



Virginia Department of Planning and Budget **Economic Impact Analysis**

18 VAC 30-21 Regulations Governing Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Department of Health Professions Town Hall Action/Stage: 7004 / 11165 Fast-Track July 1, 2026

The Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) has analyzed the economic impact of this proposed regulation in accordance with § 2.2-4007.04 of the Code of Virginia (Code) and Executive Order 19. The analysis presented below represents DPB’s best estimate of the potential economic impacts as of the date of this analysis.¹

Summary of the Proposed Amendments to Regulation

The Board of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (Board) seeks to amend the qualifications for initial licensure to re-insert language that had been erroneously removed in a previous action.

Background

The qualifications for initial licensure (18 VAC 30-21-60) previously stated that the Board may grant an initial license to an applicant who holds a current and unrestricted certification issued by the American Board of Audiology (ABA). This language was unintentionally struck in a an action that became effective in February 2025.² The American Academy of Audiology filed a petition for rulemaking in December 2025 to include the ABA certification as a pathway to licensure.³ The Board seeks to insert language that would once again include the ABA certification as an acceptable qualification for licensure.

¹ See Code § 2.2-4007.04 (A).

² See <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewStage.cfm?stageid=9924>.

³ See <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/viewpetition.cfm?petitionid=447>.

Estimated Benefits and Costs

The proposed amendment would correct the regulatory text and resolve any confusion regarding eligibility for licensure as an audiologist or speech-language pathologist. The Department of Health Professions (DHP) reports that applicants with ABA certification comprise a small minority of license applicants and that the Board did not see a drop in license applications due to the 2025 regulatory action. Thus, DHP does not expect the proposed change to lead to a significant increase in the number of applicants. To the extent that any new candidates for licensure holding an ABA certification have refrained from applying since February 2025, the proposed change would benefit those candidates by clearly establishing their eligibility in the regulation.

Businesses and Other Entities Affected

The proposed amendment would benefit individuals with an ABA certification by (once again) including it in the acceptable qualifications for licensure.

The Code requires DPB to assess whether an adverse impact may result from the proposed regulation.⁴ An adverse impact is indicated if there is any increase in net cost or reduction in net benefit for any entity, even if the benefits exceed the costs for all entities combined.⁵ As noted above, since the proposed amendment is intended to correct an error and not establish a brand new pathway to licensure, it would not increase net costs or reduce net benefits. Thus, an adverse impact is not indicated.

Small Businesses⁶ Affected:⁷

The proposed amendments would not adversely affect small businesses.

⁴ See Code § 2.2-4007.04 (D).

⁵ Statute does not define “adverse impact,” state whether only Virginia entities should be considered, nor indicate whether an adverse impact results from regulatory requirements mandated by legislation. As a result, DPB has adopted a definition of adverse impact that assesses changes in net costs and benefits for each affected Virginia entity that directly results from discretionary changes to the regulation.

⁶ Pursuant to § 2.2-4007.04 of the Code of Virginia, small business is defined as “a business entity, including its affiliates, that (i) is independently owned and operated and (ii) employs fewer than 500 full-time employees or has gross annual sales of less than \$6 million.”

⁷ See Code § 2.2-4007.04 (A.2). and Code § 2.2-4007.1 (C).

Localities⁸ Affected⁹

The proposed amendments would not disproportionately affect any locality in particular. The proposed amendments do not introduce costs for local governments.

Projected Impact on Employment

The proposed amendments would not affect total employment.

Effects on the Use and Value of Private Property

The proposed amendments would not affect the use and value of private property. The proposed amendments do not affect real estate development costs.

⁸ “Locality” can refer to either local governments or the locations in the Commonwealth where the activities relevant to the regulatory change are most likely to occur.

⁹ Code § 2.2-4007.04 defines “particularly affected” as bearing disproportionate material impact.