

Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA) Washington State Certification & Employment

This document is informational only. **The UW does not facilitate SLPA certification or work experiences for B.S. students inside or outside the state of Washington.** Students are responsible for securing their own SLPA training opportunities and should be aware that guided observation hours do not count toward the 100 hours of fieldwork training requirement for SLPAs. Please be aware that while you must be certified to work as an SLPA in Washington, not all states in the U.S. require certification/licensure for employment so students should investigate other state-specific employment requirements as applicable.

Working as an SLPA in Washington

The Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA) profession is regulated by the state of Washington. **Thus, to work as an SLPA you must first be certified by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH).** Certification (or licensure) is the state's grant of legal authority to practice within the SLPA profession and under this system, the state of Washington defines by statute the tasks, function, or scope of practice that may be legally performed only by those who are certified.

SLPA certifications must be renewed annually and like many regulated professions in the state, SLPAs must complete a minimum of 30 hours of continuing education every three years, with at least one hour of coursework in infection control. The purpose of this continuing education requirement is to keep SLPAs abreast of current developments and ensure they can deliver the highest possible professional care.

Summary of WA SLPA Certification Requirements (Mandatory)

To apply for SLPA certification in Washington, you must pay the application fee and meet the following requirements:

- 1) Provide official transcripts demonstrating completion of a **bachelor's degree** program in speech, language and hearing from a board-approved institution of higher education ([WAC 246-828-025](#)), with at least 45 quarter hours of coursework specific to speech, language and hearing and 45 quarter hours of general education coursework. The UW's B.S. program in speech and hearing sciences meets this requirement.
- 2) Provide official transcripts or other documentation* demonstrating completion of a minimum of **100 hours of work experience (SLPA training)** with patients, clients, and/or students. These hours must be supervised by a licensed Speech-Language Pathologist, with at least 50 of the hours completed under direct supervision, and completed within a one-year timeframe. Guided observation hours do not count toward this training requirement.
- 3) Successfully complete the online, open book [Jurisprudence Examination](#). Before taking the exam, applicants should review the relevant Washington statutes pertaining to delivery of hearing and speech services ([RCW 18.35](#) and [WAC 246-828](#)).

For complete details regarding Washington's SLPA certification requirements, please refer to the Washington Administrative Code ([WAC](#)) [246-828-617](#) and the online [SLPA certification application](#).

**To demonstrate 100 hours of supervised work experience that is not reflected on transcript per [WAC 246-828-617 \(2\)](#), applicant must complete and submit the [work experience form \(PDF\)](#). This form is part of the SLPA Certification Application Packet.*

Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA) National ASHA Certification

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for audiologists, speech-language pathologists, speech, language, and hearing scientists, audiology and speech-language pathology assistants, and students. Like other speech and hearing professionals, SLPAs have the option of obtaining national certification through ASHA. Certification is renewed annually and SLPAs must complete 30 hours of continuing education every three years.

ASHA certification is a lengthy process and it is voluntary. However, completing national certification can provide you with additional credibility in the job market and give you access to a greater number of resources for professional development and continuing education.

Summary of ASHA Certification Requirements (Optional)

To obtain SLPA certification through ASHA, you must pay the certification fee and meet the following requirements:

- 1) Provide official transcripts demonstrating completion of a **bachelor's degree** program in speech and hearing sciences / communication sciences and disorders from a regionally or nationally accredited institution. The UW's B.S. program meets this requirement.
- 2) Successfully complete ASHA's six [online SLPA education modules](#) that provide education on the specific roles and responsibilities of SLPAs.
- 3) Successfully complete **additional courses/training** in the following areas, providing documentation. The content can be obtained through academic courses, in-service trainings, or continuing education and must be completed no more than 2 years prior to your application for certification.
 - 1 hour course in [Ethics](#)
 - 1 hour course in [Universal Safety Precautions](#)
 - 1 hour course in [Patient Confidentiality](#)
- 4) Provide evidence of a minimum of **100 hours of supervised clinical experience**. These hours must be supervised by an ASHA-certified Speech-Language Pathologist who has worked at least 9 full-time months with their CCC-SLP and has completed at least 2 hours of professional development in clinical supervision. The hours must be completed no more than 5 years before applying for certification and at least 80 of the hours must be in the direct provision of client/patient/student services.
- 5) Successfully pass the [Praxis Assistants Certification Exam](#) with a score of 162 or higher. ASHA provides [SLPA practice exam questions](#) and other [exam resources](#).

Please review the following documents for complete details regarding ASHA's SLPA certification requirements and process: [2020 Standards for SLPA Certification](#), [ASHA SLPA Certification Handbook](#), [Assistants Code of Conduct](#) and [SLPA certification application](#).

NOTE: ASHA membership and certification are separate. You can be an SLPA member of ASHA without certification and you can obtain SLPA certification from ASHA without being a member. You receive a discounted rate from ASHA, however, when you are both certified and a member.