
DIGEST

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HB 867 Reengrossed

2024 Regular Session

Henry

Abstract: Modifies professional requirements of audiologists and speech-language pathologists.

Present law provides that a "licensed audiologist" shall not mean a person who has a provisional or restricted license issued in accordance with present law.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law defines the "practice of audiology" to authorize an audiologist to engage in any task, procedure, act, or practice necessary including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Evaluation of hearing and monitoring of neural functioning.
- (2) Training in the use of amplification, including hearing aids and assistive listening devices.
- (3) Making of earmolds.

Proposed law retains present law and adds that the practice of audiology includes all of the following:

- (1) Conducting speech and language screening.
- (2) Managing of cerumen.
- (3) Any basic health screening with a referral from an appropriate healthcare professional.

Present law provides that an audiologist may sell and fit hearing aids under certain circumstances and with certain restrictions.

Proposed law repeals present law and provides that a licensed audiologist who fits and sells hearing aids shall follow rules established by the La. Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (board) regarding hearing aid trial periods.

Present law requires an audiologist to obtain education course credits in certain areas of study to fit and sell hearing aids.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Proposed law adds definitions of "over-the-counter hearing aid", "personal sound amplification device", and "prescription hearing aid".

Present law allows a waiver of licensing requirements for audiologists and speech-language pathologists in certain circumstances.

Proposed law adds that the board may waive clinical practicum requirements of present law for applicants who hold a certification from the American Board of Audiology and have completed the national examination requirement.

Present law provides that the board may seek restitution of costs and expenses, not including attorney fees, when enforcing the provisions of present law.

Proposed law retains present law and adds that the board may seek attorney fees when enforcing provisions of present law.

(Amends R.S. 37:2651(1), (3), (7)(a) and (g), and 2662(C)(intro. para.) and (3); Adds R.S. 37:2651(13), (14), and (15) and 2660(4); Repeals R.S. 37:2651(7)(b), (e), and (f))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Health and Welfare to the original bill:

1. Add speech and language screening, cerumen management, and any basic health screening to the definition of the practice of audiology.
2. Remove provisions relative to the fitting and selling of hearing aids.
3. Remove provisions relative to educational requirements for an audiologist to fit and sell hearing aids.
4. Add that an audiologist who fits and sells hearing aids shall follow rules promulgated by the La. Board of Examiners of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (board).
5. Add that the board may waive licensing requirements in certain circumstances.
6. Add that the board may seek restitution of attorney fees when enforcing present law to discipline licensees.
7. Make technical changes.