



# AUDIOLOGIST

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

Audiologists work with people who have hearing, balance, and related ear problems. They examine individuals of all ages and identify those with the symptoms of hearing loss and other auditory, balance, and related sensory and neural problems. They then assess the nature and extent of the problems and help the individuals manage them. Using audiometers, computers, and other testing devices, they measure the loudness at which a person begins to hear sounds, the ability to distinguish between sounds, and the impact of hearing loss on an individual's daily life. In addition, audiologists use computer equipment to evaluate and diagnose balance disorders. Audiologists interpret these results and may coordinate them with medical, educational, and psychological information to make a diagnosis and determine a course of treatment.

## **EXPERIENCE & SKILLS**

Audiologists must enjoy working with others, be sensitive, compassionate, and patient. Essential skills needed are:

- Assessing/Analyzing
- Ability to communicate well
- Patience/Compassion
- Detail-oriented
- Objectivity
- Evaluation

## **EDUCATION & TRAINING**

Audiologists are regulated in 49 States; all require that individuals have at least a master's degree in audiology. However, a clinical doctoral degree is expected to become the new standard, and several States are currently in the process of changing their regulations to require the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) degree or equivalent. A passing score on the national examination on audiology offered through the Praxis Series of the Educational Testing Service also is needed. Other requirements typically are 300 to 375 hours of supervised clinical experience and 9 months of postgraduate professional clinical experience. Forty-one States have continuing education requirements for licensure renewal. An additional examination and license is required in order to dispense hearing aids in some States.

## **SALARIES**

Salaries vary depending on work setting, years of experience, specialty and region or state.

Entry level	\$45,000
Average	\$51,470
Average in public schools	\$53,000
Experienced	\$62,210

## **EMPLOYMENT & ADVANCEMENT PROSPECTS**

Employment prospects are good. Speech therapy and audiology job opportunities are expected to grow by 51% through 2006. Advancement is good and can occur when promoted to supervisor, by relocating to a larger more prestigious facility or going into private practice.

## **RELATED OCCUPATIONS**

- Physical therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Psychologists
- Recreational therapists
- Rehabilitation counselors
- Speech Therapists

## **REFERENCES**

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association at <http://www.asha.org>

Occupational Outlook Handbook, U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov) 2005-06