiagnostic procedures and equipment to verify the appropriateness of the hearing instrument fitting, and hearing instrument orientation. The fitting and dispensing of hearing instruments as defined by this chapter may be equally provided by a licensed hearing aid specialist or licensed audiologist.

(9) "Good standing" means a licensed hearing aid specialist, licensed audiologist, licensed speech-language pathologist, or certified speech-language pathology assistant whose license or certification has not been subject to sanctions pursuant to chapter 18.130 RCW or sanctions by other states, territories, or the District of Columbia in the last two years.

(10) "Hearing aid specialist" means a person who is licensed to engage in the practice of fitting and dispensing of hearing instruments and meets the qualifications of this chapter.

(11) "Hearing health care professional" means an audiologist or hearing aid specialist licensed under this chapter or a physician specializing in diseases of the ear licensed under chapter 18.71 RCW.

(12) "Hearing instrument" means any wearable prosthetic instrument or device designed for or represented as aiding, improving, compensating for, or correcting defective human hearing and any parts, attachments, or accessories of such an instrument or device, excluding batteries and cords, ear molds, and assistive listening devices.

(13) "Indirect supervision" means the procedures or tasks are performed under the speech-language pathologist, the hearing aid specialist, or the audiologist's overall direction and control, but the speech-language pathologist, hearing aid specialist, or audiologist's presence is not required during the performance of the procedures or tasks. The board shall develop rules outlining the procedures or tasks allowable under indirect supervision.

(14) "Interim permit holder" means a person who holds the permit created under RCW 18.35.060 and who practices under the supervision of a licensed hearing aid specialist, licensed speech-language pathologist, or licensed audiologist.

(15) "Licensed audiologist" means a person who is licensed by the department to engage in the practice of audiology and meets the qualifications in this chapter.

(16) "Licensed speech-language pathologist" means a person who is licensed by the department to engage in the practice of speech-language pathology and meets the qualifications of this chapter.

(17) "Secretary" means the secretary of health.

(18) "Speech-language pathology" means the application of principles, methods, and procedures related to the development and disorders, whether of organic or nonorganic origin, that impede oral, pharyngeal, or laryngeal sensorimotor competencies and the normal process of human communication including, but not limited to, disorders and related disorders of speech, articulation, fluency, voice, verbal and written language, auditory comprehension, cognition/communication, and the application of augmentative communication treatment and devices for treatment of such disorders.

(19) "Speech-language pathology assistant" means a person who is certified by the department to provide speech-language pathology services under the direction and supervision of a licensed speech-language pathologist or speech-language pathologist certified as an educational staff associate by the superintendent of public instruction, and meets all of the requirements of this chapter. [2014 c 189 s 2; 2009 c 301 s 2; 2005 c 45 s 1; 2002 c 310 s 1; 1998 c 142 s 1; 1996 c 200 s 2; 1993 c 313 s 1; 1991 c 3 s 80; 1983 c 39 s 1; 1979 c 158 s 38; 1973 1st ex.s. c 106 s 1.]

Work group—2014 c 189: "(1) The department of health with the board of hearing and speech, and representatives from the community and technical colleges, must review the opportunity to establish an interim work-based learning permit, or similar apprenticeship opportunity, to provide an additional licensing pathway for hearing aid specialist applicants.

(2) The group shall consider the following areas:

(a) The opportunity to provide a work-based learning permit for applicants that either have a two-year or four-year degree in a field of study approved by the board from an accredited institution of higher education, or are currently enrolled in a two-year or four-year degree program in a field of study approved by the board in an accredited institution of higher education with no more than one full-time academic year remaining in his or her course of study;

(b) The criteria for providing a designation of a board-approved licensed hearing aid specialist or board-approved licensed audiologist to act as the applicant's supervisor;

(c) The recommended duration of an interim work-based learning permit or apprenticeship;

(d) Recommendations for a work-based learning permit or apprenticeship and opportunities to offer a program through a partnership with a private business and/or through a partnership with accredited institutions of higher education and a sponsoring private business;

(e) Recommendations for the learning pathways or academic components that should be required in any work-based learning program, including the specific training elements that must be completed, including, but not limited to, audiometric testing, counseling regarding hearing examinations, hearing instrument selection, ear mold impressions, hearing instrument fitting and follow-up care, and business practices including ethics, regulations, and sanitation and infection control; and

(f) Recommendations for the direct supervision of a work-based learning permit or apprenticeship, including the number of persons a hearing aid specialist or audiologist may supervise, and other considerations.

(3) The work group must submit recommendations to the health committees of the legislature by December 1, 2014." [2014 c 189 s 1.]

Alphabetization—2009 c 301 s 2: "The code reviser is directed to put the defined terms in RCW 18.35.010 in alphabetical order." [2009 c 301 s 14.]

Intent—2009 c 301: "It is declared to be the policy of this state that, in order to safeguard the public health, safety, and welfare, to protect the public from incompetent, unscrupulous, unauthorized persons and unprofessional conduct, and to ensure the availability of the highest possible standards of speech-language pathology services to the communicatively impaired people of this state, it is necessary to provide regulatory authority over persons offering speech-language pathology services as speech-language pathology assistants." [2009 c 301 s 1.]

Implementation—2009 c 301: "In order to allow for adequate time to establish the program created in this act, the provisions of this act must be implemented beginning one year after July 26, 2009." [2009 c 301 s 15.]

Speech-language pathology assistants—Certification requirements—2009 c 301: See note following RCW 18.35.040.

Effective date—2002 c 310: "This act takes effect January 1, 2003." [2002 c 310 s 27.]

Effective date—1998 c 142 ss 1-14 and 16-20: "Sections 1 through 14 and 16 through 20 of this act take effect January 1, 2003." [1998 c 142 s 21.]