



# **OMFC REGISTRATION REVIEW**

## **Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association Final Registration Review Report (2013)**

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OFFICE OF THE MANITOBA FAIRNESS COMMISSIONER



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## Introduction

This Final Registration Review Report presents the results of the Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's (OMFC) registration review with the Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association (MSHA) as of March 2013.

Registration reviews are conducted as part of the Fairness Commissioner's mandate to review the registration practices of regulatory bodies subject to *The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act (Act)*.

The purpose of a registration review is to enable the Fairness Commissioner to determine a regulator's compliance to the Act and to make recommendations to improve compliance. Compliance refers first and foremost to the fairness of assessment and registration practice, with particular attention drawn to the need for the fair consideration of internationally educated applicants. It also refers to the co-operation of the regulator with the Fairness Commissioner.

The Act stipulates that a registration review for any given regulator is to be undertaken at times specified by the Fairness Commissioner. The content of a registration review is to include an analysis of the relevance and necessity of registration requirements, the timeliness of decision making, the reasonableness of fees and the registration of internationally educated individuals. This may involve the review of any third parties employed in the assessment and registration process.

The OMFC's review process culminates in a Final Registration Review Report, complete with an Action Plan from the regulator. This report is a public document submitted to the Province's Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism and posted on the OMFC's website.

## Review Process

For the purposes of the 2012/13 registration review cycle, regulatory bodies with few internationally educated applicants and/or that rely heavily upon third parties for their assessment process participated in a self-assessment review process.

The review process had several steps: agreeing to a review schedule, arranging for the involvement of key staff and council members, participating in a two-day self-assessment workshop, drafting an action plan and finalizing the plan in consultation with the Fairness Commissioner.

The process was designed to support meaningful reviews that concretely identify fairness issues and lead to progressive change.

### The Fairness Standard and Self-Assessment Workshop

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As a first review encounter with the OMFC, regulatory practice was evaluated against a single broad fairness standard as defined by the OMFC's *Fairness Standard and Criteria Document*:

***Dedicated and fair practices are applied for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure their effectiveness.***

This fairness standard covers the full spectrum of fair assessment and registration practice and is defined with multiple elements and criteria in the *Fairness Standard and Criteria Document*.

Over the course of a two-day self-assessment workshop, the standard was explained and regulators examined their practice in light of the various elements and criteria involved. Special emphasis was placed on the importance of clear, complete and accurate assessment and registration information, fair third party assessment practice and the consideration of qualifications acquired through professional work experience. Solutions and best practice models were presented as regulators drafted action plans to address issues of concern.

### Action Plan & Compliance Statement

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Shortly after the workshop, regulators submitted board-approved Action Plans to the OMFC. Regulators met with the Fairness Commissioner to discuss the plans and in some instances, revisions were made.

The Action Plan contained in this report has been reviewed by the Fairness Commissioner and is comprised of actions needed to address fairness concerns and improve compliance to *The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act*.

Concluding this report, the Fairness Commissioner's Compliance Statement provides comment on the suitability of the regulator's Action Plan and the overall compliance of the regulator's registration practice.

## Overview of the Assessment and Registration Process of the Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association

The Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association (MSHA) regulates the practice of speech and hearing therapy in Manitoba under the authority of *The Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association Act* (R.S.M. 1990, c. 101) and Regulation (1/2009). Only persons licensed and registered with the MSHA may practice speech pathology and audiology and use the professional designations ‘Audiologist’ and ‘Speech-Language Pathologist’ in Manitoba.

Audiologists and speech-language pathologists diagnose, evaluate and treat human communication disorders including hearing, speech, language and voice disorders. Practitioners are employed in both private and public practice in hospitals, health centres, clinics, and educational institutions.

Provincial statistics indicate that no internationally educated audiologists and speech-language pathologists immigrated to Manitoba from 2005 to 2011.

### Qualifications

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Principal qualifications required to be registered include holding a Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology or Audiology from a Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) accredited institution or a Master's degree judged by the MSHA to be substantively equivalent. In addition, minimum specified clinical clock hours in specified practice areas must be completed under the supervision of a registered Audiologist or Speech-Language Pathologist.

### Assessment and Registration Process

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The following steps are involved for the assessment and registration process of applicants from academic programs unaccredited by the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA).

#### Application

Applicants complete MSHA's on-line application for Provisional Licensure, pay a \$31.50 application processing fee and submit the following documents:

- Criminal Records Search Certificate
- Child Abuse Registry check
- Summary of Clinical clock hours
- A recognized Canadian credentialing agency review of transcripts, sent directly from the Agency to the MSHA Office
- Summary of Clinical Practicum Hours, signed by supervisor(s) (photocopies acceptable)
- Course description or syllabus describing the content of each course and the number of academic hours assigned to each course

All documentation must be in English or French.

Upon completed application, the MSHA informs applicants in writing within 6 weeks of their application result.

Those approved for provisional registration must work under the supervision of a fully registered member of the Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association for up to one year.

Depending on the character of their academic training, some applicants may be required to write the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) certification examination. This is a four-hour, multiple-choice format exam, offered in Winnipeg in the spring and fall and costs \$1,000.00.

### Appeal Process

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Applicants who have their application for registration denied or conditioned do not have appeal opportunity with the MSHA. Following the *Manitoba Speech and Hearing Act*, appeals for registration decisions can be heard by the Court of Queen's Bench.

### Time and Cost

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Time and cost required to be registered with the MSHA vary depending on the circumstance of the applicant. Those who are not required to write the national certification exam, face a timely and low cost registration process; 6 weeks upon completed application and a pro-rated, \$698.25 membership fee. There will be additional time and cost associated with the collection of documents and the third party credential assessment. Applicants required to write the national Certification Exam will need a further 3 to 12 months to apply and write this fixed date exam.

Specific fees are as follows:

Third Party Credential Assessment	\$ 200.00 – \$300.00
Application Processing Fee	\$ 31.50
Fully Registered Practising Annual Dues (pro-rated)	\$ 698.25
CASPLA Certification Exam Fee	\$1,000.00



## **Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association's Action Plan**

In response to the self-identified Compliance Issues, the Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association proposed the following action plan as of March 2013. The plan is reprinted under the 'MSHA's Planned Actions' column in the table below.

The MSHA's Action Plan will form the basis of its relationship with the OMFC moving forward. The plan is monitored by the OMFC and will be tracked in the 'Completion Date' box of the Action Plan as it comes to fruition. As the report will be available online, this allows any interested party to see the progress to date.

Compliance Issues	MSHA's Planned Actions	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>MSHA indicates only our direct costs. There is a need to identify other costs such as legal fees, 3<sup>rd</sup> party assessment costs, criminal record check and child abuse registry check, university transcripts/documentation, immigration and visa costs. Where specific costs cannot be identified, general information should be provided.</p>	<p>Investigate and identify all actual costs associated with licensure any other required costs. Modify the MSHA website accordingly.</p> <p>Links to 3<sup>rd</sup> party assessment agencies as well as Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Manitoba Immigration and Multiculturalism's websites. Legal and University/College documentation costs are based on case per case basis.</p>	✓			
<p>There is a need to provide information about financial support opportunities.</p>	<p>Provide link on website to financial aid opportunities, contact the OMFC Office for exact links and information.</p>	✓			
<p>There is a need to introduce information about timelines and key dates in the registration process.</p>	<p>Draft checklist for Foreign Trained applicants, timelines and key dates will be incorporated in the checklist.</p>	✓			

Compliance Issues	MSHA's Planned Actions	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
	Indicate other timeline factors such as Criminal Records Check, Child Abuse Registry Check and 3 <sup>rd</sup> party assessment reports. This can be incorporated in the checklist and made reference to on MSHA's website.	✓			
There is a need to provide information about alternative careers and academic upgrading opportunities.	Provide links on our website to the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists and the Canadian Academy of Audiologists for information on support personnel.	✓			
Appeal information accompanies any assessment and registration decision subject to appeal.  This is not currently included in all correspondence.	We will include appeal information in correspondence when an applicant is refused membership.	✓			
Records are available for access by applicants upon request. However, applicants are not normally informed as to the availability of their records.	Put access to records information on our website.	✓			

## Fairness Commissioner's Statement of Compliance

The Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association's Action Plan is a constructive response to the registration review. It will improve the compliance of the Association's responsibilities under *The Fair Registration in Practices in Regulated Professions Act*.

Over the course of our review, we were encouraged to learn of the MSHA history accommodating internationally educated applicants whose qualifications do not fully align with North American Standards. Remedial opportunities have been afforded through supervised practice opportunities, the provision of written reports, and the recognition of other regulatory exams. The Association's flexibility and willingness to think outside the box is a critical component of fair practice.

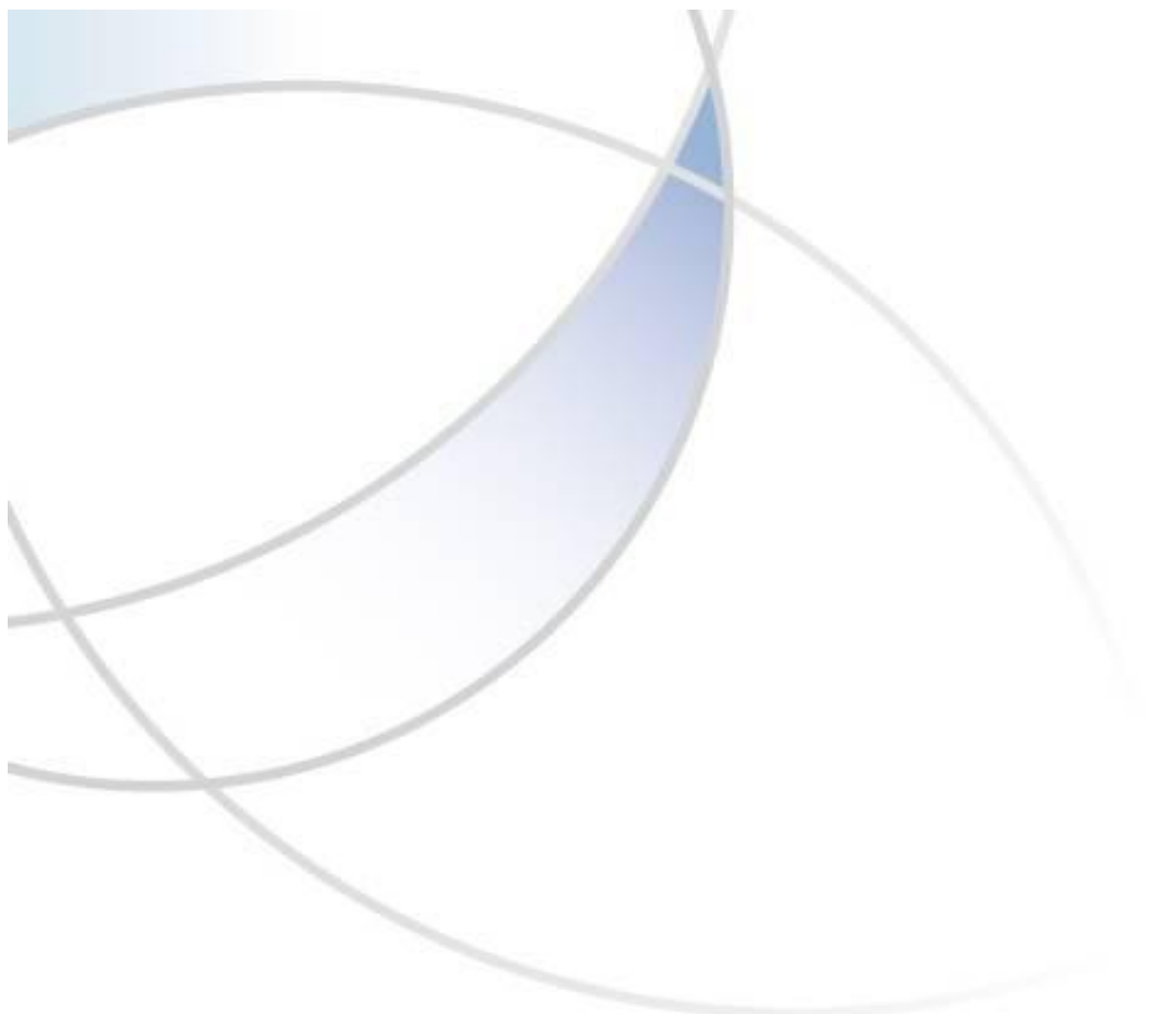
We appreciate the Association's commitment to their responsibilities under the Act. We look forward to a continued and positive relationship.



Ximena Munoz

Manitoba Fairness Commissioner





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