

**Subject: Internet Hearing Evaluations for the Purposes of Fitting and Dispensing Hearing Aids**

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1 Whereas, audiologists are professionals with Master’s and/or Doctoral degrees in audiology  
2 who are uniquely educated and trained in the evaluation, assessment, diagnosis, management,  
3 treatment and prevention of hearing and balance problems, and specifically educated and  
4 trained in providing diagnostic hearing evaluations for the purposes of fitting and dispensing  
5 hearing aids, and

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7 Whereas, audiologists are regulated by state licensure in all fifty states and the District of  
8 Columbia to conduct hearing evaluations for the purposes of fitting and dispensing hearing  
9 aids, and

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11 Whereas, the American Academy of Audiology is vigilant in its efforts to advocate for  
12 audiological practices that are safe, effective, and valid, and

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14 Whereas, telemedicine/telehealth practices have been developed, are in use, and provide a  
15 method of maintaining audiological practices to patients in underserved areas, and

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17 Whereas, a complete hearing evaluation involves the measurement of not only frequency-  
18 specific stimuli, but also physiological functions of the ear and auditory functions involving  
19 reception, recognition, processing and interpretation of speech, and

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21 Whereas, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) has determined that  
22 “Audiometric tests shall be conducted in a room where ambient noise levels conform to all  
23 requirements of the *American National Standard Maximum Permissible Ambient Noise Levels*  
24 *for Audiometric Test Rooms,*” and

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26 Whereas, the ANSI has also determined that “Audiometric tests shall be conducted with  
27 audiometers that meet the specifications of and are maintained and used in accordance with  
28 the *American National Standard Specifications for Audiometers, ANSI S3.6*”, and

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30 Whereas, the importance of adhering to ANSI requirements is demonstrated by requirements  
31 of government agencies and representative organizations, and as a result require that  
32 diagnostic hearing evaluations are to be done in environments meeting these standards by a  
33 licensed audiologist, and

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35 Whereas, thorough hearing evaluations are one part of the criteria needed to make decisions  
36 about candidacy for treatment of a hearing loss with other candidacy considerations including  
37 physical, cognitive, social, emotional, medical, and lifestyle attributes, and  
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39 Whereas, it is necessary to perform an otoscopic examination of the ear as part of a  
40 comprehensive evaluation to check for cerumen impactions, drainage, foreign bodies, and  
41 debris in the ear canal as these conditions can result in creating inaccuracies in the assessment  
42 of hearing tests and may indicate treatable causes of hearing loss, and  
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44 Whereas, any rehabilitative efforts towards the remediation of hearing problems will rely on  
45 the accuracy of testing, and  
46

47 Whereas, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has listed criteria “red  
48 flags” that indicate conditions that require medical evaluation prior to the fitting and  
49 dispensing of hearing aids, and these conditions cannot be evaluated without a thorough case  
50 history, a physical examination of the ear, and an appropriately performed diagnostic hearing  
51 evaluation, and  
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53 Whereas, untreated hearing loss (as well as inadequately treated hearing loss) can exacerbate  
54 depression, isolation, and other emotional issues in adults and in particular elderly adults, and  
55

56 Whereas, a hearing test via a website or telephone system, without the benefit of direct  
57 supervision or recognition of the standards previously described, is by its nature inadequate  
58 for the purpose of evaluating or treating hearing loss.  
59

60 RESOLVED, that a hearing evaluation for the purpose of fitting hearing aids and other  
61 assistive listening devices should be offered in controlled conditions to meet existing  
62 standards, and  
63

64 RESOLVED, that a test provided via the Internet without the appropriate supervision by an  
65 audiologist is not adequate for the purposes of the fitting or dispensing of a hearing aid.  
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