



## Supervised Practice Guide

a guide for employers,  
applicants and supervisors

The Alberta College of Occupational Therapists is dedicated to ensuring the public receives 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 registrants who assume supervisory and supportive roles to assist in the integration of new occupational therapists into the profession.

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

- new Canadian graduates
- internationally educated occupational therapists
- re-entry applicants

A definition of each category of applicant is presented below. Applicants are registered on the Provisional Register while under supervised practice.

### **Definition of Applicant Categories**

#### New Canadian graduate

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 therapist (IEOT)

The internationally educated occupational therapist applicant is defined as an applicant who received their occupational therapy training outside of Canada, including Canadians who went abroad to study occupational therapy. IEOTs complete the substantial equivalency assessment system (SEAS) process before they are eligible to apply to the College. Applicants successful in the SEAS registered on the Provisional Register. The Provisional Register permit is issued when an IEOT applicant is waiting to write the national certification exam. The Provisional Register permit may also be used when an IEOT applicant has successfully written the national certification exam, but they do not have sufficient currency hours to apply to the General Register. In this case, they must complete a Re-entry program. Registration on the Provisional Register is valid for up to one year.

### Re-entry occupational therapist

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 supervised practicum may be required and completion thereafter of any coursework or training requirements that is identified during the registration competency assessment. The applicant will remain on the Provisional Register until completion of a satisfactory review by the Registrar.

### **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's 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 in the applicant's place of practice available for guidance and assistance and capable of assessing the applicant's readiness to enter practice
- 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**

Supervised practice for Re-Entry applicants is typically for a period of between 150 to 450 hours (four to 12 weeks of full-time practice) or equivalent. At the conclusion of the supervised practice:

- Supervisors of Re-entry applicants are required to prepare an evaluation of the occupational therapist's readiness to enter independent practice. A Competency Assessment Form must be completed and submitted to the College by the supervising occupational therapist.
- Supervisors of new Canadian graduates and IEOTs who are only waiting to write the national certification exam 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 supervisor and occupational therapist applicant understand their responsibilities.

## **Employer**

- Verify the applicant's registration or eligibility for registration with the College
- Assign a qualified supervising occupational therapist to the applicant - an individual who is a regulated member of the College. The supervising occupational therapist must have 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.
- 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.
- Assist in orientation for the applicant by discussing:
  - caseload and service delivery
  - protocol for referrals, reporting and charting client information
  - relevant and appropriate assessment forms
  - necessary channels of professional communication
  - client equipment, supplies, community resources where applicable
- Mentor the applicant by promoting development of a network with other clinicians, facilities and services and by supporting and assisting in accessing resources as required.
- Ensure that the applicant complies with the Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics.
- Ensure the quality of client/patient documentation that the applicant completes.
- Supervisors of re-entry applicants must compete and submit a Competency Assessment.
- 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 applicable registration permit is issued prior to beginning employment and is kept in good standing throughout the practice period
- Ensure the Memorandum of Understanding is completed by the employer, supervisor and applicant and submitted to the College at the beginning of the supervised practicum.
- Ensure client/patient documentation is reviewed by the supervising occupational therapist.
- Recognize the importance of taking responsibility for your occupational therapy practice and seeking assistance or guidance when it is required.
- Use appropriate title, Provisional Occupational Therapist; or Provisional O.T. when documenting and communicating registration 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.



## Memorandum of Understanding

between

\_\_\_\_\_

(applicant)

and

\_\_\_\_\_

(employer)

for arrangements to practice.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes a **supervisory partnership** between

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as of \_\_\_\_\_

(applicant) (supervisor) (date)

for the purpose of (a) allowing an applicant to practice occupational therapy while completing various registration requirements and (b) ensuring there is a regulated occupational therapist in the applicant's place of practice available for guidance, assistance and evaluation of the applicant.

## Terms of Understanding

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding is not a formal undertaking. It implies that the signatories will strive to reach, to the best of their ability, the responsibilities of the partnership as outlined in the appended Supervised Practice Guide.

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signature of Applicant

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date

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signature of Supervisor

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date

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signature of Employer Representative

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date