VISION AND HEARING SCREENING RULES, TAC CHAPTER 37: OVERVIEW OF AMENDMENTS

September 26, 2014
Learning Objectives

• Explain the significant changes from this rulemaking action

• State the professional organization whose vision screening standards are being referenced

• State the photoscreening requirements
Statutes and Rules

Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36, Special Senses and Communication Disorders

Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 37. Maternal and Infant Health Services, Subchapter C. Vision and Hearing Screening

NOTE: Rules are reviewed every 4 years
Significant Revisions

• Addition of photoscreening as an optional vision screening method

• Referring to AAPOS for almost all of the vision screening standards

• Not allowing instructors to charge fees for course

• Deletion of the reference to the Radiation Control Act

• Restructuring of sections and updating language.
Significant Revisions in §37.22, Definitions

- Facility – These rules cover public and private preschools and schools. A preschool is an educational or child-care institution that admits children 3 years old or older.

- Professional examination – definition from code

- Licensed professional – Term mentioned in statute definition for Professional Examination.

- Pass/Fail – the allowable documentation for results of photoscreening
§§37.23, 37.24, and 37.25

- Content of these 3 sections used to be in one section.

- Now covered in:
  - 37.23 Vision Screening
  - 37.24 Hearing Screening
  - 37.25 Facility Requirements; Department Activities
37.23 Vision Screening

- Vision screening conducted by a person who is not a licensed professional must be conducted following the national standards set by AAPOS, including allowable methods of screening and referral criteria, with limited exceptions.

- Weblink to AAPOS standards is provided.
§37.23: Exceptions to AAPOS Standards

1. Referrals are indicated for children less than 5 years old when the screening indicates a difference of two lines in passing acuities.

This is in line with AAP recommendations. This practice will provide more comprehensive vision screening.
§37.23: Exceptions to AAPOS Standards

2. Referrals are indicated for children 5 years old or older when results indicate visual acuity less than 20/30 in either eye, rather than the AAPOS recommendation of 20/32.
§37.23: Exceptions to AAPOS Standards

3. In addition to AAPOS’ recommendation of optional photoscreening for children 42 months through 5 years of age, photoscreening is acceptable in children with disabilities who do not respond well to traditional screening methods.

A referral to a professional examination is recommended if the child fails the photoscreening.
Photoscreening

Definition:
A form of pediatric vision screening that uses a special-purpose camera to determine how well a child can see. It is an alternative to visual acuity-based screening with an eye chart for certain children, as specified in state rules. Other related terms are: auto refractor, objective screening and instrument-based screening.
Photoscreening

Photoscreening cannot determine exactly how well a child’s visual acuity is developing.

Important factors that affect visual acuity such as accommodative ability (focusing ability), binocular vision development, and other eye health issues are not assessed via photoscreening.
Photoscreening Requirements

Documentation:

Results must be documented as “Pass/Fail” and the documentation is in lieu of visual acuity results using “20/20” format.
Photoscreening Requirements

Certification:

• Screeners using a photoscreener must have successfully completed instrument-specific training and passed the test(s) in accordance with manufacturer guidelines.

• Must have a full understanding of the pass/fail referral criteria.

• Must also have a current vision screening certificate.
Photoscreening Requirements

Certification:

- Documentation of photoscreening training must be given to the instructor upon attending a certification class. Documentation must include the date and location the training was taken, and the name, affiliation and contact information of the instructor.

- Photoscreening certifications must be submitted by the instructors to the department within 14 days.
Photoscreening Requirements

Providing Proof of Certification to the Facility:

Prior to conducting photoscreening at a facility, photoscreeners must submit documentation of photoscreening training and certification to the facility.
Photoscreening Requirements

**Refresher Training:**

Photoscreeners must successfully complete instrument-specific refresher training every five years.

**Facility Reporting:**

Facilities are required to submit documentation of the total number of children screened with photoscreening in the annual report to the department. The report should include the number who failed the photoscreening.
§37.24 Hearing Screening

- Covers hearing screening methods, referral criteria, and standards and procedures.

- Like Vision Screening, says that requirements do not apply to an individual who is actively under the medical care of an appropriate licensed professional for the hearing problems for which the screening is done.
Highlights of 37.25

- States it’s the responsibility of each facility to ensure that each individual admitted to the facility complies with the screening requirements.

- Also the facility is to ensure that the screening is being done by a properly certified screener.

- Provides the schedule that facilities must follow.

- Clarifies requirement that volunteer assistants must have completed high school
§37.26: Recordkeeping and Recording

- Subsection (a) gives the requirements for screeners;
- Subsection (b) gives the requirements specific to facilities

For Screeners:
- specific information to record in the screening record
- must submit documentation to the facility at the time of the screening
Recordkeeping and Recording cont’d

For Facilities:

• Must maintain screening records for a minimum of 2 years.
• Must keep documents related to claiming exemptions to screening based on religious beliefs and practices for 2 years.
• Must keep photoscreening records for 2 years
• Must make records available to the department for inspection upon request
§37.27 Standards & Requirements for Screener Certification and Instructor Training

- There are 2 options for obtaining screening certification:
  - a certificate issued directly by the department following successful completion of a training course given by department staff; and
  - a certificate issued by an instructor trained and authorized by the department.

- The new language clarifies that there is no cost to taking a course in either option.
Requirement for taking the certification course:

To be eligible to take the certification course the individual must be a high school graduate and sign a written statement to that effect.
§37.27 cont’d

- Screening certificates are good for 5 years (unless an adverse action is taken against it by the department).

- Requirements for renewals of screening certificates and for refresher training courses are provided.

- Provides when the department may modify, suspend, or revoke a screening certificate.
§37.27 Subsection (c)

Subsection (c) provides the process and requirements for instructors to conduct trainings and issue certificates:

Requirements:

1) Instructors may not charge any type of fee for screening courses.
§37.27 Subsection (c)

2) Individuals must meet the following qualifications before taking an instructor course:

- have a current, valid department screening certificate,
- have actual experience performing screenings pursuant to that certificate;
- have experience conducting trainings to groups of adults; and
- be an audiologist, speech pathologist, optometrist, ophthalmologist, or registered nurse, with the applicable Texas license that is current and in good standing under Texas law.
§37.27 Subsection (c)

• Requires instructors use training materials obtained from the department and get prior approval from the department 15 working days before each training course begins.

• Allows instructors who are in good standing with the department to conduct refresher courses.

• Requires instructors to submit to the department in 14 days: the attendance sheets, evaluations, and the tear-off portion of the certification.
  • For photoscreeners, the photoscreening certificate must also be submitted.
§37.28 Hearing Screening Equipment Standards & Requirements

This section applies to individuals and entities (including calibration companies and facilities) who receive, possess, acquire, transfer, and/or use audiometers, audiometric testing equipment, and calibration equipment.
§37.28 Hearing Screening Equipment Standards and Requirements cont’d

- Provides the department’s registration requirements for those individuals and entities such as calibration companies using any of the equipment listed above, and provides a department registration weblink.

- Provides the technical standards which individuals/entities listed must follow as to the screening equipment/devices listed.
§37.28 Hearing Screening Equipment Standards and Requirements cont’d

• ANSI standards must be met, or, if no ANSI standards apply to the specific equipment or device in question, the manufacturer’s specifications must be followed.

• Provides registration requirements for individuals and entities who perform calibration services on the referenced equipment, and provides a department registration weblink.
§37.28 Hearing Screening Equipment Standards and Requirements cont’d

- Specifies that only calibration firms shall perform periodic electronic calibrations and exhaustive electronic calibrations on the equipment/devices listed and that those firms shall notify the owner of the audiometer that the audiometer has been calibrated.
§37.28 Hearing Screening Equipment Standards and Requirements cont’d

- Notification that an audiometer has been calibrated must be on a decal or a sticker affixed to the audiometer or hard copy documentation maintained by the owner. These must be made available to the department upon request.

- Calibration forms and records for all equipment referenced, including monthly biological calibration data, must be maintained for inspection by the department for 3 years.