

Tennessee Board of Occupational Therapy



Newsletter



Fall 2010

A regulatory agency of the State of Tennessee

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The mission of the Department of Health is to promote, protect, and improve the health of persons living in, working in, or visiting the state of Tennessee.

227 French Landing, Suite 300 – Heritage Place, MetroCenter – Nashville, TN 37243
(615) 532-5096 or 1-800-778-4123 ext 25096 Fax (615) 253-8724 <http://tennessee.gov/health>

Background Checks Required for Those Providing Patient Care

Before any person who will be providing direct patient care is hired, health care facilities and individual health professionals are required by law to conduct background checks using the state sex offenders registry, the state abuse registry and the abuse registries for states in which the prospective employee has lived in the previous 7 years, according to Public Chapter 1084, or Tenn. Code Ann. sec. 63-1-149.

Links to the following can be found on the Department of Health website at:
www.tn.gov/health

Tennessee Sex Offender Registry at:

www.tbi.state.tn.us/sex_ofender_reg/sex_ofender_reg.shtml

National Sex Offender Registry at:

www.fbi.gov/scams-safety/registry

Tennessee Abuse Registry at:

www.tn.gov/health/abuseregistry

Other Abuse Registries

Filing a Complaint

While the Department of Health hopes that you will never have to file a complaint against a health care

practitioner, doing so is a simple matter. You may contact the Office of Investigations of the Department of Health at 1-800-852-2187 to request a [complaint form](#).

The form must be completed in its entirety. All materials received in connection with the complaint will become property of the Department of Health and cannot be returned. Please return the complaint to:

**Office of Investigations
227 French Landing, Suite 201
Heritage Place Metro Center
Nashville, TN 37243**

When to File a Complaint/What to Expect

The state of Tennessee is graced with some of the finest health care professionals, educational institutions, postgraduate programs and treatment facilities in the United States. The majority of health practitioners in Tennessee are competent and caring individuals and most persons are satisfied with the level of care they receive.

However, when a problem is experienced with a practitioner, you have the right to report him/her. If you believe that a practitioner's performance or behavior is not acceptable, you may file a complaint through Health Related Boards, Office of Investigations.

- Go to www.tn.gov/health to download a complaint form

Issues Not Within Board Authority

- Fees and/or billing disputes (amounts charged for services, overcharges, etc)

Contact Consumer Affairs at 1-800-342-8385

***As of September 30, 2010, there were 1914 active Occupational Therapists and 1007 active Occupational Therapy Assistants.**

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

March 10, 2011
July 21, 2011
November 30, 2011

ADDRESS – NAME CHANGES

Did you know that it is **MANDATORY, BY LAW**, for you to keep the board informed of an address and/or name change?

When such changes occur you should notify the board no less than 30 days of the new address and/or name change. Such changes should include the old address/name and new address/name. The request should reference the individual's profession, board and license number.

Name changes should be accompanied with a copy of the marriage certificate, divorce decree or any other court document authorizing the name change.

BOARD CONSULTANT GUIDELINES

Following a general protocol, board consultants may be called upon to participate in the following:

- Review and evaluation of complaints filed with the Office of Investigations for alleged violations of the Practice Act and/or rules.
- Review of applications and supporting documents to make initial determination as to the eligibility/ineligibility for licensure.
- Review of continuing education documentation for compliance. All work is strictly confidential and shall not be

disclosed to anyone except the board's authorized administrative staff, the Office of Investigations and the Office of General Counsel.

Qualifications for a Board Consultant:

1. Current license issued by the board.
2. No discipline in this state or any state, jurisdiction or territory.
3. General knowledge or applied practice as detailed in the statutes, rules or the specified board/profession.
4. Resident and a legally practicing professional licensed for at least five years in the specified profession in this state.
5. Not regularly employed by nor a member of a governing body, training program, college or university for the specified profession.

How to Apply:

If you meet the qualifications and are interested in applying, please submit a current resume which reflects your employment history. Please include your license number with expiration date. You must provide a telephone number where you can be reached during business hours. Please send your resume and cover letter to:

Tennessee Department of Health
Division of Health Related Boards
The Board of Occupational Therapy
227 French Landing, Suite 300
Heritage Place, MetroCenter
Nashville, TN 37243

THE DIVISION OF HEALTH RELATED BOARDS

The administrative staff of the Division of Health Related Boards supports the board by issuing licenses to those who meet the requirements of the law and rules. Occupational therapists may be granted licensure by examination or reciprocity from other states. Renewal notices are mailed from the board's administrative office 45 days prior to the expiration of the license to the current address on record. ***Licenses are responsible for renewing their licenses on-time and keeping the Board apprised of current information.***

RENEWING YOUR LICENSE ON-LINE

Did you know you can renew your professional license online? The Department of Health has implemented an online process that allows all professions to renew their licenses online. The process is quick, simple, secure, and convenient – and even allows you to pay for your renewal with a credit card.

Here's how to renew on line, step by step:

Step One – Log In. As a professional, you'll need to select your board, profession and enter your profession license number, your date of birth and social security number or your transaction number from your renewal notice.

Step Two – Update Your Information. Here you'll have the opportunity to update your home address, your work address and even your billing address. Once you've completed entering that information, you're halfway done!

Step Three – Enter your Renewal Information. At this step you'll answer all necessary questions and provide information on licenses from other states. You'll have the ability to update your education information and list your principal place of employment.

Step Four – Payment. Here's where it all comes together. By entering your credit card through the secure site and choosing "submit," you will have completed the online renewal application. **Only choose submit one time!**

What Happens Next?

Your renewal information will be posted to the Department of Health's licensing system, and once you have met all of the criteria for your profession, you will be mailed your renewal certificate.

That's it – you're done! So, come check it out and renew online – or even just update your information. We'll see you at www.tn.gov!

Making the Renewal Process Work

Common Pitfalls to Avoid:

If you choose not to renew online, you can ensure that the renewal process will work...and work the first time, every time, for you. There are common pitfalls that are shared by persons in each profession. Recognizing these common errors may assist you in avoiding them and ensure trouble-free renewals.

Here's how:

- **Sign your renewal** – All applications must bear the licensee's signature.
- **Return the renewal form intact** – Don't separate the one-page renewal form. While

it looks like you could, and perhaps should, separate your renewal application, return the original form in ONE PIECE.

- **Keep your address current** – Mail (including your renewal form) is generated using a computer program, which downloads the address the committee's office has on file for you. If the committee's office has an incorrect address, the incorrect address will be used for your renewal.
- **If answering "YES" to any one of the three questions on the back of your renewal, provide an explanation** – The committee's office cannot process your renewal until we have written documentation [letter from your physician, court/disciplinary board order(s), etc.] and your written explanation of the events which made you answer "Yes" on your renewal.
- **Mail the appropriate fee with your renewal application** – Some renewals are received without the fees, or fees are sent separately from renewals, or fees are sent in the wrong amounts.

If any of these errors are made, the renewal application will not be smoothly processed, if at all. Remember, failure to renew by the end of the thirty (30) day grace period means the licensee can no longer practice legally and will subject the license/registration to administrative revocation for which reinstatement will be required.

Policy Statement

Policy Statement: Continued Competence

Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants in Tennessee are required to demonstrate continued competence by obtaining twenty-four (24) continued competence credits in the two (2) calendar years that proceed the licensure renewal year. (Please refer to the board's rule Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1150-2-.12 for complete information regarding the continued competence requirements.) Should the Tennessee licensed Occupational Therapist or Occupational Therapy Assistant fail to comply with the continued competence requirement for the two (2) calendar year period preceding the licensure renewal year, the following shall occur:

1. The licensee will be assessed a civil penalty in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100.00). Payment is due within thirty (30) days of notification from the Board.

2. The licensee must make up the deficient continued competence credit hours within the following calendar year. These deficient hours are in addition to the twenty-four (24) continued competence credit hours required in the current renewal cycle. Documented proof must be submitted to the board upon completion. Failure to comply with the continued competence requirement may result in disciplinary action. Failure to respond to a board request for documentation or to make up deficient continued competence credit hours after notification by the Board may result in disciplinary action.

Ratified by the Board of Occupational Therapy on March 12, 2009.

Policies

Called to Active Military Duty

PURPOSE: To protect licensees who are active in military service, who have been deployed for action and are not available to renew their licenses or to obtain required continuing education in a timely manner.

POLICY: The division shall allow special consideration for renewal of the licenses of military personnel who were called to active duty, and were unable to obtain required continuing education or to renew their license timely.

PROCEDURES:

Any licensee who held an active license with Health Related Boards at the time he/she was called to active duty in the military of the United States, and was unable to renew that license while on active duty, shall notify the appropriate board office in writing.

1. The licensee shall submit a letter stating that the reason for non-renewal of the license was active duty in the U.S. Military.

2. Dates and proof of service shall be submitted to the office by the licensee.

B. Upon receipt of notification and proof of active service, the licensee shall be allowed to renew the license with no late renewal or penalty fees added to the cost of renewal.

1. A copy of all documentation regarding notification and proof of active service shall be included in the permanent licensure file of the licensee.

C. A licensee whose license has been expired for one (1) year or less shall not be required to

complete required continuing education for renewal of the license at that time.

D. A licensee whose license has been expired for more than one (1) year shall be required to obtain one-half (1/2) of the required continuing education in order to have the license renewed.

Lapsed License

The Board for Occupational Therapy recognizes that an individual may inadvertently allow his/her license to expire. However, statute prohibits an individual from working as an OT or OTA unless he/she has an active and unrestricted license. While the board does not condone an individual working on an expired license, recognition is given to the fact that the problem does exist. As such, the Board has adopted the following procedures for reinstatement of an expired or administratively revoked license.

- Immediately upon recognition that his/her license has expired, the individual must stop practicing and contract the Board's administrative office to request a reinstatement application.
- Upon receipt of the reinstatement application, the individuals are to complete the application in its entirety, providing a detailed work history since the license expiration date. The application is to be signed, notarized, and returned to the board's administrative office, along with any additional information and all fees specified in the instructions.
- Upon receipt of a completed reinstatement application, supporting documentation, including continuing education, and fees, the board administrator may immediately reinstate a license which has been in an expired status for less than three months.

If the reinstatement application received reflects in the work history that the individual has worked in excess of three months on an expired license, the board will present to the licensee official notice which specifies payment of a fine in the amount of \$100 per month for every month worked in excess of three months from the expiration date.

Adopted by the Board of Occupational Therapy on the 2nd day of November, 1998.

For further information, please use the contact information provided below:

Tennessee Board of Occupational Therapy

Local (Nashville Calling Area) 615-532-3202
Nationwide (Toll Free) 800-778-4123
227 French Landing, Suite 300
Heritage Place MetroCenter
Nashville, TN 37243

Proposed Topics for Rulemaking Hearing

The Board discussed at the meeting held July 22, 2010 the following amendments:

- Require an applicant for modality certification to include proof that he/she has successfully completed the clinical training required within two (2) years prior to applying for certification. The rule amendment(s) will strike the term “The American Society of Hand Therapists” and add the term “Hand Therapy Certification Commission” because it is the latter which actually provides certification; 1150-2-.04 & 1150-2-.05
- To expand the supervision rule to address the supervision of occupational therapy doctoral-degree level students, master-degree level students and occupational therapy assistant students; 1150-2-.10
- To allow licensees to receive continuing education credit for Level I fieldwork direct supervision; 1150-2-.12



Tennessee Board of Occupational Therapy
227 French Landing Drive, Suite 300
Nashville, TN. 37243

Board of Occupational Therapy Board Members

Lorry Kleinfeld Franklin, TN Occupational Therapist Board Secretary	Quateka R. Darrington Lebanon, TN Occupational Therapy Assistant Board Member	Sandra Fletchall Millington, TN Occupational Therapist Board Chair	Manoj M. Tendolkar Knoxville, TN Occupational Therapist Board Member	Lisa R. Short Brentwood, TN Citizen Board Member
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Board Administrative Staff

Marva Swann Board Director		Tomica Walker Board Administrator
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