

SLP/SLPA Supervision: What You Need To Know

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Financial Disclosures

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American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) member

Biography

Lisa Kerrigan, M.S., CCC-SLP

I have worked in the public school and private therapy settings for 13 years. I have a master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology from Marywood University. I grew up and went to college in Scranton, Pennsylvania. I am also a certified yoga and Reiki instructor. I have a very energetic dog named Luna.

Erin Gant BA, SLPA,

I have worked as a Speech Language Pathologist Assistant in a school-based setting for 7 years. I have three children ages 17, 15, and 12 years old. I have a husband of 21 years and a dog that loves stealing bread and butter.

Abstract

This session will discuss the ethical guidelines for appropriate collaboration of speech-language pathologists (SLP) and speech-language pathology assistants (SLPA). This session will review current regulations and recommendations regarding the supervision and the use of support personnel in the field. It will discuss state/local regulations regarding SLPAs and recommendations from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). This session will provide effective tools and strategies for clinical supervision.

Learning Outcomes

1. Discuss what is within and outside the scope of responsibilities of the SLPAs who work under the supervision of SLPs.
2. Describe SLP and SLPA supervision requirements and recommendations.
3. Identify strategies for best practice for implementation of the SLP and SLPA model.

Critical Shortage

ASHA has identified critical shortages of speech-language pathologists (SLP) in all regions of the country, particularly in school settings.

The use of SLPAs is an essential element of aiding professionals.

It is the position of ASHA that the use of any support personnel be done with the explicit purpose of support for the SLP rather than used as an alternative.

Minimum Requirements for SLPAs

1. Complete an approved course of academic study
2. Complete a supervised clinical experience
3. Successfully pass the ASHA Assistants Certification Exam (Credentialing requirements for the state varies)
4. Receive orientation as well as on-the-job training of SLPA responsibilities specific to the setting

IT'S TIME FOR A ...
KAHOOT! SLPAs CAN/CANNOT
TRUE FALSE GAME



SLPAs CAN DO

- Self-identify as an SLPA
- Exhibit compliance with federal, state, and local regulations
- Administer and score screenings for clinical interpretation by the SLP
- Assist the SLP during assessment of students, patients, and clients
- Administer and score assessment tools that (a) the SLPA meets the examiner requirements specified in the examiner's manual and (b) the supervising SLP uses to verify the SLPA's competence

SLPAs CAN DO

- Implement documented care plans or protocols developed and directed by the supervising SLP.
- Provide direct therapy services
- Adjust and document the amount and type of support or scaffolding
- Develop and implement activities and materials developed by the supervising SLP
- Provide treatment as directed by the supervising SLP

SLPAs CAN DO

- Document student performance and report this information to the supervising SLP
- Provide caregiver coaching for facilitation and carryover of skills
- Share objective information regarding student performance without interpretation or recommendations as directed by the SLP
- Program augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices.

SLPAs CAN DO

- Provide training and assistance to students and families in the use of AAC
- Develop low-tech AAC materials
- Provide services via telepractice to students who are selected by the supervising SLP
- Demonstrate strategies included in the feeding/swallowing plan developed by the SLP
- Assist students with feeding and swallowing skills developed and directed by the SLP when consuming food textures and liquid consistencies

SLPAs CANNOT

- Represent themselves as the SLP
- Interpret assessment tools for the purpose of diagnosing disability, determining eligibility or qualification for services
- Administer or interpret feeding and/or swallowing screenings/assessments.
- Diagnosis communication and feeding/swallowing disorders.
- Make referrals for additional services
- Assist students without following the IEP prepared by the SLP

SLPAs CANNOT

- Select AAC systems or devices
- Treat medically fragile students without 100% direct supervision
- Perform procedures that require specialized knowledge and training
- Provide input in any team meeting without the presence or prior approval of the supervising SLP
- Sign or initial any formal documents without the supervising SLP
- Discharge a student, patient, or client from services

SLPAs CANNOT

- Develop or determine the feeding and/or swallowing strategies
- Disclose clinical or confidential information
- Write, develop, or modify a student's, patient's, or client's plan of care in any way

TIPS:

Provide parent letter - introducing SLP and SLPA at the start of the school year.

Print and discuss the IEP before each meeting

When attending IEPs - SLPA is “representing” the SLP, and not sharing their own ideas



Supervising SLP Requirements

- Hold the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP) from ASHA and/or possess the necessary state-credentials
- Completion of a minimum of 9 months of experience after being awarded ASHA certification (i.e., completion of the 9-month Clinical Fellowship followed by 9 months of experience)
- Completion of a minimum of 2 hours of professional development in clinical instruction/supervision
- Adherence to state guidelines for supervision of the SLPA
- It is recommended that the professional development course taken in clinical instruction or supervision include content related to the supervision of SLPAs.

The ASHA *Speech-Language Pathology Assistant Scope of Practice* states the minimum requirements for the frequency and amount of supervision of support personnel as follows:

Supervision requirements may vary based on a variety of factors. The amount and type of supervision required must be consistent with:

1. SLPA's skills and experience
2. The needs of the students, patients, and clients
3. The service setting
4. The tasks assigned
5. The laws and regulations that govern SLPAs

Larson's Supervisory Expectations Rating Scale

Please give your assessment of what you expect will happen during your future individual supervisory conferences. Select the number that best represents the expected level of occurrence of the behaviors suggested by each item. The numbers correspond to the following categories.

Rating Description	
1---To a very little extent	4---To a great extent
2---To a little extent	5---To a very great extent
3---To some extent	

1. Do you expect your supervisors will help you set goals for a client?	3	<input type="button" value="v"/>
2. Do you expect your supervisors will use conference time to discuss ways to improve materials?	Choose One	
3. Do you expect your supervisor will motivate you to perform at your highest potential?	Choose One	
4. Do you expect you will state the objectives of your conferences?	Choose One	
5. Do you expect your supervisor will pay attention to what you are saying whenever you talk with them?	Choose One	
6. Do you expect you will ask many questions during your conferences?	Choose One	
7. Do you expect your supervisors will use your ideas in discussion during conferences?	Choose One	

The supervising SLP should outline their expectations.

As the relationship continues to develop over time, the SLP/SLPA team can decide how and to what extent supervision is needed.

Before the SLPA begins to provide support independently, the supervising SLP must have first contact with all individuals on the caseload.

What is “first contact”?

“First contact” includes establishing rapport, gathering baseline data, and securing other necessary documentation to begin the plan of care for the student.

Minimum ongoing supervision must *always* include documentation of direct supervision provided by the SLP for each student at least every 30–60 days (depending on frequency of visits/sessions and setting).

The SLP can adjust the amount of supervision if they determine that the SLPA has met appropriate competencies and skill levels in treating students.

Data on every student serviced by the SLPA should be reviewed by the supervisor in regular intervals and can be considered “indirect supervision.”

Tips for “first contact”

- Review IEP goals and service time
- Create CRTs and data log
- Complete observation in classroom
- Collect baseline data during first session
- Time spent (15-30 minutes)

A good time for “first contact” is the first week of school before therapy sessions begin.

TIPS: Some ways to make it work....

Discuss strengths and weaknesses for the SLPA

Discuss frequency of meetings

Discuss preference of group size and therapy plans

Agree to billing, IEP meeting, and data collection requirements

Pre-schedule time together

Decide on verbal or written feedback

“First contact” -Switch caseloads

TX time - Split services SLP/SLPA

Create shared folders and data log sheets

Online programs digital folder

ASHA's Supervision Suggestions

Supervisors should arrange designated days and times of day so that all students receive direct contact with the supervising SLP.

The supervising SLP must accurately document and regularly record all supervisory activities, both direct and indirect.

100% direct supervision of SLPAs for medically fragile students is required.

A written supervisory plan is a tangible way to document progress and outline the practices of the supervising SLP and the SLPA.

ASHA's Supervision Suggestions

The supervising SLP must accurately document and regularly record all supervisory activities, both direct and indirect.



SLPA Supervision Requirements and Expectations



Direct Supervision

Direct supervision means in-view observation and guidance while the SLP is performing a clinical activity.

Direct supervision does not include reviewing an audio or video recorded session later.

Direct Supervision Tips

- When creating a schedule leave 30-60 minutes in the week for SLPA supervision time
- Supervise during scheduled evaluation time, when not testing
- Start with strengths and followed up by items for reflection or improvements

Supervision Feedback

1. Agreement between the SLPA and the supervisor on correct or incorrect recording of target behavior

2. Accuracy implementing assigned treatment procedures

3. Accuracy recording data

4. Ability to interact effectively with the student during presentation and implementation of assigned procedures or activities

Indirect Supervision

Indirect supervision does not require the SLP to be physically present or available via telecommunication while the SLPA is providing services.

Indirect supervisory activities may include:

1. Review demonstration videos
2. Review student, client, or patient files
3. Review and evaluate audio or video recorded sessions
4. Conduct supervisory conferences either in person or via telephone

What if SLP is not available?

An SLPA may not perform tasks when a supervising SLP cannot be reached by personal contact.

Any supervising SLP who will not be able to supervise an SLPA for more than 1 week will need to:

1. Inform the SLPA of the planned absence.
2. Notify the employer or site administrator that other arrangements for the SLPA supervision of services need to be made while the SLP is unavailable.
3. Inform the students, patients, or clients that their speech-language services will be rescheduled.

How many SLPAs can I supervise?

ASHA: It is recommended that the SLPA not be supervised by more than three SLPs.

State laws vary and may differ from ASHA's guidelines and requirements. Check specific state regulations to determine amount of supervision required and qualifications for supervisors of assistants in a particular state.

Quick Story Time.....

Arizona State Requirements

1. Licensed with Department. of Health Services.
2. Approved training program accredited college or university credit hours of speech-language pathology coursework and a minimum of 100 hours of clinical interaction.
3. All services of an SLPA are performed under the direction and supervision of a state licensed SLP who has at least two years of full-time experience.
4. The licensed supervisor may direct **no more than full-two time or three part-time SLPAs at one time.**

Arizona State Requirements

5. A minimum of 20% direct supervision and 10% indirect supervision is required of all the time that the assistant is providing services during the first 90 days of employment.

6. After the first 90 days, a minimum of 10% direct and 10% indirect supervision is required.

7. The supervising SLP may adjust the amount of supervision if they determine that the SLPA meets appropriate competencies and skill levels regarding various disorders of communication and related disorders.

8. At least 10% direct supervision and 10% indirect supervision of all the time that the SLPA is providing services during the first 30 days of employment. After the first 30 days of the SLPAs employment, the supervising SLP may adjust the amount of supervision if the supervising SLP determines that the SLPA meets appropriate competencies.

Arizona State Requirements

9. All periods of supervisions are to be documented and each client should be informed when the services of a SLPA are being provided.

10. Ten hours of continuing education each year in areas related to clinical services is required.



Will my caseload increase? ASHA's answer:

SLPs' caseloads may decrease to permit sufficient time to supervise staff working under their direction .

HOWEVER, workload may increase as the SLP assumes responsibilities for training and supervising assistants.

SLPAs do not carry their own caseloads.

- ASHA Technical Proficiency SLPA
- ASHA Self-Assessment Supervision
- Larson's Supervisory Expectations Rating Scale
- Larson's Supervisory Needs Rating scale
- SLPA Supervision Notification Form ADHS (Arizona requirement)

Resources

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2021). SLPA Supervision.

<https://www.asha.org/practice/supervision/slpa-supervision/>

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2021). Arizona State Information.

<https://www.asha.org/advocacy/state/info/az/>

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<https://www.asha.org/assistants-certification-program/slpa-faqs/>

Arizona Department of Education. Speech-Language Services' In Arizona Schools-Guidelines for Best Practices

<https://www.azed.gov/>

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2021). Quick Facts: Speech & Language Disorders.

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