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U.S. Department of Labor Reinstates National Guideline Standards for Hearing Aid Specialists

LIVONIA, MI – May 24, 2018 - The United States Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Apprenticeship, announced it has reissued to the International Hearing Society (IHS) its Certificate for new National Guidelines for Apprenticeship Standards for the occupation of Hearing Aid Specialist. The program’s reinstatement marks it as the first federally-recognized and standardized hearing aid specialist apprenticeship program in the United States.

The program, which establishes a two-year competency-based pre-licensure educational path for hearing aid specialist trainees, can again be used by employers to recruit and train apprentices for their licensing examinations and, upon successful completion, independent practice.

In June 2015, the DOL had first announced its approval of the program, which, shortly thereafter, was challenged by national audiology organizations: Academy of Doctors of Audiologists, American Academy of Audiology, and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. IHS worked closely with the DOL to address questions and resubmit the program for reconsideration.

The DOL’s ongoing interest in reinstating the program conveys its commitment to supporting the continued development of this apprenticing profession, and falls in line with a June 2017 directive from President Donald Trump to the agency to increase quality jobs for America’s workforce through the expansion and promotion of apprenticeship programs.

“We continue to be enthusiastic about this partnership that will open up numerous opportunities to individuals seeking meaningful employment in an apprenticing field, with the potential for them to achieve business ownership and career satisfaction,” IHS Executive Director Kathleen Mennillo, MBA, stated. “IHS is excited to work with national, regional, and local employers as well as state licensing agencies to integrate the program into the licensure process as an approved path for readying candidates to gain the competencies needed for this dynamic profession.”

In the coming months, IHS will be working with state agencies and employers to integrate the program, which provides an additional mechanism for Hearing Aid Specialist candidate recruitment and gold-standard training for independent practice.

About the International Hearing Society

The International Hearing Society (IHS) is a membership association that represents hearing healthcare professionals worldwide. IHS members are engaged in the practice of testing human hearing; selecting, fitting, and dispensing hearing instruments; and counseling patients. Founded in 1951, the Society continues to recognize the need for promoting and maintaining the highest possible standards for its members in the best interests of the hearing impaired it serves. For more information visit

www.ihinfo.org.

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