

MISSOURI BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR HEARING INSTRUMENT SPECIALISTS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the requirements to become a Hearing Instrument Specialist?

An applicant may obtain a license provided the applicant:

- 1) Is at least eighteen (18) years of age; and
- 2) Is of good moral character; and
- 3) Successfully passes the written and practical examinations; and
- 4) a) Holds an associate's degree or higher, from a state or regionally accredited institution of higher education, in hearing instrument sciences; or
(b) Holds an associate's level degree or higher, from a state or regionally accredited institution of higher education and submits proof of completion of the International Hearing Society's Distance Learning for Professionals in Hearing Health Sciences Course; or
(c) Holds a master's or doctoral degree in audiology from a state or regionally accredited institution; or
(d) Holds a current, unsuspended, unrevoked license from another jurisdiction if the standards for licensing in such other jurisdiction, as determined by the board, are substantially equivalent to or exceed those required in paragraph (a) or (b) of this subdivision; or
(e) Holds a current, unsuspended, unrevoked license from another jurisdiction, has been actively practicing as a licensed hearing aid fitter or dispenser in another jurisdiction for no less than forty-eight of the last seventy-two months, and submits proof of completion of advance certification from either the International Hearing Society or the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences.

How do I become licensed as a Hearing Instrument Specialist?

An application can be obtained from the Board's website at www.pr.mo.gov/hearing.asp. In order to obtain a license as a Hearing Instrument Specialist in Missouri, the applicant must submit the following:

- 1) A completed application; and
- 2) An original photograph; and
- 3) The application fee; and
- 4) Proof of acceptable educational credentials as evidenced by an official transcript sent directly to the board by the school; and
- 5) Verifications from all states the applicant was or is licensed in; and
- 6) If applicable, certified copies of court documentation as referenced on the application.

If the applicant has taken the written examination (ILE), the score must be transferred from the International Hearing Society (IHS). If the written examination has not yet been taken, the applicant's name will be submitted to the IHS once the application is complete. Please note, that the application and fee must be received at least thirty (30) days prior to the administration of the examination(s). Therefore, no applicant will be approved to sit for the examination, until their application file has been in our office for a period of thirty (30) days.

After an applicant's name has been submitted to the IHS and is considered eligible to take the examination, an "Introduction" email message will be sent by IHS to the applicant with instructions for making a testing appointment and submitting the ILE fee directly to the IHS. Upon completion of the examination, IHS will provide the Board with a Score Report containing

the applicant's examination results. The Board will notify the applicant if the examination was passed or failed. The actual percentage score cannot be provided to the applicant. If the examination is passed, the applicant will be provided with information on how to schedule to sit for the Practical Examination. The applicant must complete the Abbreviated Application and submit the Practical Examination fee to the Board thirty (30) days prior to the examination.

If the examination is failed or the applicant does not show without prior notification, the applicant will need to submit an Abbreviated Application to the Board's office in order to be rescheduled for the examination.

Please note, the Abbreviated Application is not available on-line and is mailed with examination results or upon request.

How do I obtain a temporary permit as a Hearing Instrument Specialist in Missouri?

An individual who is at least eighteen (18) years of age, is of good moral character, and meets the educational requirements as set forth in section 346.055, may obtain a temporary permit upon application to the Board. An application can be obtained from the Board's website at www.pr.mo.gov/hearing.asp. In order to obtain a temporary permit as a Hearing Instrument Specialist in Missouri, the applicant must submit the following:

- 1) A completed application; and
- 2) An original photograph; and
- 3) The temporary permit fee; and
- 4) Proof of acceptable educational credentials as evidenced by an official transcript sent directly to the Board by the school; and
- 5) The application must contain the registered supervisor's original signature; and
- 6) Verifications must be submitted by each state that the applicant is licensed; and
- 7) If applicable, certified copies of court documentation as referenced on the application.

Once the application is complete a temporary permit can be issued to the applicant for a period of one (1) year.

A temporary permit can be extended one time for an additional six-month time frame to start immediately after the expiration of the original permit. The Temporary Permit Extension Form must be completed and submitted with the required fee.

How do I pay the application and temporary permit fee?

The temporary permit fee must be sent to the Board in the form of a personal check or money order.

Do I have to hold a temporary permit before I apply for a full license?

It is not required for an applicant to hold a temporary permit before applying for a full license.

Do I need supervision/training hours prior to becoming eligible for licensure?

If an applicant holds a temporary permit in Missouri, the hearing instrument specialist in training is required to accrue no less than one hundred (100) hours of supervision from a registered supervisor prior to becoming eligible for licensure. Also, the hearing instrument specialists in training shall attend classes that are approved by AAA, ASHA or IHS. Three (3) hours of training shall be completed every six (6) months; however, a person in training less than six (6) months need not complete such training. Proof of completion of such training must be attached to the attestation form completed by the registered supervisor.

How do I change supervisors?

If a temporary permit holder wishes to change supervisors, the applicant will need to complete a Change of Supervision Form (<https://pr.mo.gov/boards/hearing/375-0256.pdf>) and submit the \$25.00 fee. The original supervisor must submit both the attestation form and temporary permit to the board prior to the new temporary permit being issued.

When do I need to return my temporary permit?

According to 20 CSR 2165-2.020 (5)(A) within thirty (30) days of termination of registered supervision, the registered supervisor shall submit both the attestation form and temporary permit to the board.

When does the attestation form need to be submitted?

Within 30 days of completion of registered supervision, the registered supervisor must document the supervision and training on an attestation form. This must be received prior to licensure.

What are the requirements of a registered supervisor?

A licensed hearing instrument specialist may obtain a certificate of authority as a registered supervisor by completing an application from the Board and paying the required fee. A registered supervisor must be licensed in Missouri as a hearing instrument specialist for a minimum of two (2) years.

The practice of fitting hearing instruments by a hearing instrument specialist in training shall be performed according to the registered supervisor's order, control, guidance and professional responsibility.

It is the responsibility of the registered supervisor to train the hearing instrument specialist in training in the following procedures during his/her training period: (A) Air conduction thresholds, with masking where appropriate; (B) Bone conduction thresholds, with masking where appropriate; (C) Speech reception thresholds, with masking where appropriate, utilizing test equipment with a calibrated circuit; (D) Word recognition scores, with masking where appropriate, utilizing test equipment with a calibrated circuit; (E) A verification of hearing instrument benefit; (F) Ear impressions; and (G) Visual otoscopy. The registered supervisor must meet with the hearing instrument specialist in training at least once per workweek; face-to-face, to review all purchase agreements, audiometric evaluations, instrument orders, ear impressions, whether a purchase is made or not, and all hearing instrument fittings. The registered supervisor must affix his/her signature and license number to purchase agreements and audiometric evaluation results.

Registered supervisors are required to submit an attestation form within thirty (30) days of completion of supervision or upon the termination of a temporary permit, either by it expiring or the termination of the working relationship. The supervisor must document the supervision and training on the attestation form, regardless of the length of supervision. A permanent license cannot be issued until the attestation is received or if an applicant has changed supervisors, the new temporary permit cannot be issued until our office has received the attestation and the temporary permit license.

All registered supervisors should be aware of the responsibility and requirements of being a registered supervisor; therefore, you may wish to review 20 CSR 2165-2.020 Supervisors. The

supervisor is responsible for the hearing instrument specialist in training and may subject not only their supervisor registration but their hearing instrument specialist license to discipline if the Practice Act and Rules are not adhered to.

How can I prepare for the written examination (International Licensing Examination (ILE)) and the practical examination?

Applicants can prepare for both the written and practical examination by reviewing the International Hearing Society (IHS) Manuals.

Can I transfer my written examination (International Licensing Examination (ILE)) to Missouri?

Applicants can transfer out-of-state ILE scores to Missouri. The applicant must request that the score be transferred directly to the Board from the International Hearing Society (IHS).

Is original signatures and documentation required?

All applications must contain the original signature of the applicant and/or the registered supervisor and the notary. Applications cannot be faxed or e-mailed and must contain the required fee. Supporting documentation must be original and come directly from the organization to the Board's office.

Are the FDA questions required in Missouri?

In 2016, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a guidance document explaining that it does not intend to enforce the requirement that individuals 18 and up receive a medical evaluation or sign a waiver prior to purchasing most hearing aids. However, Missouri requirements have not changed and according to the Missouri rules, 20 CSR 2165-3.030 Medical Clearance and Waivers, "Should a purchaser refuse to consult a physician after being advised to do so by the licensee, the purchaser must sign a medical waiver, in accordance with federal law, which must be a part of or attached to the purchase agreement."

Who can make changes on behalf of my application/license?

Only the applicant/licensee can make changes to their file or information concerning their application or license.

What is needed to make a name change?

All licensees are required to notify the Board of a name change. The notification must be submitted in writing to the Board of Examiners for Hearing Instrument Specialists and contain a copy of the appropriate document indicating the change. The current license must be returned which bears the former name.

How do I make an address change?

All licensees are required to notify the Board within 15 days of an address change. The notification must be submitted in writing to the Board of Examiners for Hearing Instrument Specialists, PO Box 1335, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102, by fax to (573) 526-3856 or by e-mail to behis@pr.mo.gov.

IMPORTANT: Please keep the Board informed of your current e-mail address. You can add or change your e-mail in writing as mentioned above.

How do I obtain a duplicate license?

Licensees can be issued a duplicate license by submitting a written request to the Board of Examiners for Hearing Instrument Specialists, PO Box 1335, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102, by fax to (573) 526-3856 or by e-mail to behis@pr.mo.gov.

How do I obtain a replacement wall hanging license?

Licensees can be issued a replacement wall hanging license by submitting a written request to the Board of Examiners for Hearing Instrument Specialists. A \$15.00 fee made payable to the Board of Examiners for Hearing Instrument Specialists must accompany the request.

How do I request a license verification to be sent to another state?

If a licensee is applying for licensure in another state, they will likely be required to submit verification of your Missouri license to the state board in which you are applying. A \$10.00 fee made payable to the Board of Examiners for Hearing Instrument Specialists must accompany the request.

When will I receive my license renewal?

Renewal applications are mailed to all current licensees on or around October 1st of odd numbered years. Renewal applications are mailed to the most current address on file with the Board. The renewed license is valid for a 2 year period and expires on December 31st of odd numbered years.

Do I need to submit proof of Continuing Education with my renewal?

No, the Board will conduct a random audit after the renewal period has ended. If chosen you will be mailed a letter indicating that you were selected for an audit and you will need to provide continuing education documentation for the requested reporting period.

How do I submit proof of my Continuing Education?

Proof must be submitted per 20 CSR 165-2.050 of the Board rules. The evidence must be in the form of documentation received from the sponsoring organization, showing the name of the course, date, place and hours of attendance. All licensees shall maintain full and complete records of all approved continuing education hours earned for the two (2) previous reporting periods in addition to the current reporting period.

How many hours are required for each 2 year renewal period?

Licensees are required to obtain twenty-four hours of Board approved continuing education. The reporting period begins on January 1st of even numbered years and ends on December 31st of the following year.

What if I do not have proof of my CE?

Licensees are responsible for maintaining records of continuing education activities. All licensees shall maintain full and complete records of all approved continuing education hours earned for the two (2) previous reporting periods in addition to the current reporting period. If you do not have proof, you should contact the program/sponsor to obtain another certificate of completion.

Can I contact a Board member directly?

The Board of Examiners for Hearing Instrument Specialists is responsible for the regulation of the practice of fitting hearing instruments in the State of Missouri. The powers of the Board are granted to enable the Board to effectively supervise the practice of fitting hearing instruments and to carry out the intent and provisions of sections 346.007 to 346.250. The Board's mission is to professionally and courteously serve and protect the public by providing for licensure and regulation of hearing instrument specialists, pursuant to Chapter 346, RSMo.

The Board would like to remind you that when Board members are contacted directly by a licensee or individual regarding an application for licensure, a complaint, investigation, or disciplinary process, any information given to that Board member could sway his or her unbiased opinion. A Board member receiving communication that could sway his or her opinion may be required to recuse themselves and not take part in a vote on the matter. This could put the Board member in an awkward position while trying to do his or her job and could put the licensee at a disadvantage.

It is strongly encouraged and recommended that all questions and concerns be referred to the Board's office. Board staff handles all the day-to-day functions of the Board. Therefore, questions can be answered based on full Board decisions and lessen communication between the Board and its licensees. Our hope is to make it as easy as possible for licensees to comply with Board Statutes and Regulations.

Please keep in mind that individual Board members are not authorized to make a decision for the entire Board.