

**West Virginia Board of Examiners for
Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology**

FILED

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OFFICE WEST VIRGINIA
SECRETARY OF STATE

March 24, 2020

Via U.S. Mail

Mac Warner, The Honorable Secretary of State
Secretary of State's Office – Administrative Law
Bldg 1, Suite 157-K
1900 Kanawha Blvd E
Charleston, WV 25305

Re: West Virginia Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and
Audiology Temporary Suspension of W. Va. Code R. § 29-1-15.5.2

Dear Secretary of State Warner:

The Honorable Governor of the State of West Virginia, Jim Justice, has declared a State of Emergency to address the emergency created by the worldwide coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. In a Proclamation issued March 16, 2020, the Governor delegated to “all state agencies the ability to suspend rules, if strict compliance therewith would in any way prevent, hinder or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency.”

The West Virginia Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (“Board”) is actively monitoring the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board is dedicated to fulfilling its primary mission of protecting the public during this time, while continuing to ensure that West Virginia has the workforce it needs to treat and care for speech-language pathology and audiology patients throughout the State.

At an emergency meeting held March 23, 2020, and pursuant to the Governor’s Proclamation, the Board voted to temporarily suspend its rule prohibiting telepractice by provisional licensees and Speech Pathology or Audiology Assistants, W. Va. Code R. § 29-1-15.5.2. The suspension of this rule shall remain in effect only during the State of Emergency.

Therefore, during the State of Emergency, a Speech Pathologist with a provisional license who is completing a postgraduate professional experience/clinical fellowship year, or a Speech Pathology or Audiology Assistant, having been issued such license by the Board, may provide

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In-state toll free number: 877-462-5460

~Patricia Nesbitt – Executive Director~

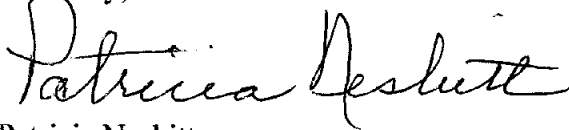
telepractice services to clients/patients in the State of West Virginia. The Board finds it necessary and appropriate to temporarily lift these restrictions on telepractice in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and in order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

In communicating this decision to its licensees, the Board has noted that the remaining provisions of W. Va. Code R. § 29-1-15 are unaffected and still apply in the telepractice setting, including practice standards, ethical requirements, supervision requirements, and patient confidentiality requirements.

The Board would respectfully request that the Secretary of State's Office accept this correspondence as notice of the temporary suspension of W. Va. Code R. § 29-1-15.5.2 and post a copy of this correspondence on its website.

Should you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact the Board's office (currently working remotely) by telephone, 304-642-9962, or by email @ wvbeslpa@wv.gov.

Sincerely,



Patricia Nesbitt

Executive Director

West Virginia Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology