

### Answers to Frequently Asked Questions About: *Practice Across Jurisdictions*

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#### Background

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document features answers to questions fielded from occupational therapists in Alberta and internationally regarding registration requirements when providing virtual and in-person services within and beyond the Alberta border. It has been prepared to supplement ACOT's [Considerations for Virtual Practice](#) guideline. This document features answers to questions in response to the [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\) on Cross-Jurisdiction Remote Practice](#) which was led by the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO). The MOU has been signed and adopted by Canadian occupational therapy regulators whose legislation permits them to do so. ACOT adopted the MOU in principle, effective October 1, 2021.

The list of questions in this Practice FAQs is not exhaustive and will be updated as unique questions are asked. If you have any concerns or questions about the content of the answers, please contact ACOT - [info@acot.ca](mailto:info@acot.ca).

- A. [Practice Within Canada](#) - Alberta occupational therapists practicing in other provinces/territories; occupational therapists from other provinces/territories practicing in Alberta.
- B. [Practice Outside of Canada](#) - Alberta occupational therapists practicing in other states/countries; occupational therapists from other states/countries practicing in Alberta.
- C. [Registration Requirement Tables](#) - Use these tables to help you determine if/where registration is required depending on where you and/or your client are physically situated at the time of service delivery.

#### Questions and Answers

##### A. Practice Within Canada

1. What is the intent of the Remote Practice Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

The Remote Practice MOU was developed partly in response to the increase in cross-provincial practice throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. It is an agreement amongst some (not all) of the Canadian occupational therapist regulators to support continuity of care when occupational therapy services are provided

across provincial borders. The signatories of the MOU agree to remove the requirement that occupational therapists be registered in both the province where they are providing services from and the province where their client is physically located.

The Remote Practice MOU enables occupational therapists to deliver occupational therapy services virtually to clients located in another province based on the occupational therapist's current province of registration - **with the following exceptions:**

- Not all provinces have signed and implemented the MOU. As such, you are advised to check and confirm with the regulatory bodies of the provinces that the occupational therapy services will be delivered from and to prior to proceeding. Links to the websites of each of the Canadian occupational therapist regulators are accessed from the [ACOTRO website](#).
- Registration in Alberta is a requirement to provide restricted activities to clients located in Alberta (such as restricted psychosocial interventions/ psychotherapy), whether the services are delivered virtually or in-person.
  - Refer to Sections 38 and 39 of the [Health Professions Restricted Activity Regulation](#) for the list of restricted activities occupational therapists registered in Alberta can perform if competent to do so and in alignment with the practice of occupational therapy. See the [Psychosocial Interventions: An Interpretive Guide to the Restricted Activity](#) for a description of which psychosocial interventions are considered restricted and thus require registration in Alberta.

**NOTE:** *The Remote Practice MOU does not extend to occupational therapy regulators outside of the Canadian border. See the [Registration Requirement Tables](#) on pages 6 & 7 for more information about registration requirements for practice within and outside of Canada.*

2. My client lives in, has moved to, or is on vacation in one of the northern territories, do I need to register there?

The three territories do not have occupational therapy regulatory bodies so your registration with ACOT will suffice. Be sure to notify your client that you are registered in Alberta and familiarize yourself with the emergency and community support services in the area in case of an adverse reaction or unexpected event.

3. I am an occupational therapist registered in Alberta and my employer/contracting organization wants me to expand my client base across the country – what does the new Remote Practice MOU mean for me?

That depends on where you are expanding your services to and what type of services you are providing.

- One of the northern territories - ACOT registration suffices.

- SK, MB, ON, NS, NB, NL, PEI – ACOT registration may suffice. Confirm the registration requirements with the regulator for each of these provinces. Some may require registration if you are providing a restricted activity or a reserved/controlled act. Others require notice that you will be providing services in the province. For example, Ontario has specific supervision requirements for occupational therapists who perform psychotherapy. [Click here](#) for COTO's standard for psychotherapy. Saskatchewan requires an *extended access membership* (no license).
    - Once you have confirmed the registration requirements for the province you are planning to provide services in **make sure to tell your clients that you are registered in Alberta and to [contact ACOT](#) with any concerns they may have about your practice – do this before initiating services.** You will also want to ensure you have an emergency plan in place for adverse or unexpected events including awareness of local emergency and/or community resources in the province where the client is located.
  - BC, QC – these provinces are not current signatories to the MOU. Each one has different legislation and timelines and the ability to implement the MOU. Courtesy or temporary registration will be required to work with clients in these provinces in person or virtually. You are responsible for confirming the registration requirements for each province you will be providing virtual services from and into before proceeding. Links to the websites of each of the Canadian occupational therapy regulators are here: <https://www.acotro-acore.org/links>.
4. My client lives in, has moved to, or is on vacation in another province, do I have to register in that province?

That depends on which province your client is in and what services you plan to provide – refer to the answers provided above.

5. What if I am an occupational therapist registered in another Canadian province – do I also need to register in Alberta if my client is an Albertan or in Alberta at the time of service delivery?
- If you are providing non-restricted activities - You can practice virtually in Alberta based on your registration in a province which has signed the MOU (all provinces except BC and QC). If allowed, make sure your client knows which province you are providing services from and the name of your regulatory body, so they know where to bring a complaint if there are concerns about your practice. Note, you are required to comply with applicable regulatory and professional legislation for the province you are registered in, but you should also be aware of relevant Alberta legislation, regulations, standards of practice and code of ethics.
  - If you are providing a **restricted activity** - **Registration in Alberta is a requirement.** Refer to the answer provided in Question 1 for information on restricted activities.

- Non-Alberta occupational therapists who are providing restricted activities to Albertans must apply for registration on ACOT's temporary Courtesy Register if they are providing services on a short-term basis (\$40 for ≤30 days up to a maximum of three x 30-day registrations in a year). If services will be provided beyond a 90-day time period (>3 x 30 days), registration on the General Register is required (or the Provisional Register if you have not yet written the national exam). Please allow up to ten business days for processing of Courtesy, General, or Provisional Register applications.

6. My clients are in Alberta, and I am registered to practice in Alberta, but I am currently in another province/territory temporarily (e.g., on vacation, caring for a family member) – do I need to be registered in the province/territory I am providing service from?

The new Remote Practice MOU permits an occupational therapist registered in one province to provide occupational therapy services virtually to clients physically situated in the province of registration, from another province without being registered in the other province. However, because not every province is able to sign or immediately implement the MOU, you are responsible for checking with the regulatory body of the province you plan to vacation in beforehand.

7. My client did not tell me that they were in BC/QC until after our therapy session started – what should I do?

Stop any therapeutic interventions you are doing to inform the client that you cannot practice virtually in BC/QC and advise the client that you will need to investigate to ensure that you are able to continue to provide services given the change in location.

To avoid this, it is important to:

- a. Make sure your client knows to inform you of any plans to travel (permanently or temporarily) outside of Alberta.
  - b. Reach out to the regulatory/licensing body of the province your client is in as soon as possible to allow time for processing your application to the temporary (courtesy) or permanent (general) register and avoid delays in service delivery.
  - c. Confirm where your client is physically located prior to any service delivery and prior to each session.
  - d. Update your client's emergency contact information for the new location and familiarize yourself with the emergency/community support services in case of an adverse or unexpected event.
8. My client has moved permanently to another province and has found another occupational therapist to provide the restricted psychosocial interventions we had been using – do I have to be registered in the province my former client is in before I call the new occupational therapist for a handover conversation? (my client is aware and has consented to me calling the new occupational therapist)

In Canada occupational therapy service encompasses screening, assessment, reassessment, treatment/intervention, discharge planning, and post-discharge follow-up with a client. Post-discharge follow-up with a therapist in another province for the purposes of handover (i.e., 1-2 phone calls) does not require registration. Client handover, if your client consents to this, is permitted through a different MOU for all provinces.

## B. Practice Outside of Canada

### 9. My client is moving to (or is on vacation in) another state/country? Can I still provide services virtually?

Check to see if registration in the state/country where the client is physically situated (temporarily or permanently) is a requirement.

Not all countries have occupational therapy regulatory legislation or regulatory bodies/organizations – you are responsible to confirm whether registration is required or not (see the [WFOT International Practice Guide](#)). If registration is required, do so prior to providing services. If registration is not required, document this in the client file and ensure your client is aware you are providing services from Alberta, Canada and to contact ACOT if they wish to bring forward a complaint.

### 10. My client did not tell me that they had moved out of the country until after our therapy session started – what should I do?

Stop the therapy session and advise the client that you will need to investigate to ensure that you are able to continue to provide services given the change in location. Depending on the state/country your client is in, this could be considered “practicing without a license.” Reach out to the regulatory body where the client is/was physically situated at the time of service delivery to inform them of the situation. If you are required to be registered and registration is not possible (i.e., the United States require passing of their national exam as part of their registration process even if services are provided virtually), ask the regulator for assistance in identifying an occupational therapist registered in that jurisdiction who can provide the client with services.

It is important to let your clients know to inform you of their plans to move/travel so that you can arrange for registration (if required) and update your emergency response plan including familiarizing yourself with the emergency and community support services in case of an adverse or unexpected event.

### 11. My clients are situated in Alberta, and I am registered to practice in Alberta, but I am currently in another state/country temporarily (e.g., on vacation, caring for a family member) – do I need to be registered in the state/country I am providing service from?

The Remote Practice MOU is only valid within Canada. ACOT cannot speak to the registration requirements outside of Canada. You should check whether registration in the state/country where you are physically located (temporarily or permanently) is required prior to the delivery of any occupational therapy service.

## 12. Are there any plans for Canadian occupational therapy regulators to enter an international Remote Practice MOU?

No.

### C. Registration Requirement Tables

**TIP:** For Alberta occupational therapists providing services virtually to clients located out of province, present your title as follows: **Registered Occupational Therapist (AB) or Reg. OT (AB)**. Expand the “AB” to “Alberta, Canada” if providing virtual services outside of Canada and registration in the country your client resides is not a requirement. See the **Practice FAQs: Representing Title and Credentials**, accessed from the [Practice Resources](#) page for more details.

Occupational Therapist (OT) Location		Client location (temporary or permanent)	Mode of Service Delivery <sup>1</sup>	Registration required in:	Comply with <sup>2</sup> applicable legislation, regulations, standards and code of ethics in:	Amount/type of liability insurance <sup>3</sup> coverage required as per:
PRACTICE WITHIN CANADA	Alberta	Alberta	In-person or Virtual	Alberta	Alberta	Alberta
	Alberta	Other territory <sup>4</sup>	In-person or Virtual	Alberta	Alberta and other territory	Alberta
	Other Territory <sup>4</sup>	Other territory	In-person or Virtual	Province of choice (or as per employer request)	Province of registration and other territory	
	Alberta	MB, ON, NS, PEI, NB, NL	Virtual	Alberta <sup>5</sup>	Alberta and other province	Alberta and other province
	Alberta	SK	Virtual	Alberta <sup>5</sup> and SK – Extended Access Membership	Alberta and SK	Alberta and SK
	Reg. OT (AB) in another province – <i>temporary</i>	Alberta	Virtual	Alberta	Alberta	Alberta
	Alberta - <i>temporary</i>	Alberta	In-person	Other province and Alberta <sup>6</sup>	Other province and Alberta	Other province and Alberta
	Alberta	BC, QC	Virtual	Alberta and other province	Alberta and other province	Alberta and other province
	BC, QC	Alberta	Virtual	Alberta and other Province	Alberta and other province	Alberta and other province



	SK, MB, ON, NS, PEI, NB, NL	Alberta - <i>receiving non-restricted activity</i>	Virtual	Other province	Alberta and other province	Alberta and other province <sup>2</sup>
	SK, MB, ON, NS, PEI, NB, NL	Alberta – <i>receiving a restricted activity</i> <sup>7</sup>	Virtual	Other province and Alberta <sup>6&amp;8</sup>	Other province and Alberta	Other province and Alberta

Occupational Therapist (OT) Location	Client location (temporary or permanent)	Mode of Service Delivery <sup>1</sup>	Registration required in:	Comply with applicable legislation, regulations, standards and code of ethics in: <sup>2</sup>	Amount/type of liability insurance coverage required as per: <sup>3</sup>
PRACTICE OUTSIDE OF CANADA	Alberta	Other state/country	Virtual	Alberta and check with regulatory body of the state/country your client is in <sup>9</sup>	Alberta and other state/country
	Outside of Canada - <i>temporary</i>	Alberta	Virtual	Alberta, and check with regulatory body of the state/country you are providing services from <sup>9</sup>	Alberta and other state/country
	Outside of Canada – <i>permanent</i> <sup>10</sup>	Alberta	Virtual	Alberta and other state/country <sup>9</sup>	Alberta and other state/country

#### Reference Key for Registration Requirement Tables:

1. **Service delivery** encompasses screening, assessment, reassessment, treatment/intervention, discharge planning, post-discharge follow-up with a client. Post-discharge follow-up with a therapist in another province for the purposes of handover does not require registration in Alberta. Service delivery can be either in-person or virtual. **Virtual practice** refers to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for the purpose of delivering occupational therapy services when the client and the occupational therapist are in different locations.
2. If a complaint about your practice is filed, an investigation will be conducted based on the legislation, regulations, standards and code of ethics for the province of primary registration. You are also expected to be aware of the applicable legislation, regulations, standards and code of ethics in the jurisdiction where your

client is located (either temporarily or permanently) and from where you are temporarily providing services.

3. You should confirm with your insurance provider that your coverage extends beyond your jurisdiction of registration.
4. The three territories do not have regulatory bodies and are not part of the Remote Practice MOU. Remember to notify the client which province you are registered/licensed to practice.
5. As each province will have differing ability/timelines for implementation of the MOU, you are advised to contact the regulatory body of the province yourself to confirm if registration is required or not in your particular situation. Links to the websites of each of the Canadian occupational therapy regulators are [here](#).
6. Non-Alberta occupational therapists are required to register on ACOT's Courtesy (temporary) Register if they are providing occupational therapy services in-person in Alberta or a restricted activity virtually to an Albertan on a short-term basis (≤30 days).
7. Some provinces (including Alberta) have stipulations in their legislation which require registration in the province where a client is physically situated at the time of receiving a restricted activity or reserved/controlled act (whether the act is being provided in-person or virtually). In Alberta, this stipulation is found in the *Health Professions Restricted Activity Regulation* which states:

*2(1) For the purposes of Part 0.1 and section 134(1)(f.1) of the Act, regulated members of each health profession may perform the restricted activities within the practice of the respective profession as set out in this Regulation.*

Refer to sections 38, 39 of the [Health Professions Restricted Activity Regulation](#) for the list of restricted activities occupational therapists registered in Alberta can perform if competent to do so. See the [Psychosocial Interventions: An Interpretive Guide to the Restricted Activity](#) for a description of which psychosocial interventions are considered restricted and thus require registration in Alberta.

8. If the restricted activity is expected to be provided virtually beyond 90 days (maximum of three times on the 30-day Courtesy Register), registration on the General Register is required (or the Provisional Register if you have not yet taken the national exam). See the [Registration page](#) on the ACOT website for information on how to apply or re-apply for the General, Provisional, or Courtesy Register.
9. Regulatory legislation of occupational therapists varies from state to state and country to country, when providing virtual services outside of Canada you are advised to contact the regulatory body of the state/country you/your client is physically situated. Also, as not all countries have regulatory legislation or regulatory bodies, it is up to each occupational therapist to confirm whether registration is required or not in the jurisdiction their client is located in (see the [WFOT](#)



[International Practice Guide](#)). If registration is required, do so prior to providing services. If registration is not required, document this appropriately in the client file and ensure your client is aware you are providing services from Alberta, Canada.

10. **IMPORTANT:** For occupational therapists registered outside of Canada wishing to provide occupational therapy services virtually to Albertans – registration with ACOT is required and application paperwork must be received and approved (including completion of the [ACOTRO SEAS process](#)) prior to delivering services.