



Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA) Agency Background Document

Agency name	Board for Hearing Aid Specialists and Opticians
Virginia Administrative Code (VAC) citation	18 VAC 80-20
Regulation title	Hearing Aid Specialists
Action title	General Review
Date this document prepared	February 26, 2014

This information is required for executive branch review and the Virginia Registrar of Regulations, pursuant to the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA), Executive Orders 14 (2010) and 58 (1999), and the *Virginia Register Form, Style, and Procedure Manual*.

Purpose

Please describe the subject matter and intent of the planned regulatory action. Also include a brief explanation of the need for and the goals of the new or amended regulation.

The Board for Hearing Aid Specialists and Opticians (the Board) seeks to amend its current regulations to eliminate the examination fee cap in order consider more modernized testing methods. The Board also seeks to ensure its regulations are the least intrusive and burdensome as possible, while still protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public, are clearly written and easily understandable, and are representative of the industry's current state of affairs.

Legal basis

Please identify the state and/or federal legal authority to promulgate this proposed regulation, including (1) the most relevant citations to the Code of Virginia or General Assembly chapter number(s), if applicable, and (2) promulgating entity, i.e., agency, board, or person. Your citation should include a specific provision authorizing the promulgating entity to regulate this specific subject or program, as well as a reference to the agency/board/person's overall regulatory authority.

Code of Virginia § 54.1-201 gives authority to the Board to promulgate regulations. It states, in part, that the Board has the power and duty "To promulgate regulations in accordance with the Administrative

Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) necessary to assure continued competency, to prevent deceptive or misleading practices by practitioners and to effectively administer the regulatory system administered by the regulatory board.”

Need

Please detail the specific reasons why the agency has determined that the proposed regulatory action is essential to protect the health, safety, or welfare of citizens. In addition, delineate any potential issues that may need to be addressed as the regulation is developed.

In order to move forward with the International Licensing Examination practical exam for Hearing Aid Specialists, the Board must eliminate the Hearing Aid Specialist fee cap. It is expect the current paper and pencil testing method will soon be obsolete. If the fee cap is not raised or removed, the Board may find itself without an examination option. Additionally, changes in the industry and the time elapsed since the last regulatory change warrant review and promulgation of regulations to ensure they accurately reflect current requirements and standards and are consistent and clearly written and easily understandable. Ensuring that the regulations are as clear as possible will facilitate increased compliance and ultimately, better protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Substance

Please detail any changes that will be proposed. Be sure to define all acronyms. For new regulations, include a summary of the proposed regulatory action. Where provisions of an existing regulation are being amended, explain how the existing regulation will be changed.

The Board will strive to ensure any changes to current regulations or new regulations will be as least intrusive and burdensome as possible, while protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public, and further, guided by §§ 2.2-4007.1 and 2.2-4017 of the Code of Virginia.

Alternatives

Please describe all viable alternatives to the proposed regulatory action that have been or will be considered to meet the essential purpose of the action. Also, please describe the process by which the agency has considered or will consider other alternatives for achieving the need in the most cost-effective manner.

No viable alternatives for achieving the purpose of the proposed regulatory action could be determined.

Public participation

Please indicate whether the agency is seeking comments on the intended regulatory action, including ideas to assist the agency in the development of the proposal and the costs and benefits of the

alternatives stated in this notice or other alternatives. Also, indicate whether a public hearing is to be held to receive comments on this notice.

Please also indicate pursuant to your Public Participation Guidelines whether a panel will be appointed to assist in the development of the proposed regulation. Please state one of the following: 1) a panel will be appointed and the agency's contact if you're interested in serving on the panel is _____; 2) a panel will not be used; or 3) public comment is invited as to whether to use a panel to assist in the development of this regulatory proposal.

The agency is seeking comments on this regulatory action, including but not limited to 1) ideas to be considered in the development of this proposal, 2) the costs and benefits of the alternatives stated in this background document or other alternatives and 3) potential impacts of the regulation. The agency is also seeking information on impacts on small businesses as defined in § 2.2-4007.1 of the Code of Virginia. Information may include 1) projected reporting, recordkeeping and other administrative costs, 2) the probable effect of the regulation on affected small businesses, and 3) the description of less intrusive or costly alternatives for achieving the purpose of the regulation.

Anyone wishing to submit comments may do so via the Regulatory Town Hall website (<http://www.townhall.virginia.gov>), or by mail, email, or fax to **Demetrios J. Melis, Executive Director, Board for Hearing Aid Specialists and Opticians, Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400, Richmond, Virginia 23233. Telephone: (804) 367-8590, Fax: (866) 245-9693, e-mail: HearingAidSpec@dpor.virginia.gov.** Written comments must include the name and address of the commenter. In order to be considered, comments must be received by midnight on the last day of the public comment period.

A public hearing will not be held following the publication of the proposed stage of this regulatory action.

Family impact

Assess the potential impact of the proposed regulatory action on the institution of the family and family stability including to what extent the regulatory action will: 1) strengthen or erode the authority and rights of parents in the education, nurturing, and supervision of their children; 2) encourage or discourage economic self-sufficiency, self-pride, and the assumption of responsibility for oneself, one's spouse, and one's children and/or elderly parents; 3) strengthen or erode the marital commitment; and 4) increase or decrease disposable family income.

No impact on the institution of the family and family stability has been identified.