

**STATE OF NEBRASKA**

Statutes, Rules and Regulations

Relating to:

**AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY**

TITLE 172 NAC 23



**Division of Public Health  
Licensure Unit**

Nebraska State Office Building  
301 Centennial Mall South-Third Floor  
P.O. Box 94986  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4986

**Effective Date: November 6, 2010**

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Effective Date  
November 6, 2010

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

172 NAC 23

TITLE 172 PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL LICENSURE

CHAPTER 23 LICENSURE OF AUDIOLOGISTS AND SPEECH-LANGUAGE  
PATHOLOGISTS

23-001 SCOPE AND AUTHORITY: These regulations govern the credentialing of an audiologist or speech-language pathologist under Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 38-501 to 38-527 and the Uniform Credentialing Act (UCA).

Exemptions: Nothing in the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Practice Act shall be construed to prevent or restrict:

1. The practice of audiology or speech-language pathology or the use of the official title of such practice by a person employed as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist by the federal government;
2. A physician from engaging in the practice of medicine and surgery or any individual from carrying out any properly delegated responsibilities within the normal practice of medicine and surgery under the supervision of a physician;
3. A person licensed as a hearing instrument specialist in this state from engaging in the fitting, selling, and servicing of hearing instruments or performing such other duties as defined in the Hearing Instrument Specialists Practice Act;
4. The practice of audiology or speech-language pathology or the use of the official title of such practice by a person who holds a valid and current credential as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist issued by the State Department of Education, if such person performs speech-language pathology or audiology services solely as a part of his or her duties within an agency, institution, or organization for which no fee is paid directly or indirectly by the recipient of such service and under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Education, but such person may elect to be within the jurisdiction of the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Practice Act;
5. The clinical practice in audiology or speech-language pathology required for students enrolled in an accredited college or university pursuing a major in audiology or speech-language pathology, if such clinical practices are supervised by a person licensed to practice audiology or speech-language pathology and if the student is designated by a title such as student clinician or other title clearly indicating the training status; or
6. The utilization of a speech aide or other personnel employed by a public school, educational service unit, or other private or public educational institution working under the direct supervision of a credentialed speech-language pathologist.

23-002 DEFINITIONS

Act means Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 38-501 to 38-527 known as the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Practice Act.

Active addiction means current physical or psychological dependence on alcohol or a substance, which develops following the use of alcohol or a substance on a periodic or continuing basis.

Alcohol or substance abuse means a maladaptive pattern of alcohol or substance use leading to

clinically significant impairment or distress as manifested by one or more of the following occurring at any time during the same 12-month period:

1. Recurrent alcohol or substance use resulting in a failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, or home;
2. Recurrent alcohol or substance use in situations in which it is physically hazardous;
3. Recurrent legal problems related to alcohol or substance use; or
4. Continued alcohol or substance use despite having persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by the effects of the alcohol or substance use.

Approved Academic Program means a program that has been accredited by the Council Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) or a nationally recognized equivalent accreditation association approved by the Board.

Attest or attestation means that the individual declares that all statements on the application are true and complete.

Audiologist means an individual who practices audiology and who presents him/herself to the public by any title or description of services incorporating the words audiologist, hearing clinician, or hearing therapist or any similar title or description of services.

Board means the Board of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology.

Complete application means an application that contains all of the information requested on the application, with attestation to its truth and completeness, and that is submitted with the required fees and all required documentation.

Confidential information means information protected as privileged under applicable law.

Consumer means a person receiving health or health-related services or environmental services and includes a patient, client, resident, customer, or person with a similar designation.

Continuing Competency means the offering of instruction or information to licensees for the purpose of maintaining skills necessary for the safe and competent practice of audiology or speech-language pathology. The continuing competency may be offered under such names as scientific school, clinic, forum, lecture, course of study, educational seminar, internet courses, correspondence courses, video conferencing, videotapes, and DVD's.

Conviction means a plea or verdict of guilty or a conviction following a plea of nolo contendere or non vult contendere made to a formal criminal charge, or a judicial finding of guilt irrespective of the pronouncement of judgment or the suspension thereof, and includes instances in which the imposition or the execution of sentence is suspended following a judicial finding of guilt and the defendant is placed on probation.

Course of study means a program of instruction necessary to obtain a credential meeting the requirements set out for each profession in the appropriate practice act and rules and regulations and includes a college, a professional school, a vocational school, hours of training, or a program of instruction with a similar designation.

Credential means a license, certificate, or registration.

Department means the Division of Public Health of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Dependence means a maladaptive pattern of alcohol or substance use, leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by three or more of the following occurring at any time in the same 12-month period:

1. Tolerance as defined by either of the following:
  - a. A need for markedly increased amounts of alcohol or the substance to achieve intoxication or desired effect; or
  - b. A markedly diminished effect with continued use of the same amount of alcohol or the substance;
2. Withdrawal as manifested by either of the following:
  - a. The characteristic withdrawal syndrome for alcohol or the substance as referred to in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, published by the American Psychiatric Association; or
  - b. Alcohol or the same substance or a closely related substance is taken to relieve or avoid withdrawal symptoms;
3. Alcohol or the substance is often taken in larger amounts or over a longer period than was intended;
4. A persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to cut down or control alcohol or substance use;
5. A great deal of time is spent in activities necessary to obtain alcohol or the substance, to use alcohol or the substance; or to recover from the effects of use of alcohol or the substance;
6. Important social, occupational, or recreational activities are given up or reduced because of alcohol or substance use; or
7. Alcohol or substance use continues despite knowledge of having had a persistent or recurrent physical or psychological problem that was likely to have been caused or exacerbated by alcohol or the substance.

Director means the Director of Public Health of the Division of Public Health or his/her designee.

Dysphagia means disorders of swallowing.

Evidence of Residency means proof of living within the boundaries of Nebraska, (for example, home address, car registration, voter registration).

Hour means 60 minutes.

Inactive credential means a credential which the credential holder has voluntarily placed on inactive status and by which action has terminated the right to practice or represent him/herself as having an active credential.

License means an authorization issued by the Department to an individual to engage in a profession or to a business to provide services which would otherwise be unlawful in this state in the absence of such authorization.

Licensure Examination means the Praxis Series Specialty Tests in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology approved by the Department on the recommendation of the Board and administered by the Educational Testing Service.

Military service means full-time duty in the active military service of the United States, a National Guard call to active service for more than 30 consecutive days, or active service as a commissioned officer of the Public Health Service or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Military service may also include any period during which a servicemember is absent from duty on account of sickness, wounds, leave, or other lawful cause. (From the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. App. 501 et seq., as it existed on January 1, 2007.)

NAC means the Nebraska Administrative Code, the system for classifying State agency rules and regulations. These regulations are 172 NAC 23.

Nationwide Professional Accrediting Organization means the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association or equivalent.

Official means issued by and under the original seal of the educational institution.

Pattern of incompetent or negligent conduct means a continued course of incompetent or negligent conduct in performing the duties of the profession.

Practice of Audiology means the application of evidence-based practice in clinical decision making for the prevention, assessment, habilitation, rehabilitation, and maintenance of persons with hearing, auditory function, and vestibular function impairments and related impairments, including:

1. Cerumen removal from the cartilaginous outer one-third portion of the external auditory canal when the presence of cerumen may affect the accuracy of hearing evaluations or impressions of the ear canal for amplification devices; and
2. Evaluation, selection, fitting, and dispensing of hearing instruments, external processors of implantable hearing instruments, and assistive technology devices as part of a comprehensive audiological rehabilitation program.

Practice of audiology does not include the practice of medical diagnosis, medical treatment, or surgery.

Practice of Speech-Language Pathology means the application of principles and methods associated with the development and disorders of human communication skills and with dysphagia, which principles and methods include screening, assessment, evaluation, treatment, prevention, consultation, and restorative modalities for speech, voice, language, language-based learning, hearing, swallowing, or other upper aerodigestive functions for the purpose of improving quality of life by reducing impairments of body functions and structures, activity limitations, participation restrictions, and environmental barriers.

Practice of speech-language pathology does not include the practice of medical diagnosis, medical treatment, or surgery.

Profession means any profession or occupation named in subsection (1) or (2) of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 38-121.

Professional Experience means at least 36 weeks of full time professional experience of 35 clock hours per week or 72 weeks of at least half time professional experience with 15 to 19 hours per week in speech-language pathology or audiology supervised in the area in which licensure is sought.

Provider means an individual or sponsoring organization that presents continuing education programs to licensees.

Scaled Score means qualitative interpretative score which is a function of performance.

Served in the regular armed forces has the same meaning as “military service” in these regulations.

Speech-Language Pathologist means an individual who presents him/herself to the public by any title or description of services incorporating the words speech-language pathologist, speech therapist, speech correctionist, speech clinician, language pathologist, language therapist, language clinician, logopedist, communicologist, aphasiologist, aphasia therapist, voice pathologist, voice therapist, voice clinician, phoniatriest, or any similar title, term, or description of services.

### 23-003 INITIAL CREDENTIAL

23-003.01 Qualifications: To receive a credential to practice audiology or speech-language pathology, an individual must meet the following qualifications:

1. Age and Good Character: Be at least 19 years old and of good character;
2. Citizenship/Resident Information: Be a citizen of the United States, an alien lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and who is eligible for a credential under the Uniform Credentialing Act, or a nonimmigrant whose visa for entry, or application for visa for entry, is related to employment as a credential holder in the United States.
3. Education: Have a degree from an approved academic program in audiology or speech-language pathology as follows:
  - a. An audiologist graduating prior to September 1, 2007 must present proof of a master’s degree or a doctoral degree, or the equivalent of a master’s degree or doctoral degree in audiology;
  - b. An audiologist graduating on or after September 1, 2007 must present proof of a doctoral degree or its equivalent in audiology; or
  - c. A speech-language pathologist must present proof of a master’s degree, doctoral degree, or the equivalent of a master’s degree or doctoral degree in speech-language pathology;
4. Examination: Have passed the licensure examination with a scaled score of 600 or above.
5. Experience: Have completed the Professional Experience. The Professional Experience must include:
  - a. Supervision in the area in which licensure is sought by:
    - (1) An audiologist or speech-language pathologist who holds a valid Nebraska license or who meets Nebraska requirements for licensure; or
    - (2) An audiologist or speech-language pathologist who holds certification from the American Speech-Language-Hearing

- Association. The supervisor's license or certification must be in the professional area in which the applicant works.
- b. Direct clinical work with patients, consultations, record keeping, and other duties relevant to a program of clinical work including clinical experience with persons who have communication impairments.
  - c. Direct management of treatment programs for specific patients or clients; and
  - d. Monitoring and evaluation by the the supervising audiologist or speech-language pathologist of the applicant's performance for at least 36 weeks of full time experience or equivalent half-time experience.
6. Endorsement: An applicant for licensure to practice audiology or speech-language pathology that has obtained a certificate of clinical competency from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and meets the qualification listed in 172 NAC 23-003-01, items 3, 4, and 5.

23-003.01A Passed Licensure Examination But Is Not Practicing. An applicant who has met the education, professional experience and examination requirements pursuant to 172 NAC 23-003.01 items 3, 4, and 5, who passed the examination more than three years prior to the time of application for licensure, and who is not practicing at the time of application for licensure must present proof to the Department, within the three years immediately preceding the application for licensure, that s/he completed 50 hours of continuing education over the subject areas outlined in Content I, pursuant to 172 NAC 23-004.01, item 1.

23-003.01B Licensed in Another Jurisdiction But Is Not Practicing. An applicant who has met the requirements for licensure pursuant to 172 NAC 23-003.01 based on a license in another jurisdiction and who is not practicing at the time of application for licensure must present proof to the Department, within the three years immediately preceding the application for licensure, that s/he completed 50 hours of continuing education over the subject areas outlined in Content I, pursuant to 172 NAC 23-004.01, item 1.

23-003.01C Temporary License: A temporary license may be issued to an applicant who has established residence in Nebraska and has met all requirements for licensure pursuant to 172 NAC 23-003.01 except:

1. Passing the licensure examination; or
2. Completion of the professional experience.

23-003.01C1 A temporary license is valid until:

1. The results of the next examination are available to the Department at which time the license terminates; or
2. The completion of the professional experience or 18 months, whichever occurs first.

23-003.01C2 A temporary license may not be renewed.



An audiologist who engages in or intends to engage in the sale of hearing instruments must obtain a license as a hearing instrument specialist pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 38-1509 and 38-1512.

23-003.02 Application: To apply for a credential to practice audiology or speech-language pathology, the individual must submit a complete application to the Department. A complete application includes all required documentation, the required fee, and a written application. The applicant may obtain an application from the Department or construct an application that must contain the following information:

1. Written Application:
  - a. Personal Information:
    - (1) The legal name of the applicant, maiden name (if applicable), and any other names by which the applicant is known;
    - (2) Date of birth (month, day, and year);
    - (3) Place of birth (city and state or country if not born in the United States);
    - (4) Mailing address (street, rural route, or post office address; and city, state, and zip code, or country information);
    - (5) The applicant's:
      - (a) Social Security Number (SSN);
      - (b) Alien Registration Number ("A#"); or
      - (c) Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) number. Certain applicants may have both a SSN and an A# or I-94 number, and if so, must report both.
    - (6) The applicant's telephone number including area code (optional);
    - (7) The applicant's e-mail address (optional);
    - (8) The applicant's fax number (optional);
    - (9) Citizenship: The applicant must state that s/he is one of the following:
      - (a) A citizen of the United States;
      - (b) An alien lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and who is eligible for a credential under the Uniform Credentialing Act; or
      - (c) A non-immigrant whose visa for entry, or application for visa for entry, is related to employment as a credential holder in the United States;
    - (10) The applicant must answer the following questions:
      - (a) Has your license ever been revoked or sanctioned by any licensing authority, association, licensed facility, or staff of such facility?
      - (b) Have your privileges ever been restricted or terminated by any licensing authority, association, licensed facility, or staff of such facility; or have you ever voluntarily or involuntarily resigned or withdrawn from such association to avoid imposition of such measures?

- (c) Do you have any unresolved or pending complaints against you with any licensing agency, professional association, licensed hospital or clinic, or staff of such hospital or clinic?
    - (d) Are you now being treated or have you in the last five years been treated for drug or alcohol dependency or abuse or participated in a rehabilitation program?
    - (e) Have you ever had a professional liability claim that resulted in an adverse judgment, settlement, or award, including settlements made prior to the suit in which the patient released any professional liability claim against you?
  - b. Practice Before Application: The applicant must state:
    - (1) That s/he has not practiced audiology or speech-language pathology in Nebraska except when practicing under a credential issued by the Department of Education in Nebraska before submitting the application; or
    - (2) If s/he has practiced audiology or speech-language pathology in Nebraska before submitting the application, the actual number of days practiced in Nebraska before submitting the application for a credential and the name and location of practice; and
  - c. Attestation: The applicant must attest that:
    - (1) S/he has read the application or has had the application read to him/her;
    - (2) All statements on the application are true and complete;
    - (3) S/he is of good character;
    - (4) S/he has not committed any act that would be grounds for denial under 172 NAC 23-006 or if an act(s) was committed, provide an explanation of all such acts; and
    - (5) For the purpose of complying with Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 4-108 to 4-114, s/he is a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien under the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act. The applicant must provide his/her immigration status and alien number, and agree to provide a copy of his/her United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) documentation upon request.
- 2. Documentation: The applicant must submit the following documentation with the application:
  - a. Evidence of age, such as:
    - (1) Driver's license;
    - (2) Birth certificate;
    - (3) Marriage license that provides date of birth;
    - (4) Transcript that provides date of birth;
    - (5) U.S. State identification card;
    - (6) Military identification; or
    - (7) Other similar documentation;

- b. Evidence of good character, including:
  - (1) Other Credential Information: If the applicant holds a credential to provide health services, health-related services, or environmental services in Nebraska or in another jurisdiction, the applicant must submit the name of the state, credential number, type of credential, date issued, and expiration date of each credential where the applicant has been or is currently credentialed. The applicant must have the licensing agency submit to the Department a certification of his/her credential;
  - (2) Disciplinary Action: A list of any disciplinary actions taken against the applicant's credential and a copy of the disciplinary action(s), including charges and disposition;
  - (3) Denial: If the applicant was denied a credential or denied the right to take an examination, an explanation of the basis for the denial;
  - (4) Conviction Information: If the applicant has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, the applicant must submit to the Department:
    - (a) A list of any misdemeanor or felony convictions;
    - (b) A copy of the court record, which includes charges and disposition;
    - (c) Explanation from the applicant of the events leading to the conviction (what, when, where, why) and a summary of actions the applicant has taken to address the behaviors/actions related to the convictions;
    - (d) All addiction/mental health evaluations and proof of treatment, if the conviction involved a drug and/or alcohol related offense and if treatment was obtained and/or required;
    - (e) A letter from the probation officer addressing probationary conditions and current status, if the applicant is currently on probation; and
    - (f) Any other information as requested by the Board/Department;
- c. Evidence that the applicant is:
  - (1) A citizen;
  - (2) An alien lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) who is eligible for a credential under the Uniform Credentialing Act; or
  - (3) A non-immigrant whose visa for entry or application for visa for entry, is related to employment as a credential holder in the United States;
- d. Evidence of citizenship, lawful permanent residence, and/or immigration status may include a copy of:
  - (1) A U.S. Passport (unexpired or expired);
  - (2) A birth certificate issued by a state, county, municipal

- authority or outlying possession of the United States bearing an official seal;
- (3) An American Indian Card (I-872);
  - (4) A Certificate of Naturalization (N-550 or N-570);
  - (5) A Certificate of Citizenship (N-560 or N-561);
  - (6) Certification of Report of Birth (DS-1350);
  - (7) A Consular Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States of America (FS-240);
  - (8) Certification of Birth Abroad (FS-545 or DS-1350);
  - (9) A United States Citizen Identification Card (I-197 or I-179);
  - (10) A Northern Mariana Card (I-873);
  - (11) An Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551, otherwise known as a "Green Card");
  - (12) An unexpired foreign passport with an unexpired Temporary I-551 stamp bearing the same name as the passport;
  - (13) A document showing an Alien Registration Number ("A#") with visa status; or
  - (14) A Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) with visa status;
- e. Documentation of education, including:
- (1) Name and date of diploma/degree awarded; and
  - (2) Name of school, college or university that awarded the diploma/degree.
- f. Documentation of examination, if applicable, including:
- (1) Name of examination;
  - (2) Date of examination; and
  - (3) Proof of passing the licensure examination with a scaled score of 600 or above; and
- g. Documentation that the applicant:
- (1) Requested that the examination scores be sent directly to the Department from the appropriate examination service or State Board Office; and
  - (2) Requested that an official transcript of a master's degree or a doctoral degree, or the equivalent of a master's degree or doctoral degree be sent to the Department.
- h. Documentation of the professional experience, if applicable, to be provided by the supervisor:
- (1) Supervisor's complete name including middle or maiden name;
  - (2) State(s) supervisor is licensed in;
  - (3) Profession supervisor is licensed in: audiology or speech-language pathology;
  - (4) Supervisor's license number(s);
  - (5) Supervisor's Certificate of Clinical Competence certificate number from the American Speech-Language Hearing Association, if applicable;
  - (6) Name of profession that Certificate of Clinical Competence is held in: audiology or speech-language pathology;
  - (7) Name of applicant;
  - (8) Dates of supervision;

- (9) Name of supervision site;
  - (10) Mailing address of site including street, P.O. Box, route, city, state, and zip code;
  - (11) Telephone number including area code of the supervisor;
  - (12) Area in which clinical fellow completed his/her professional experience: audiology or speech- language pathology;
  - (13) Number of hours worked per week;
  - (14) Attest to the following statement: The applicant's professional experience consisted of:
    - (a) Direct clinical work with patients, consultations, record keeping, and other duties relevant to a program of clinical work including clinical experience with persons who have communication handicaps; and
    - (b) Direct management of treatment programs for specific patients or clients; and
  - (15) Sign and date the following statement: I hereby certify that the preceding information is correct to the best of my knowledge;
  - i. Documentation of licensure in another jurisdiction, including:
    - (1) Certification from the other jurisdiction (s) verifying licensure, including:
      - (a) Date of initial licensure;
      - (b) The name of the examination on which licensure was based;
      - (c) The score received on the examination;
      - (d) Date of the examination;
      - (e) Name of accredited program that the applicant presented a transcript from;
      - (f) The nature of disciplinary actions, if any, taken against the applicant's credential.
    - (2) The applicant must:
      - (a) State that s/he has practiced within the three years preceding the application; and
      - (b) Provide the dates and locations of practice prior to the date of the application; and
  - j. Documentation of continuing competency if not practicing: Submit certificates of attendance verifying the 50 hours of continuing education pursuant to 172 NAC 23-004;
  - k. Documentation of continuing competency if licensed in another jurisdiction but not practicing: Submit certificates of attendance verifying the 50 hours of continuing education pursuant to 172 NAC 23.004; and
3. Fee: The applicant must submit the required license fee along with the application and all required documentation.

23-003.02A Prorated Fee: When a credential will expire within 180 days after its initial issuance date and the initial credentialing fee is \$25 or more, the Department will collect \$25 or one-fourth of the initial credentialing fee, whichever is greater, for

the initial credential, and the credential will be valid until the next subsequent renewal date.

23-003.03 Department Review: The Department will act within 150 days upon all completed applications for initial credentialing.

23-003.04 Denial of Initial Credential: If an applicant for an initial credential does not meet all of the requirements for a credential, the Department will deny issuance of a credential. If the applicant is found to have committed any act which would be grounds for denial of a credential as listed in 172 NAC 23-006, the Department may deny issuance of a credential. To deny a credential, the Department will notify the applicant in writing of the denial and the reasons for the determination. The denial will become final 30 days after mailing the notice unless the applicant, within that 30-day period, requests a hearing in writing. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act and 184 NAC 1, the Department's Rules of Practice and Procedure for Administrative Hearings.

23-003.05 Withdrawn Applications: An applicant for a credential who withdraws his/her application or whose application is rejected by the Department prior to administration of the examination will be allowed the return of his/her fee, except for a \$25 administrative fee to be retained by the Department.

23-003.06 Practice Prior to Credential: An individual who practices prior to issuance of a credential is subject to assessment of an administrative penalty under 172 NAC 23-009 or such other action as provided in the statutes and regulations governing the credential.

23-003.07 Confidentiality: Social Security Numbers obtained under this section are not public information but may be shared by the Department for administrative purposes if necessary and only under appropriate circumstances to ensure against any unauthorized access to this information.

23-003.08 Address Information: Each credential holder must notify the Department of any change to the address of record.

23-003.09 Non-English Documents: Any documents written in a language other than English must be accompanied by a complete translation into the English language. The translation must be an original document and contain the notarized signature of the translator. An individual may not translate his/her own documents.

23-004 CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS: Each person holding an active credential must, on or before the date of expiration of the credential, comply with the continuing competency requirements for his/her profession, unless the requirements are waived in accordance with 172 NAC 23-005.03 and 23-005.04. Each credentialed individual is responsible for maintaining certificates or records of continuing competency activities.

23-004.01 General Requirements for Licensee: On or before December 1 of each even-numbered year, each audiologist or speech-language pathologist who has an active license must:

1. Participate in at least 20 hours of acceptable continuing competency programs/activities for each renewal period. All 20 hours may be from Content Area I with no more than five hours from Content Area II as specified in 172 NAC 23-004.01B items 1 and 2; and
2. Be responsible for maintaining until the next renewal period:
  - a. Documentation of attendance at, or participation in, continuing education programs/activities. Documentation must include:
    - (1) Signed certificate; and
    - (2) Course brochure or course outline; and/or
    - (3) Other requested documentation pursuant to 172 NAC 23-004.01C, items 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8.
  - b. If the licensee is presenting a program, documentation of the continuing education program. Documentation must include:
    - (1) Course outline;
    - (2) Course brochure; and
    - (3) Statement of instructor's qualifications to teach the course, unless the qualifications are included in the brochure; or
3. When applicable, submit an application for waiver of the continuing competency requirement pursuant to 172 NAC 23-005.03 and 23-005.04.

23-004.01A Acceptable Continuing Education: The Board does not pre-approve continuing education programs but will accept as continuing education for renewal, continuing education programs specified in 172 NAC 23-004.01C. The Board retains final authority for acceptance of any educational program/activity submitted by the licensee to meet the continuing competency requirement. In order for continuing education programs/activities to be accepted for renewal or reinstatement of a license, the continuing education programs/activities must relate to the theory or clinical application of theory pertaining to the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology and must be open to all licensees.

23-004.01B It is the licensee's responsibility to attend or participate in continuing education programs/activities which meet the guidelines pursuant to 172 NAC 23-004.01C. Renewal of a license will be contingent upon the licensee fulfilling the continuing competency requirements and maintaining documentation for a possible audit. The licensee may participate in all 20 hours from Content Area I with no more than five hours from Content Area II as specified below:

1. Content Area I
  - a. Anatomic and physiologic bases for the normal development and use of speech, language, hearing, swallowing, and balance;
  - b. Physical bases and processes of swallowing, hearing, balance, and the production and perception of speech and language; c. Linguistic and psycho-linguistic variables related to normal development and use of speech, language, and hearing;
  - d. Technological, biomedical, engineering, and instrumentation information which would enable expansion of knowledge in basic speech, language, hearing, balance, and swallowing processes;
  - e. Various types of disorders of speech, language, hearing, balance, and swallowing, their manifestations, classification, and cause;

- f. Evaluation skills, including procedures, techniques, and instrumentation for assessment of speech, language, hearing, balance, and swallowing; and
  - g. Principles in habilitation and rehabilitation of speech, language, hearing, balance, and swallowing disorders.
2. Content Area II (must relate to the practice of audiology and speech-language pathology):
- a. Regulations and implementation of federal and/or state regulated programs;
  - b. Service delivery models;
  - c. Ethical practices;
  - d. Supervision issues related to the practice of audiology and speech-language pathology;
  - e. Related disciplines which interface with delivery of audiology and speech-language pathology services; and
  - f. Reimbursement issues.

23-004.01C Continuing Education Program/Activity: The following is a list of acceptable continuing education programs/activities and the required documentation specified for each. One hour credit will be awarded for each 60 minutes of attendance and a quarter hour will be awarded for each additional 15 minutes over 60 minutes. Each program/activity must be at least 60 minutes in length. Credit will not be awarded for breaks or meals.

- 1. Programs at State and National meetings which relate to the theory or clinical application of theory pertaining to the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology ( for example, a meeting of the Nebraska Speech-Language-Hearing Association and/or the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, or American Academy of Audiology). Documentation must include:
  - a. The certificate of attendance;
  - b. A listing of individual presentations attended; and
  - c. Continuing education program outline and/or objectives.
- 2. Poster sessions at State and National meetings which relate to the theory or clinical application of theory pertaining to the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology. Documentation must include:
  - a. The certificate of attendance;
  - b. A listing of individual poster sessions attended; and
  - c. Program outline and/or objectives.
- 3. Formal education courses/presentations in which the objectives relate to the theory or clinical application of theory pertaining to the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology and in which:
  - a. The courses or presentations are formally organized and planned instructional experiences that have a:



- (1) Date;
    - (2) Location;
    - (3) Course title;
    - (4) Number of contact hours;
    - (5) Signed certificate of attendance; and
  - b. The instructor has specialized experience or training to meet the objectives of the course. Documentation must include:
    - (1) The certificate of attendance; and
    - (2) Program outline and/or objectives.
4. Accredited university sponsored courses relating to the theory or clinical application of theory pertaining to the practice of audiology and speech-language pathology taken for college credit including internet courses. Documentation of successfully completing the course must include:
  - a. An official transcript; and
  - b. A program outline and/or objectives.
    - (1) One academic semester credit hour is equal to 15 contact hours. A three credit hour course will provide 45 contact hours of continuing education credit.
    - (2) One academic quarter credit hour is equal to ten contact hours. A three credit hour course will provide 30 contact hours continuing education credit; and
    - (3) Documentation of successful completion of the course.
5. Home study where the content of the home study program/activity relates to the theory or clinical application of theory pertaining to the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology, (for example, videotapes, internet courses not for university credit, and/or correspondence courses). The program/activity must have a testing mechanism scored by the named home study provider. Licensees may complete a maximum of ten hours of continuing education requirements by home study each 24 month renewal period. Documentation must include a:
  - a. Certificate of completion; and
  - b. Program outline and/or objectives.
6. Participation in research or other scholarly activities that result in professional publication or acceptance for publication and relate to the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology. Five contact hours will be awarded for each publication. Licensees may earn up to a maximum of ten contact hours of continuing education each 24 month renewal period for;
  - a. Authorship;
  - b. Editorship;
  - c. Co-authorship;
  - d. Co-editorship; or

- e. All of these of a juried publication. Documentation must include:
  - (1) A copy of the final publication; or
  - (2) Verification of publication (for example, title page and table of contents).
  
- 7. Nationally recognized specialty certification examinations: A licensee may earn ten contact hours of continuing education each 24 month renewal period for successfully completing a nationally recognized specialty certification examination related to an area of advanced practice in the field of audiology or speech-language pathology. Documentation must include a copy of the certification.
  
- 8. Scientific Presentation: A licensee acting as an essayist or a lecturer to licensed audiologists, speech-language pathologists, or other credentialed health care professionals will be awarded one hour credit for each hour of scientific presentation, including poster sessions if the program/activity relates to the practice of audiology and speech-language pathology. A licensee may receive continuing education credit for only the initial presentation during a renewal period, with a maximum of four hours of continuing education for presentation in a 24 month renewal period. Documentation must include:
  - a. The program brochure that includes the licensee's name as presenter;
  - b. The continuing competency course outline and/or objectives and
  - c. Statement of instructor's qualification to teach the course, unless the qualifications are included in the brochure.

23-004.01D Non-acceptable Continuing Education: Continuing education credit will not be awarded where the content area does not relate to the theory or clinical application of theory pertaining to the practice of audiology and speech-language pathology including but not limited to:

- 1. Marketing and business communications and operations;
- 2. Courses which deal with personal self-improvement, human relations, financial gain, time management, or career options;
- 3. Courses designed for lay persons;
- 4. Teaching non-credentialed persons or any preparation for the same;
- 5. Courses less than 60 minutes in duration;
- 6. Participation in or attendance at case conferences, grand rounds, facility tours, (for example, manufacturing, education, medical, or informal presentations).

23-005 RENEWAL: An individual who wants to renew his/her audiology and/or speech-language pathology credential must request renewal as specified in 172 NAC 23-005.02. All audiology and speech-language pathology credentials issued by the Department will expire on December 1 of each even-numbered year.

23-005.01 Renewal Notice: At least 30 days before the expiration of a credential, the Department will notify each credential holder at the last known address of record. The renewal notice will include:

1. The type of credential;
2. The credential number;
3. The expiration date;
4. Continuing competency requirements for renewal;
5. The amount of the renewal fee; and
6. Information on how to request renewal and how to place a credential on inactive status.

23-005.02 Renewal Procedures: The request for renewal may be submitted in person or by mail or Internet, and must include all required documentation and the renewal fee, which must be paid no later than the expiration date. The applicant may obtain an application from the Department or construct an application.

1. Application: The applicant must attest that all information in the application is truthful and complete, and the applicant, in his/her application:
  - a. Must provide the following information:
    - (1) The legal name of the applicant, maiden name (if applicable), and any other names by which the applicant is known;
    - (2) Mailing address (street, rural route, or post office address; and city, state, and zip code, or country information);
    - (3) The applicant's:
      - (a) Social Security Number (SSN); or
      - (b) Alien Registration Number (A#) or
      - (c) Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) number.Certain applicants may have both a SSN and an A# or I-94 number, and if so, must report both;
  - b. Must state that s/he is one of the following:
    - (1) A citizen of the United States;
    - (2) An alien lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and who is eligible for a credential under the Uniform Credentialing Act; or
    - (3) A non-immigrant whose visa for entry, or application for visa for entry, is related to employment as a credential holder in the United States;
  - c. May provide the following information about him/herself:
    - (1) The applicant's telephone number including area code;
    - (2) The applicant's e-mail address; and
    - (3) The applicant's fax number;
  - d. Must indicate that s/he:
    - (1) Is of good character;
    - (2) Has met the continuing competency requirements specified in 172 NAC 23-004 or has requested a waiver if s/he meets the requirements of 172 NAC 23-005.03 and/or 23-005.04;
    - (3) Has not, since the last renewal of the credential, committed

- any act which would be grounds for action against a credential as specified in 172 NAC 23-006.01, or if an act(s) was committed, provide an explanation of all such acts: and
- (4) Is a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien under the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act, for the purpose of complying with Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 4-108 to 4-114. The applicant must provide his/her immigration status and alien number, and agree to provide a copy of his/her USCIS documentation upon request.
2. Documentation: The applicant must submit the following documentation with the application:
- a. Alien or Non-Immigrant: Evidence of lawful permanent residence, and/or immigration status may include a copy of:
- (1) An Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551, otherwise known as a "Green Card");
  - (2) An unexpired foreign passport with an unexpired Temporary I-551 stamp bearing the same name as the passport;
  - (3) A document showing an Alien Registration Number ("A#") with visa status; or
  - (4) A Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) with visa status;
- b. Other Credential Information: If the applicant holds a credential to provide health services, health-related services, or environmental services in Nebraska or in another jurisdiction, the applicant must submit the name of the state, credential number, type of credential, date issued, and expiration date of each credential where the applicant has been or is currently credentialed;
- c. Disciplinary Action: A list of any disciplinary actions taken against the applicant's credential and a copy of the disciplinary action(s), including charges and disposition;
- d. Denial: If the applicant was denied a credential or denied the right to take a credentialing examination, an explanation of the basis for the denial;
- e. Conviction Information: If the applicant has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, since his/her last renewal or during the time period since initial credentialing if such occurred within the previous two years the applicant must submit to the Department:
- (1) A list of any misdemeanor or felony convictions;
  - (2) A copy of the court record, which includes charges and disposition;
  - (3) Explanation from the applicant of the events leading to the conviction (what, when, where, why) and a summary of actions the applicant has taken to address the behaviors/actions related to the convictions;
  - (4) All addiction/mental health evaluations and proof of treatment, if the conviction involved a drug and/or alcohol related offense and if treatment was obtained and/or required;
  - (5) A letter from the probation officer addressing probationary conditions and current status, if the applicant is currently on

- probation; and  
(6) Any other information as requested by the Board/Department;  
and

3. The renewal fee according to 172 NAC 2.

23-005.03 Waivers for Military Service: A credential holder who has served in the regular armed forces of the United States during part of the credentialing period immediately preceding the renewal date, or is actively engaged in military service as defined in 172 NAC 23-002, is not required to pay the renewal fee or to meet the continuing competency requirements if acceptable documentation is submitted to the Department. The individual must document his/her military service by submitting to the Department:

1. Military identification proving that s/he is in active service;
2. Military orders; or
3. A letter from his/her Commanding Officer indicating that s/he is on active duty.

Upon receipt of acceptable documentation, the Department will waive the fee and the continuing competency requirements and renew the credential. The credential will remain active until the next renewal period.

23-005.04 Waiver of Continuing Competency Requirements: The Department waives continuing competency requirements for individuals who were first credentialed within the 24-month period immediately preceding the renewal date.

23-005.04A The Department may waive continuing competency requirements, in whole or in part, upon submission by a credential holder of documentation that circumstances beyond his/her control have prevented completion of these requirements. These circumstances may include proof that the credential holder was suffering from a serious or disabling illness or physical disability which prevented completion of the required number of continuing education hours during the 24 months immediately preceding the license renewal date.

23-005.05 Audit of Continuing Competency Requirements: The Department or the Board may biennially select in a random manner, a sample of the renewal applications for audit of continuing competency requirements. Each credential holder selected for audit must produce documentation of the continuing competency activities.

23-005.05A The Department/Board will notify each selected credential holder by mail. Failure to notify the Department of a current mailing address will not absolve the credential holder from the requirement for audit.

23-005.05B Within 30 days, each selected credential holder must respond by submitting documentation that s/he has met the requirements for continuing competency. An extension beyond 30 days for submission of the documentation may be granted at the discretion of the Department. Documentation submitted by the credential holder will not be returned.

23-005.05C Acceptable documentation that the credential holder has met the continuing competency requirements includes:

1. Signed certificate; and
2. Course brochure or course outline; and/or
3. Other requested documentation required pursuant to 172 NAC 23-004.01C, items 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

23-005.05D The Department/Board will review the submitted documentation to determine if the credential holder has met the requirements for continuing competency activities for renewal of the credential. Only documented activities/hours that meet the continuing competency requirements will be counted toward the total requirements for renewal.

23-005.05E The Department/Board will notify the credential holder upon satisfactory completion of the audit.

23-005.05F The credential of any person who fails to comply with the conditions of the audit will expire 30 days after notice and an opportunity for a hearing.

23-005.05G The Board reserves the right to audit continuing competency requirements of any credential holder by notifying the credential holder and requesting that s/he produce the required documentation of attendance at or participation in acceptable continuing competency programs within 30 days of mailing.

23-005.06 Department Review: The Department will act within 150 days upon all completed applications for renewal.

23-005.06A False Information: The Department may refuse to renew a credential for falsification of any information submitted for renewal of a credential. The refusal will be made according to 184 NAC 1, the Department's Rules of Practice and Procedure for Administrative Hearings.

23-005.07 Address Information: Each credential holder must notify the Department of any change to the address of record.

23-005.08 Expiration of a Credential: A credential expires if a credential holder fails to:

1. Notify the Department that s/he wants to place his/her credential on inactive status upon its expiration;
2. Meet the requirements for renewal on or before the date of expiration of his/her credential; or
3. Otherwise fails to renew his/her credential.

23-005.08A Failure to Renew: A credential automatically expires without further notice or opportunity for hearing if a credential holder fails by the expiration date of the credential to either:

1. Submit documentation of continuing competency; or
2. Pay the required renewal fee.

23-005.08B Failure to Meet Continuing Competency Requirements: The Department will refuse to renew a credential, after notice and opportunity for hearing, if a credential holder fails to meet the continuing competency requirements for renewal by the expiration date of the credential.

23-005.08C Right to Practice: When an individual's credential expires, the right to represent him/herself as a credential holder and to practice as an audiologist or speech-language pathologist terminates.

23-005.08D Practice After Expiration: An individual who practices after expiration of his/her credential is subject to assessment of an administrative penalty under 172 NAC 23-009 or such other action as provided in the statutes and regulations governing the credential.

23-005.08E Reinstatement of an Expired Credential: If a credential holder wants to resume the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology after failing to renew his/her credential by the expiration date, s/he must apply to the Department for reinstatement as specified in 172 NAC 23-008.

23-005.09 Inactive Status: When an individual wants to have his/her credential placed on inactive status, s/he must notify the Department in writing. There is no fee to have a credential placed on inactive status and continuing competency is not required.

23-005.09A Request for Inactive Status: When the Department has received notification that an individual wants to have his/her credential placed on inactive status, the Department will notify the credential holder in writing of the acceptance or denial of the request.

23-005.09B Placement on Inactive Status: When an individual's credential is placed on inactive status, the credential holder must not engage in the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology, but may represent him/herself as having an inactive credential.

23-005.09C Return to Active Status: A credential may remain on inactive status for an indefinite period of time. An individual who wants to have his/her credential returned to active status must apply to the Department for reinstatement and meet the requirements specified in 172 NAC 23-008.

## 23-006 DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

23-006.01 Grounds for Action Against a Credential: A credential to practice a profession may have disciplinary actions taken against it on any of the following grounds:

1. Misrepresentation of material facts in procuring or attempting to procure a credential;
2. Immoral or dishonorable conduct evidencing unfitness to practice the profession in this state;

3. Abuse of, dependence on, or active addiction to alcohol, any controlled substance, or any mind-altering substance;
4. Failure to comply with a treatment program or an aftercare program, including, but not limited to, a program entered into under the Licensee Assistance Program established pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 38-175;
5. Conviction of:
  - a. A misdemeanor or felony under Nebraska law or federal law, or
  - b. A crime in any jurisdiction which, if committed within this state, would have constituted a misdemeanor or felony under Nebraska law and which has a rational connection with the fitness or capacity of the applicant or credential holder to practice the profession;
6. Practice of the profession:
  - a. Fraudulently;
  - b. Beyond its authorized scope;
  - c. With gross incompetence or gross negligence; or
  - d. In a pattern of incompetent or negligent conduct;
7. Practice of the profession while the ability to practice is impaired by alcohol, controlled substances, drugs, mind-altering substances, physical disability, mental disability, or emotional disability;
8. Physical or mental incapacity to practice the profession as evidenced by a legal judgment or a determination by other lawful means;
9. Illness, deterioration, or disability that impairs the ability to practice the profession;
10. Permitting, aiding, or abetting the practice of a profession or the performance of activities requiring a credential by a person not credentialed to do so;
11. Having had his/her credential denied, refused renewal, limited, suspended, revoked, or disciplined in any manner similar to 172 NAC 23-006.05 by another state or jurisdiction based upon acts by the applicant or credential holder similar to acts described in this part;
12. Use of untruthful, deceptive, or misleading statements in advertisements;
13. Conviction of fraudulent or misleading advertising or conviction of a violation of the Uniform Deceptive Trade Practices Act;
14. Distribution of intoxicating liquors, controlled substances, or drugs for any other than lawful purposes;
15. Violations of the Uniform Credentialing Act or the rules and regulations relating to the particular profession;
16. Unlawful invasion of the field of practice of any profession regulated by the Uniform Credentialing Act which the credential holder is not credentialed to practice;
17. Violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act or any rules and regulations adopted pursuant to the act;
18. Failure to file a report required by Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 38-1,124 or 38-1,125;
19. Failure to maintain the requirements necessary to obtain a credential;
20. Violation of an order issued by the Department;
21. Violation of an assurance of compliance entered into under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 38-1,108;
22. Failure to pay an administrative penalty;
23. Unprofessional conduct as defined in 172 NAC 23-006.02; and/or
24. Violation of the Automated Medication Systems Act.



23-006.02 Unprofessional Conduct: Unprofessional conduct means any departure from or failure to conform to the standards of acceptable and prevailing practice of a profession or the ethics of the profession, regardless of whether a person, consumer, or entity is injured, but does not include a single act of ordinary negligence. Unprofessional conduct also means conduct that is likely to deceive or defraud the public or is detrimental to the public interest. Unprofessional conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Receipt of fees on the assurance that an incurable disease can be permanently cured;
2. Division of fees, or agreeing to split or divide the fees, received for professional services with any person for bringing or referring a consumer other than:
  - a. With a partner or employee of the applicant or credential holder or his/her office or clinic;
  - b. With a landlord of the applicant or credential holder pursuant to a written agreement that provides for payment of rent based on gross receipts; or
  - c. With a former partner or employee of the applicant or credential holder based on a retirement plan or separation agreement.
3. Obtaining any fee for professional services by fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation, including, but not limited to, falsification of third-party claim documents;
4. Cheating on or attempting to subvert the credentialing examination;
5. Assisting in the care or treatment of a consumer without the consent of the consumer or his/her legal representative;
6. Use of any letters, words, or terms, either as a prefix, affix, or suffix, on stationery, in advertisements, or otherwise, indicating that the person is entitled to practice a profession for which s/he is not credentialed;
7. Performing, procuring, or aiding and abetting in the performance or procurement of a criminal abortion;
8. Knowingly disclosing confidential information except as otherwise permitted by law;
9. Commission of any act of sexual abuse, misconduct, or exploitation related to the practice of the profession of the applicant or credential holder;
10. Failure to keep and maintain adequate records of treatment or service;
11. Prescribing, administering, distributing, dispensing, giving, or selling any controlled substance or other drug recognized as addictive or dangerous for other than a medically accepted therapeutic purpose;
12. Prescribing any controlled substance to:
  - a. Oneself; or
  - b. Except in the case of a medical emergency:
    - (1) One's spouse;
    - (2) One's child;
    - (3) One's parent;
    - (4) One's sibling; or
    - (5) Any other person living in the same household as the prescriber;
13. Failure to comply with any federal, state, or municipal law, ordinance, rule, or regulation that pertains to the applicable profession;

14. Disruptive behavior, whether verbal or physical, which interferes with consumer care or could reasonably be expected to interfere with the care;
15. Competence: An audiologist or speech-language pathologist must not provide services for which s/he is not trained or experienced. Unprofessional conduct in the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology includes but is not limited to performing or agreeing to perform procedures when the procedures are known to be a departure from standard or acceptable and prevailing practice in audiology and speech-language pathology, but not to include a single act of ordinary negligence;
16. Committing any act which endangers public safety or welfare;
17. Confidentiality: Without the prior written consent of a patient, an audiologist or speech-language pathologist must hold in confidence information obtained from a patient, except in those unusual circumstances in which to do so would result in clear danger to the person or to others, or where otherwise required by law.
18. Professional Relationships: An audiologist or speech-language pathologist must safeguard the welfare of patients and maintain professional relationships with patients. Commission of any of the following acts or behavior will constitute unprofessional conduct:
  - a. Exploiting a patient for financial gain or sexual favors;
  - b. Performing or agreeing to perform audiology or speech-language pathology therapy services that have been requested when the services are known to be contraindicated or unjustified;
  - c. Performing or agreeing to perform procedures that have been requested when the procedures are known to be outside of the audiologist's or speech-language pathologist's scope of practice;
  - d. Verbally or physically abusing patients;
  - e. Falsification or unauthorized destruction of patient's records;
  - f. Attempting to provide diagnostic or treatment information to patient(s) that is beyond the audiologist's or speech-language pathologist's level of education, training and expertise;
  - g. Delegating to other personnel those patient related services for which the clinical skills and expertise of an audiologist or speech-language pathologist are required;
  - h. Encouraging or promoting the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology by untrained or unqualified persons;
  - i. Failure to safeguard the patient's dignity and right to privacy;
  - j. Filing a false report or record in the practice of audiology or speech-language pathology including, but not limited to, collecting a fee;
  - k. Falsely representing the use or availability of services or advice of a physician; or
  - l. Providing services or promoting the sale of devices, appliances, or products to a person who cannot reasonably be expected to benefit from the services, devices, appliances, or products;
  - m. Providing services except in a professional relationship; and
  - n. Must not discriminate in the provision of services to individuals on the basis of gender, race, religion, or national origin.
19. Sexual Misconduct: An audiologist or speech-language pathologist must under no circumstances engage in sexual misconduct. Specifically with regard to patients, the unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Engaging in sexual relationships, whether consensual or non-consensual with any patient while an audiologist or speech-language pathologist/patient relationship exists;
  - b. Engaging in sexual harassment of patients. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, making unwelcome sexual advances, requesting sexual favors, and engaging in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which results in:
    - (1) Providing or denying service to a patient;
    - (2) Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for the patient; or
    - (3) Interfering with a patient's ability to recover.
20. Other unprofessional conduct includes but is not limited to:
- a. Obtaining any fee for professional services by fraud, deceit or misrepresentation;
  - b. Failure to follow policies or procedures implemented in the practice situation to safeguard patient care;
  - c. Failure to exercise appropriate supervision over persons who are authorized to practice only under the supervision of an audiologist or speech-language pathologist;
  - d. Practicing in this state without a current Nebraska license;
  - e. Failure to obtain patient informed consent before treatment;
  - f. Failure to take steps to transfer the continuum of care of the patient, as appropriate, to another health care provider in the event of elective termination of audiology or speech-language pathology therapy services by an audiologist or speech-language pathologist;
  - g. Failure to report suspected cases of child abuse or vulnerable adult abuse pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 28-717 and 28-384; and
  - h. Failure of a licensee, who is the subject of a disciplinary investigation, to furnish the Department or its investigator with requested information or requested documents.

#### 23-006.03 Temporary Suspension or Limitation

23-006.03A The Department may temporarily suspend or temporarily limit any credential issued by the Department without notice or a hearing if the Director determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that grounds exist under 172 NAC 23-006.01 for the revocation, suspension, or limitation of the credential and that the credential holder's continuation in practice or operation would constitute an imminent danger to the public health and safety. Simultaneously with the action, the Department will institute proceedings for a hearing on the grounds for revocation, suspension, or limitation of the credential. The hearing will be held no later than 15 days from the date of the temporary suspension or temporary limitation of the credential.

23-006.03B A continuance of the hearing will be granted by the Department upon the written request of the credential holder, and the continuance must not exceed 30 days unless waived by the credential holder. A temporary suspension or temporary limitation order by the Director will take effect when served upon the credential holder.

23-006.03C A temporary suspension or temporary limitation of a credential under 172 NAC 23-006.03 will not be in effect for more than 90 days unless waived by the credential holder. If a decision is not reached within 90 days, the credential will be reinstated unless and until the Department reaches a decision to revoke, suspend, or limit the credential or otherwise discipline the credential holder.

23-006.04 Department Action: The Department will follow the procedures delineated in the Uniform Credentialing Act to notify credential holders of any disciplinary action to be imposed and the time and place of the hearing.

23-006.05 Sanctions: Upon the completion of any hearing held regarding discipline of a credential, the Director may dismiss the action or impose the following sanctions:

1. Censure;
2. Probation;
3. Limitation;
4. Civil Penalty;
5. Suspension; or
6. Revocation.

23-006.05A Additional Terms and Conditions of Discipline: If any discipline is imposed pursuant to 172 NAC 23-006.05, the Director may, in addition to any other terms and conditions of that discipline:

1. Require the credential holder to obtain additional professional training and to pass an examination upon the completion of the training. The examination may be written or oral or both and may be a practical or clinical examination or both or any or all of the combinations of written, oral, practical, and clinical, at the option of the Director;
2. Require the credential holder to submit to a complete diagnostic examination by one or more physicians or other qualified professionals appointed by the Director. If the Director requires the credential holder to submit to an examination, the Director will receive and consider any other report of a complete diagnostic examination given by one or more physicians or other qualified professionals of the credential holder's choice if the credential holder chooses to make available the report or reports by his/her physician or physicians or other qualified professionals; and
3. Limit the extent, scope, or type of practice of the credential holder.

23-007 VOLUNTARY SURRENDER OR LIMITATION: A credential holder may offer to voluntarily surrender or limit a credential issued by the Department. The credential holder must make the offer in writing on a form provided by the Department or constructed by the credential holder, which must include the following information:

1. Personal Information:
  - a. First, middle and last name;
  - b. Mailing address (street, rural route, or post office address), city, state, and zip code;

- c. Telephone number; and
  - d. Fax number.
2. Information Regarding the Credential Being Offered for Surrender or Limitation:
  - a. List credential(s) and credential number(s) that would be surrendered or limited;
  - b. Indicate the desired time frame for offered surrender or limitation:
    - (1) Permanently;
    - (2) Indefinitely; or
    - (3) Definite period of time (specify);
  - c. Specify reason for offered surrender or limit of credential; and
  - d. Specify any terms and conditions that the credential holder wishes to have the Department consider and apply to the offer.
3. Attestation: The credential holder must:
  - a. Attest that all the information on the offer is true and complete; and
  - b. Provide the credential holder's signature and date.

23-007.01 The Department may accept an offer of voluntary surrender or limitation of a credential based on:

1. An offer made by the credential holder on his/her own volition;
2. An offer made with the agreement of the Attorney General or the legal counsel of the Department to resolve a pending disciplinary matter;
3. A decision by the Attorney General to negotiate a voluntary surrender or limitation in lieu of filing a petition for disciplinary action; or
4. A decision by the legal counsel of the Department to negotiate a voluntary surrender or limitation in response to a notice of disciplinary action.

23-007.02 The Department may reject an offer of voluntary surrender of a credential under circumstances which include, but are not limited to, when the credential:

1. Is under investigation;
2. Has a disciplinary action pending but a disposition has not been rendered; or
3. Has had a disciplinary action taken against it.

23-007.03 When the Department either accepts or rejects an offer of voluntary surrender or limitation, the Director will issue the decision in a written order. The order will be issued within 30 days after receipt of the offer of voluntary surrender or limitation and will specify:

1. Whether the Department accepts or rejects the offer of voluntary surrender; and
2. The terms and conditions under which the voluntary surrender is accepted or the basis for the rejection of an offer of voluntary surrender. The terms and conditions governing the acceptance of a voluntary surrender will include, but not be limited to:
  - a. Duration of the surrender;
  - b. Whether the credential holder may apply to have the credential reinstated; and
  - c. Any terms and conditions for reinstatement.

23-007.04 A limitation may be placed on the right of the credential holder to practice a profession or operate a business to the extent, for the time, and under the conditions as imposed by the Director.

23-007.05 Violation of any of the terms and conditions of a voluntary surrender or limitation by the credential holder will be due cause for the refusal of renewal of the credential, for the suspension or revocation of the credential, or for refusal to restore the credential.

23-007.06 Reinstatement following voluntary surrender is set out in 172 NAC 23-008.

23-008 REINSTATEMENT: This section applies to individuals previously credentialed in Nebraska who seek the authority to return to practice in Nebraska with a valid Nebraska credential. Individuals may apply for reinstatement as follows:

1. An individual whose credential has expired, been placed on inactive status, voluntarily surrendered for an indefinite period of time, or suspended or limited for disciplinary reasons, may apply for reinstatement at any time.
2. An individual whose credential has been voluntarily surrendered for a definite period of time may apply for reinstatement after that period of time has elapsed.
3. An individual whose credential has been revoked may apply for reinstatement only after a period of two years has elapsed from the date of revocation.
4. An individual whose credential has been permanently voluntarily surrendered may not apply for reinstatement.

The voluntary surrender of a credential may be unrelated to disciplinary matters, or may be done to resolve a pending disciplinary matter, in lieu of disciplinary action, or in response to a notice of disciplinary action.

23-008.01 Reinstatement From Expired or Inactive Status or Following Voluntary Surrender Unrelated to a Disciplinary Matter

The applicant must submit to the Department a written application on a form provided by the Department or constructed by the applicant.

1. Application: The applicant must attest that all information in the application is truthful and complete, and the applicant, in his/her application:
    - a. Must provide the following information:
      - (1) The legal name of the applicant, maiden name (if applicable), and any other names by which the applicant is known;
      - (2) Mailing address (street, rural route, or post office address; and city, state, and zip code or country information);
      - (3) The applicant's:
        - (a) Social Security Number (SSN); or
        - (b) Alien Registration Number (A#); or
        - (c) Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) number.
- Certain applicants may have both a SSN and an A# or I-94

- number, and if so, must report both.
- (4) If the applicant holds a professional credential in another state, a list of the state(s) and type of credential;
- b. Must state that s/he is one of the following:
- (1) A citizen of the United States;
- (2) An alien lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and who is eligible for a credential under the Uniform Credentialing Act; or
- (3) A non-immigrant whose visa for entry, or application for visa for entry, is related to employment as a credential holder in the United States;
- c. If the applicant is an alien or non-immigrant, s/he must submit evidence of lawful permanent residence and/or immigration status which may include a copy of:
- (1) An Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551, otherwise known as a "Green Card");
- (2) An unexpired foreign passport with an unexpired Temporary I-551 stamp bearing the same name as the passport;
- (3) A document showing an Alien Registration Number ("A#") with visa status; or
- (4) A Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) with visa status;
- d. May provide the following information about him/herself:
- (1) Telephone number including area code;
- (2) E-mail address;
- (3) Fax number; and
- e. Must indicate that s/he:
- (1) Is of good character;
- (2) Has met the continuing competency requirements specified in 172 NAC 23-004 within the 24 months immediately preceding submission of the application (or other requirements as specified by the practice act);
- (3) Has not practiced in Nebraska since s/he last held an active credential, or if the applicant has practiced in Nebraska since s/he last held an active credential, the actual number of days practiced;
- (4) Has not committed any act which would be grounds for action against a credential as specified in 172 NAC 23-006 since the last renewal or issuance of the credential (whichever is later), or if an act(s) was committed, provide an explanation of all such acts; and
- (5) Is a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien under the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act, for the purpose of complying with Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 4-108 to 4-114. The applicant must provide his/her immigration status and alien number, and agree to provide a copy of his/her USCIS documentation upon request; and

2. Fee(s): The following fee(s):

- a. If the credential is expired or inactive, the reinstatement and renewal fees; or
- b. If the credential was voluntarily surrendered, the renewal fee.

23-008.01A If an applicant has practiced while his/her credential was expired, inactive, or voluntarily surrendered, the Department may, with the recommendation of the Board, take one or more of the following actions:

1. Deny the application to reinstate the credential;
2. Reinstate the credential to active status and impose limitation(s) or other disciplinary actions on the credential; and/or
3. Reinstate the credential.

23-008.01B If an applicant has committed any other violation of the statutes and regulations governing the credential, the Department may:

1. Deny the application for reinstatement of the credential;
2. Reinstate the credential to active status and impose limitation(s) or other disciplinary actions on the credential; and/or
3. Reinstate the credential.

23-008.01C The Department will act within 150 days on all completed applications.

23-008.01D The Department's decision may be appealed to the Director by any party to the decision. The appeal must be in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

23-008.02 Reinstatement from Non-Disciplinary Revocation or Lapsed Status: An individual whose credential was placed on non-disciplinary revocation or lapsed status before December 1, 2008 may apply for reinstatement as provided in 172 NAC 23-008.01.

23-008.03 Reinstatement Following Suspension, Limitation, Revocation, or Voluntary Surrender to Resolve a Pending Disciplinary Matter, In Lieu of Discipline, or In Response to a Notice of Disciplinary Action: An individual whose credential was suspended or limited may apply for reinstatement at any time. An individual whose credential has been revoked may apply for reinstatement after a period of two years has elapsed from the date of revocation. An individual whose credential was voluntarily surrendered may apply for reinstatement according to the order entered by the Director.

The applicant must submit to the Board a written application on a form provided by the Department or constructed by the applicant.

1. Application: The applicant must attest that all information in the application is truthful and complete, and the applicant, in his/her application:
  - a. Must provide the following information:
    - (1) The legal name of the applicant, maiden name (if applicable), and any other names by which the applicant is known;
    - (2) Mailing address (street, rural route, or post office address; and city, state, and zip code or country information);
    - (3) The applicant's:



- (a) Social Security Number (SSN); or
- (b) Alien Registration Number (A#); or
- (c) Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) number.  
Certain applicants may have both a SSN and an A# or I-94 number, and if so, must report both.
- (4) If the applicant holds a professional credential in another state, a list of the state(s) and type of credential;
- (5) A statement of the reason the applicant believes his/her credential should be reinstated;
- b. Must state that s/he is one of the following:
  - (1) A citizen of the United States;
  - (2) An alien lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and who is eligible for a credential under the Uniform Credentialing Act; or
  - (3) A non-immigrant whose visa for entry, or application for visa for entry, is related to employment as a credential holder in the United States;
- c. If the applicant is an alien or non-immigrant, s/he must submit evidence of lawful permanent residence and/or immigration status which may include a copy of:
  - (1) An Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551, otherwise known as a "Green Card");
  - (2) An unexpired foreign passport with an unexpired Temporary I-551 stamp bearing the same name as the passport;
  - (3) A document showing an Alien Registration Number ("A#") with visa status; or
  - (4) A Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record) with visa status;
- d. May provide the following information about him/herself:
  - (1) Telephone number including area code;
  - (2) E-mail address;
  - (3) Fax number; and
- e. Must indicate that s/he:
  - (1) Is of good character;
  - (2) Has met the continuing competency requirements specified in 172 NAC 23-004 within the 24 months immediately preceding submission of the application;
  - (3) Has not practiced in Nebraska since s/he last held an active credential, or if the applicant has practiced in Nebraska since s/he last held an active credential, the actual number of days practiced; and
  - (4) Has not committed any act which would be grounds for action against a credential as specified in 172 NAC 23-006 since the last renewal or issuance of the credential (whichever is later), or if an act(s) was committed, provide an explanation of all such acts; and
  - (5) Is a citizen of the United States or a qualified alien under the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act, for the purpose of complying with Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 4-108 to 4-114. The

applicant must provide his/her immigration status and alien number, and agree to provide a copy of his/her USCIS documentation upon request; and

2. Fee: The renewal fee pursuant to 172 NAC 2.

23-008.03A The Board will make a recommendation regarding reinstatement following suspension, limitation, revocation, or voluntary surrender within 180 days of receipt of the application.

23-008.03B The Department, with the recommendation of the Board, may:

1. Conduct an investigation to determine if the applicant has committed acts or offenses prohibited by Neb. Rev. Stat. § 38-178;
2. Require the applicant to submit to a complete diagnostic examination, at the expense of the applicant, by one or more physician(s) or other professionals appointed by the Board. The applicant may also consult a physician(s) or other professionals of his/her own choice for a complete diagnostic examination and make available a report(s) of the examination(s) to the Department and to the Board;
3. Require the applicant to pass a written, oral, or practical examination or any combination of examinations at the expense of the applicant;
4. Require the applicant to successfully complete additional education at the expense of the applicant;
5. Require the applicant to successfully pass an inspection of his/her practice site; or
6. Take any combination of these actions.

23-008.03C On the basis of the written application, materials submitted by the applicant, and the information obtained under 172 NAC 23-008.03B, the Board may:

1. Deny the application for reinstatement; or
2. Recommend to the Department:
  - a. Full reinstatement of the credential;
  - b. Modification of the suspension or limitation; or
  - c. Reinstatement subject to limitations or subject to probation with terms and conditions.

If the applicant has practiced while his/her credential was suspended, limited, revoked, or voluntarily surrendered, the Department may assess an administrative penalty pursuant to 172 NAC 23-009, in which case a separate notice of opportunity for hearing will be sent to the applicant.

23-008.03D An affirmative vote of a majority of the full membership of the Board as authorized by statute is required to recommend reinstatement of a credential with or without terms, conditions, or restrictions.

23-008.03E Full Reinstatement: If the Board recommends full reinstatement of the credential, modification of the suspension or limitation, or reinstatement of the

credential subject to limitations or subject to probation with terms and conditions, the Board's recommendation will be sent to the applicant by certified mail. The following information will be forwarded to the Director for a decision:

1. The written recommendation of the Board, including any finding of fact or order of the Board;
2. The application for reinstatement;
3. The record of hearing, if any; and
4. Any pleadings, motions, requests, preliminary or intermediate rulings and orders, and similar correspondence to or from the Board and the applicant.

23-008.03F Denial, Modification, Limitation, or Probation: If the Board's initial decision is to deny the application for reinstatement, recommend modification of the suspension or limitation, or reinstate the credential subject to limitation or probation with terms and conditions, notification of the Board's decision will be mailed to the applicant by certified mail.

1. The initial decision or recommendation of the Board will become final 30 days after the decision or recommendation is mailed to the applicant unless the applicant requests a hearing within that 30-day period.
  - a. If the applicant requests a hearing before the Board, the Department will mail a notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing. The notice will be sent by certified mail at least 30 days before the hearing.
  - b. Following the hearing, the Board may deny the reinstatement or recommend full reinstatement of the credential, or recommend modification of the suspension or limitation, or recommend reinstatement of the credential subject to limitations or probation with terms and conditions.
2. If the applicant has been afforded a hearing or an opportunity for a hearing on an application for reinstatement within two years before filing the current application, the Department may grant or deny the application without another hearing before the Board.

23-008.03G Denial Decision: If the Board's final decision is denial of the application for reinstatement, the applicant will be notified by certified mail. The applicant may appeal the Board's denial to District Court in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

23-008.03H Board Recommendation: If the Board's final recommendation is full reinstatement of the credential, modification of the suspension or limitation, or reinstatement of the credential subject to limitations or probation with terms and conditions, the Board's recommendation will be sent to the applicant by certified mail. The following information will be forwarded to the Director for a decision:

1. The written recommendation of the Board, including any finding of fact or order of the Board;
2. The application for reinstatement;
3. The record of hearing, if any; and
4. Any pleadings, motions, requests, preliminary or intermediate rulings and orders, and similar correspondence to or from the Board and the applicant.

23-008.03I Director's Review: The Director, upon receipt of the Board's recommendation for full reinstatement, modification, or probation, will review the application and other documents and make a decision within 150 days of receipt of the Board's recommendation and accompanying documents. The Director will enter an order setting forth the decision. The Director may:

1. Affirm the recommendation of the Board and grant reinstatement; or
2. Reverse or modify the recommendation if the Board's recommendation is:
  - a. In excess of statutory authority;
  - b. Made upon unlawful procedure;
  - c. Unsupported by competent, material, and substantial evidence in view of the entire record; or
  - d. Arbitrary and capricious.

The order regarding reinstatement of the applicant's credential will be sent to the applicant by certified mail. The Director's decision may be appealed to District Court by any party to the decision. The appeal must be in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

23-009 ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY: The Department may assess an administrative penalty when evidence exists of practice without a credential to practice a profession or operate a business. Practice without a credential for the purpose of this regulation means practice:

1. Prior to the issuance of a credential;
2. Following the expiration of a credential; or
3. Prior to the reinstatement of a credential.

23-009.01 Evidence of Practice: The Department will consider any of the following conditions as prima facie evidence of practice without being credentialed:

1. The person admits to engaging in practice;
2. Staffing records or other reports from the employer of the person indicate that the person was engaged in practice;
3. Billing or payment records document the provision of service, care, or treatment by the person;
4. Service, care, or treatment records document the provision of service, care, or treatment by the person;
5. Appointment records indicate that the person was engaged in practice; and
6. The person opens a business or practice site and announces or advertises that the business or site is open to provide service, care, or treatment.

For purposes of this regulation prima facie evidence means a fact presumed to be true unless disproved by some evidence to the contrary.

23-009.02 Penalty: The Department may assess an administrative penalty in the amount of \$10 per day, not to exceed a total of \$1,000 for practice without a credential. To assess the penalty, the Department will:

1. Provide written notice of the assessment to the person. The notice will specify:
  - a. The total amount of the administrative penalty;
  - b. The evidence on which the administrative penalty is based;
  - c. That the person may request, in writing, a hearing to contest the assessment of an administrative penalty;
  - d. That the Department will within 30 days following receipt of payment of the administrative penalty, remit the penalty to the State Treasurer to be disposed of in accordance with Article VII, section 5 of the Constitution of Nebraska;
  - e. That an unpaid administrative penalty constitutes a debt to the State of Nebraska which may be collected in the manner of a lien foreclosure or sued for and recovered in a proper form of action in the name of the state in the District Court of the county in which the violator resides or owns property. The Department may also collect in such action attorney's fees and costs incurred directly in the collection of the administrative penalty; and
  - f. Failure to pay an administrative penalty may result in disciplinary action.
2. Send by certified mail, a written notice of the administrative penalty to the last known address of the person to whom the penalty is assessed.

23-009.03 Administrative Hearing: When a person contests the administrative penalty and requests a hearing, the Department will hold a hearing pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act and 184 NAC 1, the Department's Rules of Practice and Procedure for Administrative Hearings.

23-010 FEES: Fees referred to in these regulations are set out in 172 NAC 2, unless otherwise specified.

Effective Date  
November 6, 2010

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

172 NAC 23

These amended rules and regulations replace Title 172 NAC 23 Regulations Governing the Practice of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, effective April 10, 2006. Fee changes only effective July 1, 2007.

Approved by Attorney General:	October 19, 2010
Approved by Governor:	November 1, 2010
Filed with Secretary of State:	November 1, 2010
Effective Date:	November 6, 2010

Forms may be obtained by contacting the Licensure Unit or by accessing the website at <http://www.hhss.ne.gov/crl/profindex1.htm>

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services  
Department of Public Health  
Licensure Unit  
PO Box 94986  
Lincoln NE 68509-4986

(402)471-2299