

Senate Bill No. 370

An act relating to health professionals treating speech or hearing disorders; amending s. 468.1155, F.S.; revising requirements for the Department of Health in issuing a provisional license to practice speech-language pathology or audiology; revising licensing requirements for applicants who graduated, or who are currently enrolled, in a speech-language pathology or audiology program at a university located outside of the United States or Canada; authorizing the Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology to waive certain requirements for applicants who received professional education in another country under certain circumstances; amending s. 468.1165, F.S.; revising requirements for applicants to obtain professional employment in order to be licensed by the department to practice speech-language pathology or audiology; amending s. 468.1185, F.S.; revising requirements for the department to issue a license to an applicant to practice speech-language pathology or audiology; amending s. 468.1215, F.S.; revising requirements for a person to be certified as an audiology assistant; requiring an audiologist or speech-language pathologist to give an assistant a board-approved plan for training and to maintain responsibility for services performed by the assistant; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 468.1155, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

468.1155 Provisional license; requirements.—

(1)(a) A provisional license shall be required of all applicants for a license in speech-language pathology who cannot document a minimum of 9 months of supervised professional employment experience and a passing score on the national examination. A provisional license shall be required of all applicants for a license in audiology who cannot document a minimum of 11 months of supervised clinical experience and a passing score on the national examination.

(b) Individuals who are required to hold a provisional license under paragraph (a) shall apply to the department and be certified by the board for licensure prior to initiating the professional employment experience required pursuant to s. 468.1165.

(2) The department shall issue a provisional license to practice speech-language pathology to each applicant who the board certifies has:

(a) Completed the application form and remitted the required fees, including a nonrefundable application fee.

(b) Received a master's degree or has completed the academic requirement of ~~is currently enrolled in~~ a doctoral degree program with a major

emphasis in speech-language pathology from an institution of higher learning ~~that which~~ is, or at the time the applicant was enrolled and graduated was, accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor or the United States Department of Education, or from an institution ~~that which~~ is a member in good standing with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. An applicant who graduated from or is currently enrolled in a program at a university or college outside the United States or Canada must present documentation of the determination of equivalency of the program to standards established by an accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor or the United States Department of Education in order to qualify.

1. The applicant must have completed the program requirements by academic course work, practicum experience, or laboratory or research activity, as verified by the program, including:

a. Knowledge of basic human communication and swallowing processes, including their biological, neurological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural bases.

b. Knowledge of the nature of speech, language, hearing, and communication disorders and differences and swallowing disorders, including their etiologies, characteristics, anatomical or physiological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural correlates, voice and resonance, including respiration and phonation, receptive and expressive language in speaking, listening, reading, writing, and manual modalities, hearing, including the impact on speech and language, swallowing, cognitive aspects of communication, social aspects of communication, and communication modalities.

c. Knowledge of the principles and methods of prevention, assessment, and intervention for people having communication and swallowing disorders, including consideration of anatomical or physiological, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural correlates of the disorders, articulation, fluency, voice and resonance, receptive and expressive communication, hearing, swallowing, cognitive aspects of communication, social aspects of communication, and communication modalities.

2. The program must include appropriate supervised clinical experiences.

The board may waive the requirements for education, practicum, and professional employment experience for an applicant who received a professional education in another country if the board is satisfied that the applicant meets the equivalent education and practicum requirements and passes the examination in speech-language pathology. ~~60 semester hours that include:~~

1. ~~Fundamental information applicable to the normal development and use of speech, hearing, and language; information about training in management of speech, hearing, and language disorders; and information supplementary to these fields.~~

2. ~~Six semester hours in audiology.~~

3. ~~Thirty of the required 60 semester hours in courses acceptable toward a graduate degree by the college or university in which these courses were taken, of which 24 semester hours must be in speech-language pathology.~~

~~(c) Completed 300 supervised clinical clock hours with 200 clock hours in the area of speech-language pathology or completed the number of clock hours required by an accredited institution meeting national certification standards. The supervised clinical clock hours shall be completed within the training institution or one of its cooperating programs.~~

(3) The department shall issue a provisional license to practice audiology to each applicant who the board certifies has:

(a) Completed the application form and remitted the required fees, including a nonrefundable application fee.

(b) Effective January 1, 2008, earned a doctoral degree in audiology, but has not passed the license examination required for a license in audiology or has completed the academic requirements of ~~Received a master's degree or is currently enrolled in a doctoral degree program~~ with a major emphasis in audiology from an institution of higher learning ~~that which~~ is, or at the time the applicant was enrolled and graduated was, accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor or the United States Department of Education, or from an institution ~~that which~~ is a member in good standing with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. An applicant who graduated from or is currently enrolled in a program at a university or college outside the United States or Canada must present documentation of the determination of equivalency of the program to standards established by an accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor or the United States Department of Education in order to qualify.

1. The program must assure that the student obtained knowledge of foundation areas of basic body systems and processes related to hearing and balance.

2. The program must assure that the student obtained skills for the diagnosis, management, and treatment of auditory and vestibular or balance conditions and diseases.

3. The program must assure that the student can effectively communicate with patients and other health care professionals.

4. The program must assure that the student obtained knowledge of professional ethical systems as they relate to the practice of audiology.

5. The program must assure that the student obtained clinical experiences that encompass the entire scope of practice and focus on the most current evidence-based practice.

The board may waive the education, practicum, and professional employment experience requirements for an applicant who received a professional

education in another country if the board is satisfied that the applicant meets equivalent education and practicum requirements and passes the examination in audiology.

(c) Earned a master's degree with a major emphasis in audiology which was conferred before January 1, 2008, from an institution of higher learning which was, or at the time the applicant was enrolled and graduated, accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor, the United States Department of Education, or from an institution that is a member in good standing with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

1. An applicant who graduated from or is currently enrolled in a program at a university or college outside the United States or Canada must present documentation of the determination of equivalency of the program to standards established by an accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor or the United States Department of Education in order to qualify.

2. The board may waive the education, practicum, and professional employment experience requirements for an applicant who received a professional education in another country if the board is satisfied that the applicant meets equivalent education and practicum requirements and passes the examination in audiology. This paragraph expires on January 1, 2013. The applicant must have completed 60 semester hours that include:

1. Fundamental information applicable to the normal development and use of speech, hearing, and language; information about training in management of speech, hearing, and language disorders; and information supplementary to these fields.

2. Six semester hours in speech-language pathology.

3. Thirty of the required 60 semester hours in courses acceptable toward a graduate degree by the college or university in which these courses were taken, of which 24 semester hours must be in audiology.

(c) Completed 300 supervised clinical clock hours with 200 clock hours in the area of audiology or completed the number of clock hours required by an accredited institution meeting national certification standards. The supervised clinical clock hours shall be completed within the training institution or one of its cooperating programs.

(4) An applicant who has received a master's degree or is currently enrolled in a doctoral degree program with a major emphasis in speech-language pathology as provided in subsection (2), or audiology as provided in subsection (3), and who seeks licensure in the area in which the applicant is not currently licensed, must have completed 30 semester hours in courses acceptable toward a graduate degree and 200 supervised clinical clock hours in the second discipline from an accredited institution.

(4)(5) The board, by rule, shall establish requirements for the renewal of a provisional license. However, a provisional license may not exceed a period of 24 months.

Section 2. Section 468.1165, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

468.1165 Professional employment experience requirement.—Every applicant for licensure as a speech-language ~~speech~~ pathologist must ~~or audiologist shall demonstrate~~, prior to licensure, a minimum of 9 months of full-time professional employment, or the equivalent in part-time professional employment, pertinent to the license being sought. Each applicant for licensure as an audiologist must demonstrate, prior to licensure, a minimum of 11 months of full-time professional employment, or the equivalent in part-time professional employment. The board, by rule, shall establish standards for obtaining and verifying the required professional employment experience.

Section 3. Subsections (2) and (3) of section 468.1185, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

468.1185 Licensure.—

(2) The board shall certify for licensure any applicant who has:

(a) Satisfied the education and supervised clinical ~~clock hour~~ requirements of s. 468.1155.

(b) Satisfied the professional experience requirement of s. 468.1165.

(c) Passed the licensure examination required by s. 468.1175.

(d) An applicant for an audiologist license who has obtained a doctoral degree in audiology has satisfied the education and supervised clinical requirements of paragraph (a) and the professional experience requirements of paragraph (b).

(3) The board shall certify as qualified for a license by endorsement as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist an applicant who:

(a) Holds a valid license or certificate in another state or territory of the United States to practice the profession for which the application for licensure is made, if the criteria for issuance of such license were substantially equivalent to or more stringent than the licensure criteria which existed in this state at the time the license was issued; or

(b) Has received the certificate of clinical competence of the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association or board certification in audiology from the American Board of Audiology.

Section 4. Subsections (2), (3), and (4) of section 468.1215, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

468.1215 Speech-language pathology assistant and audiology assistant; certification.—

(2) The department shall issue a certificate as an audiology assistant to each applicant who the board certifies has:

(a) Completed the application form and remitted the required fees, including a nonrefundable application fee.

(b) ~~Earned a high school diploma or its equivalent. Completed at least 24 semester hours of coursework as approved by the board at an institution accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.~~

(3) An audiologist or speech-language pathologist who employs a speech-language assistant or audiology assistant must provide the assistant with a plan approved by the board for on-the-job training and must maintain responsibility for all services performed by the assistant. The board, by rule, shall establish minimum education and on-the-job training and supervision requirements for certification as a speech-language pathology assistant or audiology assistant.

(4) The provisions of this section shall not apply to any student, intern, or trainee performing speech-language pathology or audiology services while completing the supervised clinical experience ~~clock~~ hours as required in s. 468.1155.

Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006.

Approved by the Governor June 7, 2006.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 7, 2006.