

ENSURING A SUCCESSFUL CF EXPERIENCE

How to Ensure a Successful CF for Yourself or for the CF You Supervise!

ASHA has recently changed their terminology from SLPCF supervisor to SLPCF mentor in order to better reflect the purpose and function of this relationship. Some of the ASHA requirements for your CF experience have also changed.

Here's the inside information you need in order to protect yourself:

You will have 2 types of supervisors during your Clinical Fellowship Year: 1) Your ASHA SLPCF mentor and 2) your employment supervisor. Your SLPCF mentor is not your employment supervisor. They offer different types of support to you during this first year of work. Your SLPCF mentor does not have to be on site with you. They do not have to be employed by the same company that employs you. Your SLPCF mentor is to ensure the quality of your clinical skills in accordance with ASHA standards. They are not required to orient you to your company's policies and procedures or to train you to do your job. Those are the responsibilities of your employment supervisor.

(SOS goes one step further in supporting SLPCFs by having TWO experienced CCC-SLPs on staff and available to you; Diane Powers, President of SOS, and Sarah Foulks, SLP Consultant for SOS! We're aware of your needs as a new professional from day one.)

Your SLPCF mentor does not have to meet with you the first day of your employment in a new job. But the mentoring SLP should talk with you by phone or in person no later than your first day of work.

(Before accepting a job you need to find out who your employment supervisor will be in addition to who your SLPCF mentor will be. You want your mentor to be interested in you, enjoy guiding new professionals, and engaged in working on mutually outlined outcomes and performance levels goals to be achieved by the end of your CFY.)

He/She should meet with you in person within 4 weeks of initiating the SLPCF in a goal-setting conference to determine those outcomes and performance levels. The state you are working in may have alternative or other requirements as well. Before beginning a clinical fellowship, the SLPCF should determine what the state licensing agency requires of persons fulfilling a clinical fellowship. Some states use a different designation for the fellowship (e.g., the Required Professional Experience in California). You may be required to register with the licensing agency, obtain a provisional or temporary license, and/or file a clinical fellowship plan. Completing the clinical fellowship without also meeting the state requirements may jeopardize the SLP CF's ability to practice.

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ASHA requires that your SLPCF mentor be in good standing with ASHA throughout the period of your CFY. During each of the 3 required segments of your CF experience, your SLPCF mentor must formally meet with you and discuss your performance on the Clinical Fellowship Skills Inventory (CFSI) form as well as your progress on the outcomes and performance levels goals established in your initial meeting. If you are working 35 hours or more per week, he/she will observe your clinical skills a minimum of 6 hours per segment. Your SLPCF mentor must also provide 6 other monitoring activities during each 12-week segment. You do not have to follow the ASHA process in order to become state licensed.

(SOS values your ASHA standing. We ensure that your SLPCF mentor is in good standing and remains in good standing throughout your CF year. We also pay for ASHA membership for our employees as part of your continuing education benefit!)

Since states cannot require you to belong to a private organization (like ASHA) there may be an alternate method for permanent licensure. Unfortunately, not all companies encourage or require ASHA membership and acquiring your CCCs.

(Unlike SOS, most companies are not owned by therapists, so they might not even understand the differences.) Therefore, if you *want* ASHA CCC certification, it is up to YOU to ensure that you meet the ASHA requirements.

- **Remember**, it is the responsibility of the SLPCF to verify the certification status of the SLPCF mentor before initiating the experience and to verify the mentor's continuing certification throughout the duration of the clinical fellowship experience.
- **Remember**, if the SLPCF is mentored by multiple individuals, it is the responsibility of the clinical fellow to verify the certification status of all SLPCF mentors.
- **Remember**, if the SLPCF mentor's certification lapses, the clinical fellow may be required to extend his or her fellowship.
- **Remember**, a separate Clinical Fellowship Report and Rating Form must be submitted to ASHA for each component of the clinical fellowship that involves a change of site, mentor, or work schedule.
- **Remember**, many states require clinical fellows to register with the licensing/certification agency, obtain provisional or temporary licensure, and/or file a clinical fellowship plan in addition to filing a clinical fellow plan with ASHA.
- **Remember**, the State licensing/certification requirements and supervision requirements for a clinical fellow may differ from those that ASHA requires.
- **Remember**, the supervisor for your State license must generally hold a current license in that same State.
- **Remember**, transfer of supervision for your State license/certificate may need to be reported to, or preauthorized by, the licensing agency.

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