



Starting a Private Practice

Question:

I am a regulated member of ACSLPA, and I am looking into starting my own private practice. Are there any special requirements from ACSLPA for starting a private practice? Is there anything else from the College's perspective that I should be looking into?

Answer:

**This is not an exhaustive list of considerations for regulated members who wish to start a private practice, but information from the College's perspective on the most frequently asked questions about starting up a private practice.*

ACSLPA Requirements

- From the College perspective, there are no specific requirements of regulated members who wish to set up their own private practice.
- Any registered member holding a valid practice permit may work in the private practice setting, including starting up their own private practice.
- There is no minimum amount of time in practice or clinical experience required before working in a private practice setting, or for starting up a private practice.
- Regulated members should ensure that their personal information on their online ACSLPA member profile, including their contact and employment information, is up to date.

Business Licenses and Structures

- Under Alberta's *Health Professions Act (HPA) section 101*, regulated members are not required to obtain a municipal business license to practice their profession. Regulated member's municipal business licencing authority will be the best source of information on any potential benefits of licensing.
- Similarly, there is no requirement under the *HPA* to incorporate a private practice. The decision on the type of business structure (e.g., sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation) is a personal one, where an accountant and a lawyer will be the best sources of advice on the structure that would best suit the regulated member's circumstance.

Fees

- Regulated members must practice in compliance with ACSLPA's Standard of Practice [4.7 Fees and Billing](#) at all times.
- Regulated members must ensure that the fees charged for products and/or services are justifiable.
- ACSLPA, as a regulator, does not set fees for services, nor make any recommendations for fee setting.
- A sliding scale for fees, which would make services more affordable for people living at lower income levels, would be considered an appropriate mechanism what can be put into place if desired.



Insurance

- All regulated members holding a practice permit must hold their own professional liability insurance, as a condition for registration. [Click here](#) for more information on ACSLPA's professional liability insurance requirements.
- Other types of insurance are available to private practice owners, including commercial general liability, office contents, cyber insurance, directors and officers insurance, errors and omissions, and clinic professional liability. The regulated member's insurance provider will be the best source of information regarding the best insurance options for them and their business.

Practice Management Requirements

- All ACSLPA's Standards of Practice apply to regulated members working in private practice settings.
- Regulated members working in, or operating a private practice should be particularly mindful of the following standards of practice:
 - ◇ [Documentation and Information Management](#)
 - ◇ [Privacy/Confidentiality](#)
 - ◇ [Advertising and Promotional Communications](#)
 - ◇ [Fees and Billing](#)
 - ◇ [Human Resources Management](#)
 - ◇ [Clinical Supervision](#)

ACSLPA's [Clinical Documentation and Record Keeping Guideline](#) provides more detailed information on the record retention and privacy/confidentiality requirements of the College.

Social Media

- If/when using social media for business purposes, regulated members must practice in compliance with ACSLPA's Standard of Practice [4.5 Advertising and Promotional Communications](#).
- ACSLPA's Professional Predicaments [Social Media Series](#) may provide some helpful information on using social media in private practice.
- There are no ACSLPA restrictions on advertising format, so regulated members may advertise on social media.
- If using social media for business, regulated members should have a well-thought-out social media approach that remains consistent with ACSLPA's Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics. Professional boundaries, integrity, and client confidentiality MUST be maintained at all times.
- Regulated members may wish to maintain separate professional and personal social media accounts.

Other Resources

- [Alberta Speech-Language Association of Private Practitioners](#)
- [Alberta Association of Audiologists](#)
- [Speech-Language & Audiology Canada](#)
- [Biz Connect](#), a service provided by the Alberta government, which provides small business support, including advice, coaching, financing, and training.
- You may be listed in ACSLPA's [Find an Audiologist or SLP](#) directory.