



## Iowa Board of Hearing Aid Specialists Guidance Related to Governor Reynold's Proclamations & COVID-19

On March 22, 2020, Governor Kim Reynolds issued a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency. In this Proclamation, Governor Reynolds temporarily suspended a number of regulatory provisions applicable to a number of professions, including hearing aid specialists. The Proclamation eases administrative rules relating to renewal of licenses and continuing education. *The suspension of rules identified in the Proclamation is effective through June 25, 2020, unless the Governor terminates or extends the Proclamation.* As required in the Proclamation, the Board of Hearing Aid Specialists issues this guidance relating to the temporary suspension of administrative rules in these areas:

### **License Renewal**

Section Six of the Proclamation temporarily suspended administrative rules relating to license expirations during the period of the Proclamation. This means that if a license expired while the Proclamation is in effect, the licensee would not be required to renew until after the termination of the Proclamation. However, hearing aid specialist licenses expire on December 31, 2020. Because the Governor's Proclamation is set to expire on June 25, 2020, this provision does not currently impact hearing aid specialists. The Board will continue to monitor the situation and will provide future guidance about possible suspensions of license renewal requirements as necessary in the future.

### **Continuing Education**

Section Five of the Proclamation temporarily suspended rules relating to continuing education deadlines or in-person continuing education requirements as a condition of license renewal. In light of decreased in-person continuing education opportunities available this year, licensees will not be required to complete a minimum number of in-person continuing education hours for the renewal period ending on December 31, 2020.

### **Telehealth Services**

Section seven of the Governor's April 24, 2020 Proclamation temporarily suspended regulatory provisions that required Iowa licensure for providing hearing aid specialist services to patients located in Iowa. Accordingly, a hearing aid specialist who holds an active license in another state may provide telehealth or electronic services to patients located in Iowa. Please note that any HIPAA provisions that have not been waived by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) or the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) must still be complied with when providing telehealth services during this emergency. Additionally, please note that the standard of care for electronic or telehealth services is the same standard as in-person services, and each provider must ensure compliance with all applicable laws and rules when providing remote services.

## **Personal Protective Equipment**

The Iowa Department of Public Health has issued orders and gathered resources to assist healthcare workers with providing in-person services during this public health disaster emergency. Prior to performing in-person services, please review this information and ensure that you are complying with all orders and appropriate guidance to safeguard the safety of yourself and your patients: <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus/Healthcare>.