

STATE BOARD OF SPEECH PATHOLOGY & AUDIOLOGY
Professional and Vocational Licensing Division
Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
State of Hawaii

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: October 29, 2024

Time: 2:00 p.m.

In-Person Location: Queen Liliuokalani Conference Room
HRH King Kalakaua Building
335 Merchant Street, First Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WyZ7Ie9Wj98>

Present: Erin Firmin, Chair, Speech Pathologist
Dr. Denby Rall, Vice Chair, Audiologist
Lorna Hu, Member, Speech Pathologist
Brian Chen M.D., Public Member/Otorhinolaryngologist
Christopher Fernandez, Executive Officer (“EO”)
Rochelle Araki, EO
Marc Yoshimura, Secretary

Excused: Christopher Leong, Esq., Deputy Attorney General (“DAG”)

Guests:

Call to Order: **2:10 p.m.** After a roll call confirming that she, Vice Chair Rall; Ms. Hu; and Dr. Chen were all present and the Board had met quorum, Chair Firmin brought the meeting to order.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: After Chair Firmin confirmed the public had no testimony, the Board reviewed the meeting minutes of July 30, 2024. Chair Firmin motioned to approve the minutes as is, which was seconded by Vice Chair Rall, and approved unanimously by the Board.

Applications:

A. Ratifications

After Chair Firmin confirmed there was no public testimony and on her motion, seconded by Vice Chair Rall, the Board unanimously carried to approve the ratification list below.

Audiologist

AUD-266	Melanie J Shaffer
AUD-267	Nirali Govind
AUD-268	Catrina Lan-Tien Liner

AUD-269 Nina E Kashanian
AUD-270 Lisa Batterton

Speech Pathologist

SP-2331 Katie D Newell
SP-2336 Maya Millar
SP-2337 James Landherr
SP-2338 Faith Bishop-Purkey
SP-2339 Hrefna Czaja
SP-2340 Amy Virginia Saparto
SP-2341 Glenn Alan Higginbotham
SP-2343 Caroline R Marta
SP-2344 Celine Montcerisier Nysse
SP-2345 Molly B Cote
SP-2346 Kimberley Cole
SP-2347 Lexi Ward
SP-2348 Teri L Kawasaki
SP-2349 Kirsten C Pavlovics
SP-2350 Annette Boulgourjian
SP-2351 Rebecca Gerety
SP-2352 Amy Marie Ashley
SP-2353 Amy Brown McMahan
SP-2354 Melanie Wang
SP-2355 Mattie Roberts
SP-2356 Kensey Nicole Neely
SP-2357 Michaela S Rappa
SP-2358 Lisa Steng
SP-2359 Felicia K Darling
SP-2360 Scott K Davis
SP-2361 Maiko Ogawa
SP-2362 Kimberly Steinberg
SP-2363 Rebecca E Graham
SP-2364 Kristin R Howard
SP-2365 Keira Strickling

Speech Pathologist Provisional License

SPP-60 Evangelina Scianna
SPP-61 Emmaline K Bradley
SPP-62 Lindsay K Delmont
SPP-63 Katherine M Rodriguez
SPP-64 Kendall Fink

SLPAs and SLP
Scope Of
Practice:

Chair Firmin asked if there was any public testimony.

Hearing none, the Board began its discussion on regulation of Speech Language Pathology Assistants (SLPA) and their scope of practice.

Chair Firmin asked if members had any information stemming from the Board's last discussion on the subject.

Ms. Hu noted that SLPAs, if licensed, should not be able to practice independently and should only do those activities that are low risk and not excludes testing or diagnosis. She added that SLPAs should be helping maintain the treatment plans set by the Speech Pathologist, which is really providing support with case load management.

Chair Firmin stated that she reviewed the American Speech-language-Hearing Association (ASHA) information and found the SLPA examination blueprint, which provides a list of skills needed and scope of duties for an SLPA, including:

- Assisting Care Givers in completing relevant history and completing forms.
- Assisting during assessments.
- Assisting in translations or interpretations services.
- Following treatment plans.
- Creating activities.
- Providing therapy under the treatment plan of the SLP.
- To help with subjects such as: language, speech, voice fluency, cognitive, and pragmatics.
- Supporting the family or caregivers of the children.
- Checking equipment.

Chair Firmin noted that she disagreed with one duty that ASHA included: administering screenings without clinical interpretation. She contemplated how a screening can be administered without a clinical interpretation being done by the SLP.

members generally agreed with the list of acceptable duties and skills.

Chair Firmin stated she also compiled some tasks that should never be done by an SLPA if a license type is created in Hawaii, including:

- Assess or interpret assessments
- Design treatment programs
- Using instrumentation for screening. (Chair Firmin noted her concern for SLPAs using an otoscope).

- Advising and designing home programs without SLPs

After members considered the information Chair Firmin provided, Ms. Hu noted the significant number of states who have SLPA licensure laws established.

EO Fernandez noted the size of the scope of practice as presented in ASHA documents, adding that the Board will most likely need to really set parameters for practice if the scope is so big.

Ms. Hu supported the idea of SLPAs applying for licensure with training in place and not using the jobs for on-job training and asked if SLPA practice would be unlicensed.

EO Fernandez explained that SLPAs are unlicensed in Hawaii currently, and the chapter would need to be amended to at least allow SLP licensees to retain supervised SLPAs under their license. He added as example, that if the Board were to begin licensing SLPAs, it would need to identify education and training required for the license.

Vice Chair Rall noted that Audiology Assistants is a new term, but “Aud Techs” or Audiology Technicians have on the job training with specializations requiring extra training or course study.

The Board considered various ways regulating SLPAs from simply having the SLP register the SLPA under their license, to obtaining their own license. It was noted that SLPAs can work under several SLPs, and so creating registration under the license of an SLP may not be conducive to professional practice.

Chair Firmin suggested that if SLPAs are licensed that their employer be responsible for ensuring they are working under a supervisor. She added that the Board should look into Certified Occupational Therapist Assistants (COTA) and Physical Therapy Assistants (PTA) and how they are supervised.

The Board discussed potential licensure requirements, establishing fees, and additional legislative research to complete that would better address the licensure of SLPAs.

EO Fernandez recommended waiting for DAG Leong for legal questions pertaining to this subject matter and the legislative process.

The Board also considered how to continue discussion outside of meetings either by creating a Permitted Interaction Group or designating two members to work on researching SLPA licensure.

Vice Chair Rall noted that Audiologist Assistants would be dissimilar enough in practice that another licensure would likely be needed.

Chair Firmin agreed that an Assistant license-type would be needed for both professions.

Board discussed how billing happens with the services that SLPAs provide.

Members concluded that SLPAs would most likely submit billing that is cosigned by a Speech Pathologist supervising the work.

Chair Firmin noted that she and Ms. Hu will continue researching SLPA licensure.

The Board unanimously approved a motion by Ms. Hu, seconded by Vice Chair Rall, to establish group of (2) members or less including Chair Firmin and Ms. Hu, to research SLPA regulation and licensure.

Next Meeting: Chair Firmin noted the next meeting as scheduled:

Date to be determined
Virtual Conference—Zoom Meeting, and Conference Room to be determined
HRH King Kalakaua Building

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Firmin at **2:56 p.m.**

Taken, Recorded, Reviewed and Approved By:

/s/ Christopher Fernandez
Christopher Fernandez
Executive Officer

CF

Minutes approved as is.

Minutes approved with changes; see minutes of January 28, 2025.