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Overview

This bill establishes a registration system at the Department of Health for speech-language pathology assistants. Under a registration system, only speech-language pathology assistants who meet the qualifications for registration and are registered on an official roster are authorized to use protected titles: registered speech-language pathology assistant, registered SLP assistant, or registered SLP asst. Speech-language pathology assistants who are not registered may still identify themselves as speech-language pathology assistants, but may not use “registered” with their title.

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- 1 Applicant.** Amends § 148.512, subd. 4. Expands the definition of applicant for statutes governing speech-language pathology and audiology, to include a speech-language pathology assistant applying for registration or registration renewal.
- 2 Register or registered.** Adds subd. 16a to § 148.512. Defines register or registered for statutes governing speech-language pathology and audiology.
- 3 Registrant.** Adds subd. 16b to § 148.512. Defines registrant for statutes governing speech-language pathology and audiology.
- 4 Registration.** Adds subd. 16c to § 148.512. Defines registration for statutes governing speech-language pathology and audiology.
- 5 Protected titles and restrictions on use; speech-language pathologists and audiologists.** Amends § 148.513, subd. 2. In a subdivision listing protected titles, removes language

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specifying protected titles for speech-language pathology assistants (protected titles for this occupation are moved to a new subdivision 2b).

- 6** **Protected titles and restrictions on use; speech-language pathology assistants.** Adds subd. 2b to § 148.513. Lists protected titles for registered speech-language pathology assistants. Provides that all speech-language pathology assistants are prohibited from representing to the public that the assistant is a licensed speech-language pathologist, and lists titles that may be used by speech-language pathology assistants.
- 7** **Registration; speech-language pathology assistants.** Adds § 148.5185. Establishes registration requirements for speech-language pathology assistants.
- Subd. 1. Qualifications for registration.** Provides that to be eligible for registration, a speech-language pathology assistant must either have (1) an associate degree from an accredited speech-language pathology assistant program or (2) a bachelor's degree in communication science or disorders, plus additional training and supervised work experience. In addition, an assistant must complete at least 100 hours of supervised work experience.
- Subd. 2. Scope of practice.** Provides that scope of practice for registered speech-language pathology assistants is the same as for nonregistered speech-language pathology assistants.
- Subd. 3. Application procedures.** Provides that application procedures for registration are governed by section 148.519, subd. 1a.
- Subd. 4. Action on registration applications.** Provides that actions on registration applications are governed by section 148.519, subd. 2.
- Subd. 5. Change of name, employment, and address.** Provides that changes to the name, employment, and address of a registered speech-language pathology assistant are governed by section 148.519, subd. 3.
- Subd. 6. Registration renewals.** Provides that registration renewals are governed by section 148.5191.
- Subd. 7. Continuing education.** Requires applicants for registration to meet continuing education requirements established by the commissioner.
- Subd. 8. Investigation procedures and disciplinary action.** Provides that investigations and disciplinary actions are governed by section 148.5195.
- 8** **Licensure and registration procedures.** Amends § 148.519, by adding subd. 1a and amending subs. 2 and 3.
- Subd. 1a. Applications for registration.** Lists materials that an applicant for registration as a speech-language pathology assistant must submit to the commissioner.
- Subd. 2. Action on applications for licensure or registration.** Expands the procedures used by the commissioner to process speech-language pathologist and audiologist licensure applications, to also apply to speech-language pathology assistant registration applications.

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Subd. 3. Change of name, employment, and address. Includes registered speech-language pathology assistants in requirements to notify the commissioner if the assistant changes name, employment, or address.

- 9 Licensure and registration renewal.** Amends § 148.5191. Expands procedures for renewal, late fees, renewal notices, and renewal deadlines to apply to speech-language pathology assistant registration.
- 10 Registered speech-language pathology assistant biennial registration fee.** Adds subd. 3b to § 148.5194. Sets the biennial registration fee for registered speech-language pathology assistants at \$.....
- 11 Penalty fees.** Amends § 148.5194, subd. 8. Establishes penalty fees for a speech-language pathology assistant who uses a protected title but whose registration has expired or who is not registered. Also establishes a penalty fee for a speech-language pathology assistant who fails to submit a continuing education report.
- 12 Rights of applicants, licensees, and registrants.** Amends § 148.5195, subd. 2. Provides that the rights of an applicant denied registration are the same as those of an application denied licensure. Prohibits a registrant from being subject to disciplinary action without the opportunity for a contested case hearing.
- 13 Grounds for disciplinary action by commissioner.** Amends § 148.5195, subd. 3. Makes the following grounds for disciplinary action:
- performing the services of a speech-language pathology assistant in an incompetent or negligent manner; and
 - violating a law which directly relates to the practice of speech-language pathology assisting.
- 14 Disciplinary actions.** Amends § 148.5195, subd. 4. If the commissioner finds an individual should be disciplined, gives the commissioner authority to refuse to grant or renew a registration, suspend a registration, revoke a registration, or impose a civil penalty to deprive a registrant of any economic advantage gained by the violation and to reimburse the commissioner of health for the cost of the investigation and disciplinary proceeding.
- 15 Membership.** Amends § 148.5196, subd. 1. Expands the Speech-Language Pathologist and Audiologist Advisory Council from 12 to 13 persons, and adds a registered speech-language pathology assistant to its membership.
- 16 Duties.** Amends § 148.5196, subd. 3. Adds to the duties of the Speech-Language Pathologist and Audiologist Advisory Council, to include advising the commissioner on speech-language pathology assistant registration standards, distributing information about speech-language pathology assistant registration standards, making recommendations to the commissioner about granting or denying registrations and registration renewals, and reviewing investigation reports regarding registrants and making recommendations about disciplining registrants.