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An Act To Amend the Licensing Requirements for Speech-language Pathology Assistants

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, existing language in the laws governing the licensing of speech-language pathology assistants is preventing otherwise qualified individuals from practicing; and

Whereas, this legislation corrects that language; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 32 MRSA §17101, sub-§16, as enacted by PL 2007, c. 369, Pt. C, §3 and affected by §5, is amended to read:

16. Speech-language pathology assistant. "Speech-language pathology assistant" means an individual who meets minimum qualifications that the board may establish for speech-language pathology assistants, that are less than those qualifications established by this chapter for licensure as a speech-language pathologist, but must include an associate's degree or its equivalent as determined by the board, or a higher degree in the field of communication disorders.

Sec. 2. 32 MRSA §17103, sub-§6, as enacted by PL 2007, c. 369, Pt. C, §3 and affected by §5, is amended to read:

6. Speech-language pathology assistants. ~~Registration~~Licensure may be granted to an individual who meets the minimum qualifications for a speech-language pathology assistant established by the board and who is supervised by a licensed speech-language pathologist, as set forth by the board by rule. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Sec. 3. 32 MRSA §17301, sub-§5, as enacted by PL 2007, c. 369, Pt. C, §3 and affected by §5, is amended to read:

5. Speech-language pathology assistant. A speech-language pathology assistant must have an associate's degree or a higher degree from an accredited institution in the field of communication disorders, or its equivalent as determined by the board, and must meet such other minimum qualifications as the board may establish, except that an applicant for licensure as a speech-language pathology assistant who has obtained a bachelor of science degree in the field of communication disorders is exempt from any practicum requirements that are applicable to applicants who hold associate degrees.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

This bill specifically provides that an applicant for licensure as a speech-language pathology assistant may hold a degree higher than an associate degree and exempts applicants holding a bachelor of science degree from any practicum requirements that may be applicable to applicants who hold associate degrees.