



# ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

## PREVENTION SERVICES

April 23, 2020

At this time it is unknown how the COVID-19 pandemic will impact the start of the upcoming 2020/2021 school year. The ADHS Sensory Program is moving forward as if school sites will re-open for the new school year. This correspondence provides clarification and updates to the statutory requirements regarding Vision/Hearing Screenings for children. All information is subject to change as the situation is fluid and may require adjustments. All updates will be accessible on the [ADHS Sensory Program webpage](#). Please review the following information.

### **Vision Screening:**

- Vision screening legislation (SB1456) was passed on August 17, 2019. This bill requires vision screening of children in Arizona upon initial entry to school as well as not more than two additional grade levels in a district or charter school that provides preschool and/or K-12 instruction. The vision screening law is now officially in the Arizona Revised Statutes and can be found at: [ARS §36-899.10](#).
- Rulemaking for ARS §36-899.10: Official rules for vision screening have not yet been established under A.R.S. 36-899.10. The ADHS Sensory Program is working to establish a timeline for rulemaking and looks forward to stakeholder engagement during the process. The ADHS Sensory Screening Program is committed to developing screening rules that follow national guidelines, which will help ensure early detection and intervention of children with vision impairments. Until the rules are completed and approved, there are no official requirements in place for vision screening regarding training, screening, and reporting of data to ADHS.
- **What This Means for Schools:**
  - Conducting vision screenings: For anyone currently administering vision screenings, the ADHS Sensory Program encourages you to continue performing screenings following the process outlined by your school or agency if vision screenings are conducted; the ADHS Sensory Program requests that vision screenings be administered and/or supervised by an ADHS certified vision screener if possible. If schools would like to track the vision screening the current vision screening reports can be utilized and found on the [ADHS Sensory Screening webpage, Reporting tab](#).
  - Vision Screening Training: Information on vision screening training is available on the [ADHS Sensory Screening webpage, Training tab](#). The ADHS Sensory Screening Program is working with current trainers and other training partners to increase access to training sessions, including Training of Trainers opportunities in the upcoming months, dependent on COVID-19 social distancing requirements. More information will be communicated to schools and organizations and posted on the webpage as it becomes available.

- Once official rules are established, the ADHS Sensory Program will work with stakeholders to train, monitor, track, and ensure compliance to the requirements.

**Hearing Screening:**

- Revised [Hearing screenings Rules 9 A.A.C. 13, Article 1](#) became effective 7/3/19 and applies to all schools (public, charter and private) as defined in ARS §15-101. The ADHS Sensory Program will continue to train, monitor, track, and ensure compliance to the established requirements listed in Hearing Screening Rules.
- All schools are required to complete and report hearing screenings by June 30th for each school year. Report is located on the ADHS Sensory Screening webpage. [Link to ADHS Sensory Reporting Forms](#).
- R9-13-115 under Article 1. Requirement for Screener or Trainer Certificate of Completion Issued Before Article Effective Date guidance.
  - A. If a screener's certificate of completion expires before June 30, 2020, the screener whose certificate of completion includes pure tone audiometry or OAE and wishes to retain screener certificate of completion, shall complete training, examination, and assessment specified in R9-13-108 prior to the certificate's date of expiration.
  - B. If a screener's certificate of completion expires after June 30, 2020, the screener whose certificate of completion includes pure tone audiometry or OAE and wishes to retain screener certificate of completion, shall complete training, examination, and assessment specified in R9-13-108 prior to June 30, 2020.
  - C. A screener, whose certificate of completion includes both pure tone audiometry and OAE, shall renew the current certificate of completion within 30 days prior to the expiration date of the certificate.
  - D. A trainer, who wishes to retain a trainer certificate of completion and whose certificate of completion was issued before the effective date of this Article, shall submit a certificate of completion request to ADHS as specified in R9-13-110 no later than 30 days prior to November 1, 2020. .

Thank you for your patience as we work to clarify vision/hearing screening guidelines. We appreciate the input and partnership of all stakeholders. We look forward to continued work to improve early detection and address vision and hearing problems in children and adolescents across Arizona. Please feel free to contact the Sensory Program at [sensoryprogram@azdhs.gov](mailto:sensoryprogram@azdhs.gov) with any questions.