

Guide to Hiring Speech Teletherapists

By Allison Bounds, M.S., CCC-SLP



Prior to hiring a contract speech-language pathologist, district administrators should ask certain questions.

Do you have appropriate licensure and certification?

Speech-language pathologists with master's degrees typically have a certificate of clinical competence through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. You may inquire about this certification by doing an online search through this [website](#).

State licensure varies state-to-state. Some states require licensure with the Department of Education and/or the Department of Health. Frequently, you can visit your state licensing board's website to verify the individual has an active license.

Do you have professional liability insurance?

Speech-language pathologists who contract with schools should have professional liability insurance. Since they are not working as employees for the school district, it is imperative that they have their own policy. It is recommended that speech-language pathologists have policies with a minimum of \$1,000,000 for each claim and \$3,000,000 aggregate.

Do you provide group therapy?

All virtual speech-language pathologists are not comfortable with group therapy. Some speech-language pathologists have only provided individual therapy either through the schools or in private practices. Frequently, districts want the option for students to be seen in groups. Therefore, it is important to not assume the therapist is comfortable offering group teletherapy.

Do you do case management tasks such as IEP preparation, IEP meeting attendance, and ESY meetings?

Not all virtual speech-language pathologists are willing to undertake case management tasks alongside therapy. Certain speech-language pathologists would rather concentrate solely on therapy and avoid the added responsibilities of meetings, documentation, and case management. It is crucial to ensure that the virtual SLP and the district share the same expectations with regards to case management activities before hiring.

Do you provide virtual evaluations?

All speech teletherapists do not have the access to provide virtual evaluations. The virtual evaluations can be costly for the therapist, so it cannot be assumed the speech therapy contractor owns the proper products to complete evaluations. Prior to hiring an online speech therapist, discuss his/her comfort level with online evaluations and access to materials. It is also recommended to discuss how the district plans to collect testing protocols used during the assessment process.