

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY TEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL LIMITED TEMPORARY LICENSE

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House Bill 4101 (H-2) as passed by the House
Sponsor: Rep. Curt S. VanderWall
Committee: Health Policy
Complete to 2-23-24

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

(Enacted as Public Act 57 of 2024)

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4101 would amend the Public Health Code to extend, from 12 months to 24 months, the maximum period for which a temporary license for completing a supervised postgraduate clinical experience in speech-language pathology may be issued. In addition, the temporary license of a qualified applicant could be renewed for one additional 12-month term. The bill would take effect 180 days after it is enacted.

Speech-language pathologists provide an array of services for individuals with communication and swallowing difficulties, from infants in a hospital neonatal intensive care to the elderly. To obtain a license as a speech-language pathologist, a graduate of a master's or doctoral program must complete 1,260 hours of supervised postgraduate clinical experience.

The act provides for a temporary license (known as a speech-language pathology educational limited temporary license) for the purpose of completing a supervised postgraduate clinical experience. An individual seeking a temporary license must obtain it before beginning that clinical experience.

To be eligible for the temporary license, the applicant must meet both of the following:

- The applicant must have a master's or doctor of science or doctor of philosophy degree in speech-language pathology that is acceptable to the Michigan Board of Speech-Language Pathology and must have their academic institution transmit their academic transcripts directly to the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA).
- The applicant must submit a plan for supervised postgraduate clinical experience on a form approved by the board and signed by a licensed professional who will provide supervision.

An individual who holds a speech-language pathology educational limited temporary license cannot work without supervision. At the conclusion of the individual's clinical experience, their supervisor must sign and submit to LARA a report documenting the individual's successful completion of the clinical experience.

As noted above, the period of the temporary license is currently 12 months, which the bill would extend to 24 months. In addition, the temporary license is currently nonrenewable.

The bill would allow it to be renewed for an additional 12-month term (for a total of three years) as long as the applicant continues to be eligible as described above.

MCL 333.17609

BRIEF DISCUSSION:

Currently, the Public Health Code and R 338.613 of the Michigan Administrative Code authorize LARA to issue a nonrenewable 12-month temporary license to an individual for the purpose of completing the supervised postgraduate clinical experience.

However, until 2021, the administrative rule had allowed LARA to issue a two-year educational limited license that could be renewed up to two times, providing up to six years for individuals to complete the required postgraduate clinical experience. The educational limited license is no longer offered, and only educational limited licenses issued before the effective date of the rule change may be renewed for the additional two-year periods.

According to representatives of the Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the shortened period in which to complete the 1,260 hours of supervised postgraduate clinical experience is proving untenable for many recent graduates. Clinical experience can be interrupted by factors outside an individual's control, and part-time employees working less than 24 hours a week simply cannot complete the hours in time. These constraints could result in recent graduates being unable to obtain full licensure or incentivize graduates to move to states with more favorable licensing requirements.

Beginning about six months after the bill is enacted, the time period an initial temporary license is valid would be extended from 12 months to 24 months. In addition, the license could be renewed for an additional 12 months, for a total of up to three years (instead of one) in which to complete the supervised clinical experience. While this total is three years less than the previous educational limited license provided, it is hoped that it would be sufficient to accommodate circumstances requiring more than the time currently allowed to complete the necessary hours of supervised clinical experience.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 4101 would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, as the impact would largely depend on the choices of individual licensees. Under the provisions of the bill, some licensees would likely choose to renew their educational limited temporary license, which currently has a lower associated fee than the standard license. Under current law, the temporary license is valid for 12 months, but the bill would increase this period to 24 months. The bill would also allow for a temporary license to be renewed for a single 12-month term. It is unclear whether the department would increase the fee to reflect this longer period. The current fee associated with a speech-language pathologist educational limited temporary license is \$102.70 for 12 months, while the total fee for a speech-language pathologist license is \$183.80 for two years. For reference, as of September 2023, there were 313 active temporary licenses.

POSITIONS:

A representative of the Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association testified in support of the bill. (9-28-23)

The following entities indicated support for the bill (9-28-23):

- Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs
- Michigan Health and Hospital Association

Legislative Analyst: Rick Yuille
Fiscal Analyst: Marcus Coffin

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.