



SUPERVISED PRACTICE GUIDE

**A guide for new grads,
employers, and supervisors**

The Alberta College of Occupational Therapists is dedicated to ensuring the public receive competent, ethical occupational therapy services. Timely integration of qualified occupational therapists into Alberta's healthcare environment is critically important to achieving that mandate. The college meets this challenge with the support of Alberta's employers of occupational therapists and the experience of our regulated members who assume supervisory and supportive roles to assist in the integration of new members to the profession.

Currently there are three categories of applicant requiring a level of supervision as a condition of their registration:

New Canadian Graduates:

The new Canadian graduate applicant is defined as an applicant who may be waiting for conferment of their degree, completion of the national certification exam, or submission of examination results to the College. An occupational therapist in the process of completing these requirements for registration is registered on the Provisional Register. Registration on the Provisional Register is valid for up to one year.

Internationally Educated Occupational Therapists (IEOTs)

The internationally educated occupational therapist applicant is a new applicant to the Canadian health system. IEOT applicants are initially assessed based on substantial equivalence to a Canadian-educated occupational therapist through the national Substantial Equivalency Assessment System (SEAS). After successfully completing the SEAS process, IEOTs are then eligible to register in any Canadian province. Applicants are then registered on the Provisional Register. The Provisional Register permit is issued when an IEOT applicant is waiting to write the national certification exam. The applicant will remain on the Provisional Register until successful completion of the national certification exam. The Provisional Register permit may also be used when an applicant has successfully written the exam, but his/her exam results are not yet available.

Re-Entry Applicants

The re-entry applicant is an occupational therapist applying to re-enter the profession after a period of absence and does not have sufficient currency hours for registration to the General Register. Re-entry applicants are registered on the Provisional Register. The Provisional Register permit may be issued when an applicant has insufficient currency hours. The Registrar will determine whether the applicant must write or re-write the national certification exam. A 320-hour supervised practicum is mandatory and completion thereafter of any coursework or training requirements that are identified during the competency assessment. The applicant will remain on the Provisional Register until completion of a satisfactory review by the supervising therapist is approved by the Registrar.

This guide is intended for new Canadian graduates.

Supervised Practice

Supervised practice must be provided by an occupational therapist registered on the General Register of the College with a minimum of one year work experience.

The purpose of supervised practice is to:

- Allow an applicant to practice while completing various registration requirements
- Ensure there is a regulated occupational therapist available to provide assistance and guidance
- Enable regulated members of the College to act on behalf of the College to ensure that the Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics are upheld

Assessment

Supervisors of new Canadian graduates are not required to submit a competency assessment of the applicant; however, a supervisor must contact the College if any concerns arise during the supervised practice of the applicant.

Roles and Responsibilities

The supervised practice process is a proven registration tool, effective when the employer, the supervisor, and the occupational therapist applicant understand their responsibilities. Note: levels of supervision may vary depending on what areas the graduate is competent in from their supervised placements. The supervisor must determine the graduate's level of competency in various areas and provide appropriate support.

Employer

- Verify the applicant's registration or eligibility for registration with the College
- Assign a qualified supervising occupational therapist who is a regulated member of the college to the applicant. It is required that the supervising occupational therapist has been registered on the General Register for a minimum of one year
- Contact the College if any concerns arise throughout the period of supervised practice

Supervisor

- Verify the status of the applicant's registration with the College
- Assist in orientation for the applicant by discussing:
 - An appropriate caseload and service delivery
 - Protocol for referrals, reporting and charting client information
 - Relevant and appropriate assessment forms
 - Necessary channels of professional communication
 - Budget, staffing, equipment, and supplies
 - Community and other resources available to clients
 - Note: general organizational orientation may be provided by another member of the team if the OT supervisor is not on-site
- Mentor the applicant by promoting development of a network with other clinicians, facilities, and services and by supporting and assisting in accessible resources as required
- Ensure that the applicant complies with the Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics in all service provision

- Ensure that the quality of client/patient documentation meets the Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics requirements
- Determine the level of supervision required based on observation of the Provisional OT's performance and chart reviews; once competence in the practice area is established, greater levels of independence are provided
- Supervision is ideally provided on-site, however in some circumstances this will not be possible, in which case remote supervision can be acceptable. In these cases, be sure to set up more frequent communication points, including phone or video calls and chart reviews at the beginning of the supervised practice period. Once it is established that the Provisional OT is competent in the practice area and knows when to seek out assistance, the communication points may be reduced
- Contact the College if any concerns arise throughout the period of supervised practice

Applicant

- Complete the registration process with the College, providing all required information including the name of the supervising occupational therapist. Ensure that the Provisional registration permit is issued prior to beginning employment and is kept in good standing throughout the practice period
- Review ACOT's Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics
- Ensure that client/patient documentation is reviewed by your supervising occupational therapist
- Recognize the importance of taking responsibility for your occupational therapy practice and seeking assistance or guidance when it is required; do not proceed to provide a service if you are not competent to do so
- Use appropriate title, (Provisional Occupational Therapist; Provisional OT) when documenting and communicating status
- Notify the College immediately if there is a change in the supervising occupational therapist or if any concerns arise throughout the period of supervised practice