

HOW TO BECOME a Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA)

WHAT IS A SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSISTANT?



An Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA) (support personnel) who, following academic coursework, fieldwork, and on-the-job training, performs tasks that are prescribed, directed, and supervised by a certified and/or licensed speech-language pathologist.

SLPAs may have the opportunity to work in a variety of settings including schools, home health, clinics, private practice, and Early Intervention, as determined by state laws and regulations.

WHAT IS ASHA CERTIFICATION?

- ASHA Assistants certification is a national, voluntary professional credential that you can obtain after meeting the eligibility requirements and passing the ASHA national exam.
- The ASHA Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (ASHA C-SLPA) designation is not interchangeable with state licensing laws or regulations and does not automatically qualify you for licensure, but some states do recognize it as a step in the licensing process.
- Learn more about the [ASHA Assistants Certification Program](#), or email assistants@asha.org

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WHAT IS STATE LICENSURE AND REGISTRATION?



- Obtaining state licensure or registration allows you to work as an SLPA. Licensure and registration are granted by the state licensing entity.
- Requirements for vary by state—[check the ASHA State-by-State webpage for your state's requirements](#), and click on "Assistants (support personnel)" for an overview, including contact information for each licensing entity.
- Not all states utilize and regulate SLPAs—and some states regulate them only for certain settings.
- If you are still unsure about the requirements, please contact your state licensing entity. If you still need further clarification about licensure requirements, reach out to your [ASHA state liaison](#) for more information.

HOW TO BECOME A SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSISTANT

- ☐ Determine what education or degree your state requires. A state may require one or more of the following:
 - ☐ a high school diploma or equivalent
 - ☐ an associate degree or equivalent in speech-language pathology assisting
 - ☐ a bachelor's degree or equivalent
 - ☐ a bachelor's degree or equivalent—plus graduate hours
- ☐ Determine whether your state requires observation hours or practicum hours:
 - ☐ If yes, is an applicant required to complete those hours while enrolled in an academic program—or can the applicant complete them "on the job" as a part of the licensing process?
- ☐ Determine whether there are any other requirements.

Before enrolling in any academic program, contact your licensing entity and/or state Department of Education to determine if your academic program or degree is accepted for a licensing requirement.

SLPA

RESOURCES

ASHA State-by-State Guide—includes contact information for your state licensing entity, state Department of Education, and state speech-language and hearing associations.

Scope of Practice for the Speech-Language Pathology Assistant—provides recommendations for the roles and responsibilities that an SLPA can perform. Note that the Scope of Practice does not supersede any legislation or regulation, including existing state licensure laws, nor does it affect the interpretation or implementation of such laws.