

Leading Perspective: Thoughts from the Chair



Claire Covert-ByBee
Chair
Nebraska

Happy New Year to our Member State Boards, Board Administrators, Partner Agencies, and all Interested Parties!

As we welcome the new year, it brings with it a time for reflection, new goals, and a renewed commitment to growth. The Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC) is embracing this spirit by setting ambitious goals and focusing on continued progress. One of our key objectives for 2025 is to keep you informed and engaged through our quarterly newsletter—and we are excited to share this first edition with you. As an essential partner in the ASLP-IC, it's important that you stay up-to-date on the compact's activities, its current status, and its future ambitions.

We hope this newsletter will serve as a valuable resource, helping you keep your jurisdiction well-informed and involved in the ASLP-IC's initiatives.

One of our most significant goals this year is to officially become operational in 2025. This ambitious milestone requires a tremendous amount of time, dedication, and collaboration, particularly from our committed volunteers. A major highlight is the collective work underway with the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact and the Counseling Compact to develop a unified licensure compact database. Recognizing that we are stronger together, these three compacts have joined forces to form the Joint Compact Commission. This collaboration is critical to the successful operationalization of the ASLP-IC, as a functional database is essential for moving forward. If you're interested in learning more about the Joint Compact effort, visit www.compactconnect.org.

In this newsletter, you'll also read updates from the Executive, Rules and Finance Committees, as well as insights from the Compact's Interim Executive Director, Legal Counsel, and Legislative Liaison. Their updates will provide important information on the steps we're taking toward achieving our operationalization goal.

On a personal note, I'd like to share a goal of mine for the year: to remain grounded in gratitude. As the current Chair of the ASLP-IC, I'm fortunate to witness firsthand the incredible amount of work, often done by unpaid volunteers, that goes into making this compact a success. From the delegates in each member state to the tireless volunteers on our committees and the partner agencies we collaborate with—your collective effort is truly inspiring. Thank you for your continued dedication and hard work. Together, we can make 2025 a year of great progress and success.

Here's to a remarkable year ahead!

Claire Covert-ByBee

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Guiding Principals: Notes from the Executive Director

Keith Buckhout, Interim Executive Director

As the Interim Executive Director of the Commission, I want to thank everyone for their time, work and dedication to activating the compact. There is much to look forward to in 2025 as we expect the CompactConnect data system development project to be completed. This milestone in the life of the compact will allow member states to activate the compact and begin issuing privileges to practice.

Additionally, the compact is currently searching for a permanent Executive Director. Through a request for proposals that ended January 31, we have received applications from top-notch candidates. In the coming weeks, the Executive Committee and I look forward to hosting interviews to find the best person to lead ASLP-IC into the future.

Until the permanent Executive Director is hired and brought up to speed, please do not hesitate to contact me at: kbuckhout@csg.org if I can be of assistance.

Updates from the States

Susan Adams, Legislative Liaison

The ASLP-IC currently stands at 34 member states and one US territory.

2020: Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Utah, West Virginia, Wyoming

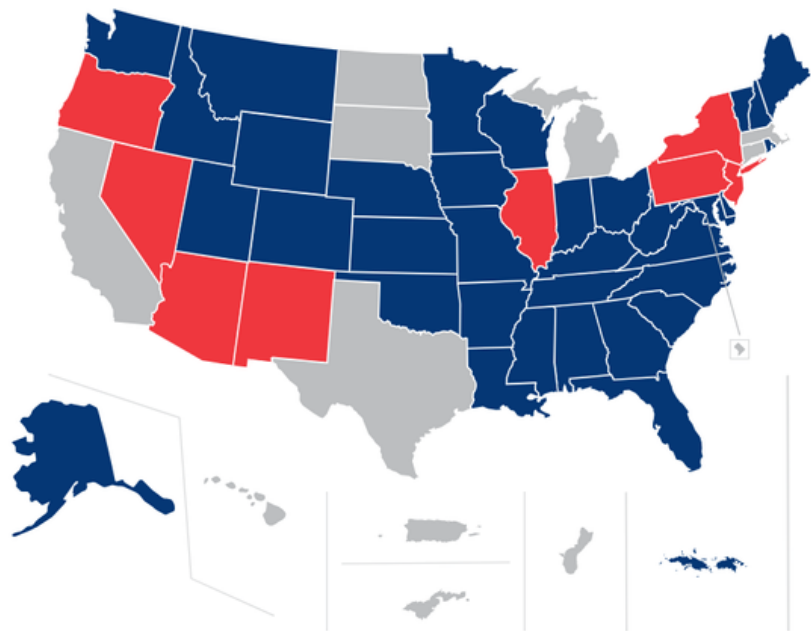
2021: Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio

2022: Delaware, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Mississippi, Missouri, South Carolina, Tennessee

2023: Arkansas, Maine, Montana, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin

2024: Alaska, Florida, Minnesota, Rhode Island, US Virgin Islands

At the time of this newsletter, eight states (Arizona, Illinois, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon and Pennsylvania) have proposed legislation to adopt the ASLP-IC. We expect additional state introductions this year and look forward to sharing legislative successes in the coming issues. We will continue working with the remaining states and territories in the coming sessions to achieve access to the ASLP-IC for all practitioners.





CompactConnect

CompactConnect is a collaborative, open-source project to develop a licensure compact data system. For an occupational licensure compact to operationalize, a data system must first be established. Compact data systems enable practitioners to apply for multi-state practice and for states to share necessary information about licensees.

To realize efficiencies, a shared use system is in development through the partnership of The Council of State Governments (CSG) and the three occupational licensure compact commissions of the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, Counseling, and Occupational Therapy Compacts.

Pilot states are currently being onboarded to the system. Remaining states are expected to be onboarded beginning Spring 2025 with the issuance of privileges to practice starting in August 2025.

The project is supported by the American Counseling Association, American Occupational Therapy Association, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Department of Defense, National Board for Certified Counselors, and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy.

Please visit www.compactconnect.org for more information about this joint initiative and to view demo videos.

Legal Corner

Nahale Kalfas, General Counsel

I am pleased with the work we have completed together in the past four years with the ASLP-IC Commission and am honored to be entering my nineteenth year representing audiology and speech-language pathology regulators as an administrative lawyer. One of the most important aspects of my work in the interstate compact arena is ensuring that commissions are complying with the affirmative duties outlined in the compact legislation that their respective member states have enacted. To that end, I encourage the member states to ensure the Commission website is linked to their board or agency regulatory homepage where licensees search for information regarding licensure. This will provide notice of when Commission proposed rules are posted for promulgation and will provide important meeting and records information to licensees and the public to ensure our transparency as a governmental body.

We are also attaching the State Onboarding Checklist from the CompactConnect manager. This document contains information on what states need to do in order to operationalize the compact in their state. I urge you to review the document and reach out to the CompactConnect Manager, Isabel Eliassen at ieliassen@csg.org to get started.

I remain inspired and appreciative for the work that all of you do to ensure public protection and access to competent care!



News from the Executive Committee

Claire Covert-ByBee, Chair

The Executive Committee was established in January 2022. The Committee is empowered to act on behalf of the Commission between Commission meetings, except for rulemaking or amendment of the Compact. The Committee meets monthly to engage in the business of the Commission.

The Committee currently has two vacant member-at-large positions. Elections will be held to fill those positions. If you are interested in running for the position, please contact the Interim Executive Director, Keith Buckhout, at info@aslpcompact.com.

The Executive Committee currently consists of:

Claire Covert-ByBee (NE), Chair

Vickie Pullins (WV), Vice Chair

Brenda Fairfax (NC), Treasurer

Alicia Barker (TN), Secretary

Tammy Brown (OH), Member-at-large

Stephanie Czuhajewski (ADA), audiology ex-officio

Susan Adams (ASHA), SLP ex-officio

Kerri Phillips (NCSB), Board ex-officio

News from the Finance Committee

Brenda Fairfax, Chair

The Finance Committee was established in January 2022 and tasked with providing financial oversight and ensuring the Commission is operating within its budget and is developing financial resources to achieve its purpose. The committee meets regularly to develop an annual budget and make financial recommendations to the Executive Committee.

The Commission receives financial support from the Academy of Doctors of Audiology (ADA), the American Academy of Audiology (AAA) and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). This funding allows the Commission to operationalize prior to practitioners purchasing privileges to practice. The Organizational Funding Agreement can be found on the Commission website at: <https://aslpcompact.com/commission/commission-governance-documents/>.

The Commission's current operating budget for fiscal year 2024-2025, which can also be found on the Commission website, totals \$154,850. This amount covers personnel costs, operational costs, and annual meeting costs. The Commission currently contacts with the Council of State Governments to provide interim Executive Director services.

The CompactConnect data system, which is funded solely by ASHA, will allow states to share licensee and disciplinary information between states. It will also allow individual licensees to purchase privileges to practice. The Committee recommended the use of credit card processing vendor Authorize.net to effectuate that purpose. Authorize.net charges a 1.5% processing fee, which is significantly lower than other vendor. Authorize.net also has security built into the system that will ensure any issues will be corrected within 24 hours. The Committee has recommended a Commission fee of \$50 for the privilege to practice. This fee is separate from the fee that states may implement and will apply to each privilege requested. This fee was determined based on the number of privileges expected to be issued. The intent of the Committee is that once is fully operational, the Commission will be financially independent.

The following members comprise the current Finance Committee:

Brenda Fairfax (NC), Chair

Claire Covert-ByBee (NE), ASLP Commission Chair, ex-officio

Jolie Jones (LA)

Denise Brown (NC)

Carrie Mills (TN)

Leticia White-Minnis (MO)



News from the Rules Committee

Gregg Thornton, Chair

The Rules Committee was established in January 2022. The Committee develops compact rules, bylaw amendments, and policies for consideration by the Commission and for implementation by the member states. It also reviews existing rules and recommend changes to the Commission.

Since its formation in 2022, the Committee has met almost monthly on the second Thursday. The early work of the Committee focused on identifying priority rules and amendments to the By-Laws that were needed shortly after the ASLP-IC first became active.

During 2023, the Committee reviewed and/or drafted the following administrative policies, bylaw amendments, first-tier rules and frequently asked questions which were approved at the Commission Special Meeting on April 17, 2023 and Annual Business meeting on October 7, 2023:

Administrative policies:

- Code of Conduct, Disclosures, Conflicts of Interest, and Recusal

Bylaws:

- Amendments to the Commission bylaws, e.g., changing fiscal year, establishing process to appointment committee members and fill vacancies, etc.

First-Tier Rules:

- Rulemaking
- Definitions
- Uniform Data Set Reporting Requirements
- Implementation Date and Requirement/Procedures
- Licensure, Member State Requirements/Procedure for posting of Commission information and documents on Member State websites
- Initial privilege to practice
- Implementation of Criminal Background Check Requirements

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

- Creating an FAQ of the most common questions and answers to assist the public and board administrators

During 2024, the Committee made additional amendments to the bylaws and FAQs which were approved at the Commission's Special Meeting on July 1, 2024. At the Commission's Annual Meeting on September 28, 2024, the Committee reported that it has been working on second-tier rules such as fees to be assessed to applicants when the ASLP-IC becomes operational in 2025.

In January 2025, the Committee met and recommended a draft rule to the Executive Committee on fees the Commission will collect from applicants in order to administer the compact and operate the data system. The Committee will continue to have discussion regarding the criminal background check requirements and propose rules as necessary.

The work of the Rules Committee could not be possible without the hard work and support of the following committee members:

Gregg Thornton (OH), Chair
Claire Covert-ByBee (NE), ASLP-IC Commission Chair
Tamara Cranfill (KY)
Sherri Smith (NC)
Michael Zagarella (WV)
Larry Molt (AL), Former ASLP-IC Commission Chair
Alicia Barker (TN) and Nate Brown (CO), Former Committee Members

A special thank you is extended to the following for their continued contributions to the Committee:

Nahale Kalfas, ASLP-IC General Counsel
Isabel Eliassen, Council of State Governments
Keith Buckhout, Council of State Governments
Susan Adams, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

