

A recent law regulating telepractice in Montana contains rules and provisions designed by lawmakers to protect consumers and perhaps facilitate insurance coverage of some telepractice services. Unfortunately, this law complicates SLP and audiologist service provision by adding increased costs and time, as well as added legal exposure. While the consumer protection goal is admirable, the risk of unintended restriction of service provision and constraint on consumer choice poses very real self-imposed risks. These provisions seem to extend significantly beyond those suggested by ASHA: <http://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/ModLangInterstatPract.pdf>

A few of these provisions include:

1. **4 hours of CEUs**-*"licensee using telepractice to deliver services shall complete four hours of board-approved telepractice training prior to engaging in telepractice"*.
2. **Ongoing documentation of competency** by associating with a "...with a group who has experience in telepractice delivery of care."
3. **An in-person** (face-to-face physically together) evaluation before starting the tele-recovery program that includes-
 - (a) need for services; and
 - (b) candidacy for telepractice, including behavioral, physical, and cognitive abilities to participate in telepractice services. Telepractice services may be provided by the patient's evaluator or another qualified speech-language pathologist or audiologist by the board.
4. **Further regulations** when initiating a program-
 - (a) make reasonable attempts to verify the identity of the patient;
 - (b) obtain alternative means of contacting the patient other than electronically;
 - (c) provide to the patient alternative means of contacting the licensee other than electronically;
 - (d) document whether the patient has the necessary knowledge and skills to benefit from the type of telepractice provided by the licensee;
5. **Recordkeeping** is determined by MT law not state or residency of the SLP.
6. **Inform and document** (i) the limitations of using technology in the provision of telepractice;
 - (ii) the potential risks to the confidentiality of information due to technology used in telepractice;
 - (iii) the potential risks of disruption in the use of telepractice;
 - (iv) when and how the licensee will respond to routine electronic messages;
 - (v) in what circumstances the licensee will use alternative communications for emergency purposes;
 - (vi) who else may have access to patient communications with the licensee;

- (vii) how communications can be directed to a specific licensee;
- (viii) how the licensee stores electronic communications from the patient; and
- (ix) that the licensee may elect to discontinue the provision of telepractice services.

Source:

<http://www.asha.org/Advocacy/state/State-Telepractice-Requirements/#MT>

Some resources for SLPs applying for telepractice in MT:

1. [Aphasiatoolbox.com](http://aphasiatoolbox.com) offers a course through HomeCEU Connection! Course Name: *Start Your Telepractice, Now!*

This course provides you with practical skills, techniques, technology, and tools that you can use to most effectively use telepractice to treat patients and expand your business. https://www.homeceuconnection.com/course/3229/Start-Your-Telepractice--Now#course_tabs-1

For additional information on this course, please contact us at information@aphasiatoolbox.com

2. [Aphasiatoolbox.com](http://aphasiatoolbox.com) also is rolling out its **SLPTelePartner Program** May 15, 2015. This will assist not only in preparation for provisions of state licensure laws, but also practical ongoing assistance and support.

3. Other courses are available at ASHA:

<http://sig18perspectives.pubs.asha.org>;

[http://www.asha.org/eweb/olsdynamicpage.aspx?title=telepractice+technology%3a+tools+to+deliver+care+remotely+\(on+demand+webinar\)&webcode=olsdetails#_ga=1.146184884.1472341502.1417731537](http://www.asha.org/eweb/olsdynamicpage.aspx?title=telepractice+technology%3a+tools+to+deliver+care+remotely+(on+demand+webinar)&webcode=olsdetails#_ga=1.146184884.1472341502.1417731537)

4. speechpathology.com:

<http://www.speechpathology.com/slp-ceus/telehealth-telepractice/>