

Richards, Lucy

From: Montana Board of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists
<DLIBSDSLP@announcements.mt.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 1:02 PM
To: Richards, Lucy
Subject: Board of Speech-Language Pathologists & Audiologists – Quick Update August 2020



Montana Department of LABOR & INDUSTRY

A Word from the Executive Officer

Greetings to all the Montana speech-language pathologists and audiologists. Work at the Department of Labor & Industry has settled into the new pandemic normal with the majority of employees still working from home—very efficiently I might add. Board meetings are being held electronically and the department recently switched from Skype to Zoom which allows the board members and staff to attend using video. We are still working out the protocols, so for the time being the public is still attending meetings through the phone call option only (although that could potentially change in coming months).

With so many licensees continuing to engage in telepractice I thought it would be a good time to reach out and remind you that you can find information on telepractice and other frequently asked questions on the COVID-19 FAQ posted to the board's website at www.slpaud.mt.gov. The website also contains additional information pertaining to licensing requirements and the board's laws and administrative rules.

Can Aides/Assistants Conduct Telepractice?

As you are aware there have been various changes to state and federal laws which affect the work you do under your scopes of practice as licensed speech-language pathologists and audiologists in Montana. However, aides/assistants remain unlicensed individuals under Montana law and are still not allowed to engage in telepractice since statute prohibits it ([37-15-314\(3\), MCA](#)). Neither the board nor the department have the authority to change statute. However, as stated in that statute, that prohibition does not prohibit an aide/assistant from serving as a facilitator when a licensee is engaging in telepractice.

For further information on this topic and other topics of interest visit the updated COVID-19 FAQ posted to the board's homepage at www.slpaud.mt.gov. You can also visit the [Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Joint Information Center website](#) for information about Governor Bullock's directives and statewide COVID-19 information.

Annual Aide/Assistant Registration Opens 9/1/20

The 2020 annual registration period for speech-language pathology and audiology aides/assistants opens September 1 and ends on October 31. Licensed speech-language pathologists and

audiologists who supervise aides/assistants must register those aides/assistants by October 31 (see [37-15-313, MCA](#)).

Starting on September 1, you can access the registration form on the board's homepage at www.slpaud.mt.gov. There is no online registration or payment option. If you require assistance submitting the registration you can contact customer service staff at DLIBSDHELP@MT.GOV or (406) 841-2300.

2021 Legislation Session

The 2021 legislative session is scheduled to convene in January 2021. As you know there is much discussion regarding how the session will be conducted. Nothing has been finalized at this time, but if you are interested in more information on that topic you can visit the Legislature's website at <https://leg.mt.gov/>.

The board is not proposing any legislation for the 2021 Session. However, the Montana Speech-Language-Hearing Association (MSHA) is once again sponsoring legislation that would repeal aide/assistant registration and instead create a license for assistants. MSHA will be presenting its proposed legislation to this board at a meeting prior to the start of the session so the board can take action on whether or not it would like to request to take a position on the bill.

Events and Dates of Interest

- **September 1, 2020 – annual aide/assistant registration opens and runs through 10/31/20.** For questions visit the board's homepage at www.slpaud.mt.gov or contact customer service directly at DLIBSDHELP@MT.GOV.
- **October 31, 2020 – end of aide/assistant registration**
- **Mid-October 2020 – upcoming board meeting (tentative)** – exact meeting date to be determined. Final meeting agenda will be posted to the website two weeks prior to the meeting. Recordings and agendas from past meetings can also be found by viewing the [board events web page](#).
- **December 4, 2020 – annual renewal for speech-language pathologists and audiologists opens.** Renewal ends on 2/1/21.
- **January 2021 – start of 2021 Legislative Session**

Board Contact Information

Contact information for the Board of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists :

- Email: DLIBSDHELP@MT.GOV
- Phone: (406) 841-2300

Your email is likely to get a quicker response than a phone call. We also encourage you to visit the board website to find the answers to your questions

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