

Massachusetts needs to know, from those states who currently regulate audiology assistants (and speech-language pathology assistants), how many have applied/are registered/certified/licensed by your state?

STATE	COMMENTS
OH	Ohio would like to give you these #'s. We do not call them assistants, but aides. Audiology Aide 84/ Speech Language Pathology Aide 15
NV	Nevada does not recognize audiology assistants.
TX	<p>In Texas we have a provision to license audiology assistants and SLP assistants. There are a lot of SLP assistants, but virtually no audiology assistants.</p> <p>In Texas, we have had audiology and speech pathology since 1984 under the same statute. For both audiology and speech pathology there is a sub-license category of audiology assistant or speech pathology assistant. At present we have approximately 10,000 speech pathologists and 1000 audiologists with full licensure. While I don't know any numbers for speech pathology assistants, I do know that they are heavily used in most public school programs as long as they operate under the supervision of a licensed speech pathologist. I do know that there are only 5 or 6 persons who have ever applied for licensure as an audiology assistant. This is due in part to the fact that our statute requires a bachelor's degree in speech and hearing for application. We (Texas Academy of Audiology) maybe introducing legislation next year to allow for licensed audiologists to supervise temporary training permits for hearing aid licensure. This would allow them to assist an audiologist in their every day practice. At present, a licensed fitter and dispenser must supervise temporary trainees. The Texas statute does exempt CAOHC certified audiometric technicians in hearing conservation programs.</p>
ND	Thought that you may like to know that North Dakota currently does not license assistants for either speech/language pathology or audiology.
FL	<p>We recently addressed the assistant's issue in Florida and our university, Nova Southeastern U., has the only audiology assistants training program in the country--</p> <p>I know your specific question is about numbers. That's a tough one to answer and I would encourage you to call a sample of license boards directly. The difficulty is that in many states, like Florida, SLP assistants that work in the schools are exempt from state license. If this were the case in MA, then many assistants would not need the certificate.</p> <p>However, with that said, we had an interesting issue in Florida, specific to audiology. Last year there were something like 2 audiology assistants registered with the license board in the State. Yet, a survey of licensed practitioners revealed that about 50% used assistants. This meant that hundreds of assistants were not registered in the state. The Atty General's office and License Board counsel asked what these assistants were doing and found out that many were cleaning hearing aids, changing batteries, etc. The AG concluded that these assistants were really performing the work of hearing aid dispensers and therefore were practicing without a license. Unlicensed activity. A taskforce was immediately setup by the license board which reviewed the current rules. The rules changed to permit assistants to now perform these services as long as under some level of supervision.</p> <p>The key to any assistant's statute is making sure there is a level of supervision. NEVER permit assistants to do ANYTHING without supervision otherwise you create a new occupation. Just look at Physician Assistants. In fact, that is why we named our training program at NSU the Audiologist's Assistant program. We believe that mistake other professions made, like Orthopedics permitting the independence of Phys Therapists, and even physicians permitting PA's is because they let these practitioners perform some services without supervision. Be very careful with your language.</p> <p>I know I am rambling but this is such an important issue. Feel free to contact me if you have additional</p>

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	<p>questions. Also, we published our survey results of AAA members on the use of assistants and the tasks that licensed practitioners across the country felt that assistants should be able to perform. Let me know if you want the reference.</p> <p>I took a few minutes to look up the legislation on-line. It does look good. I noticed in that language (copied below) the requirement for formal training, i.e., bachelor's degree, certificate program, etc. That's quite a difference. I also noted that you are leaving some of definition to the rules of the Board (which is great). In Florida, we tried to avoid college education requirement for assistants. Will your language do the same thing?</p> <p>By the way, congratulations. Like the language. Barry</p> <p>(2) possess at a minimum an associate's degree in a speech-language pathology or audiology training program approved by a national certifying body for speech-language pathology or audiology, a bachelor's degree from a college with a speech-language pathology assistant or audiology assistant certificate program or an equivalent course of study with a major emphasis in the area of speech-language pathology or</p> <p>(3) meet the minimum criteria established by a national certifying body for speech-language pathology or audiology for registration as a speech-language pathology assistant or audiology assistant.</p>
ME	<p>The "aid" sunsets this year and the "assistant" has more stringent criteria. Each SLP may have two aids or assistants total and their registration is linked to the SLP's license. They are about 300 maybe 400 SLP's in Maine and only about 29 or 30 Aids/Assistants in the state right now. Although the law does not limit the practice settings, re-imbursement issues do. Currently, almost all SLP aids/assistants work in the schools because Medicaid is about the only third party reimbursing these services. I hope this helps. He also strongly recommended someone from Mass attend the "CSET" meeting the day before ASHA in Philadelphia. It is a meeting similar to our state leaders meeting for SLP's. (Council of State Associations) He felt this would be an excellent forum to get this type of information you need. He also said in Maine he doesn't believe it costs the state more \$ to process the applications because it is linked to the license of the SLP. Also, many states estimate licensure fees by estimating the expenses of the Board, multiplying it by 125% and then dividing it by the number of licensees/registered professionals.</p>
NJ	<p>As far as I know, NJ has no regulations for audiology assistants.</p>