



IT'S HERE

## *It's here - The Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada.*

The goal was to develop a single set of competencies that would clarify occupational therapy as a profession in Canada, ultimately advancing safe, effective, and ethical patient care.

With guidance from occupational therapists and key stakeholders across Canada and through the collaborative work of the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists, the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations, and the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy University Programs, we now have the [Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada](#).

### **Why is this important?**

The Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada reflect the broad range of skills and abilities required of all occupational therapists in Canada at every stage of their career. They also serve to guide a variety of professional quality assurance processes such as provincial regulatory activities, accreditation of educational programs, entry-level examinations, and continuing professional development.

### **What should I do now?**

As an occupational therapist in Canada, you need to stay informed and understand how to apply these competencies in your practice. These competencies will be implemented in 2022. Specific details in the upcoming months will outline this process. Stay tuned.

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Registrant

## Professional Liability Insurance

To be licensed as an occupational therapist in Nova Scotia, all registrants must carry professional liability coverage with \$5,000,000 liability and a legal endorsement for investigations by the regulatory body. Regardless of the provider or purchaser of the insurance policy, the policy must meet our requirements as indicated in section 48 of the Occupational Therapists Registration Regulations. The College no longer accepts insurance coverage from Nova Scotia Health as their insurance policy does not meet our requirements. Occupational therapists must provide alternative insurance coverage.



### Insurance FAQs

**Q.** I work in a non-clinical role and not with clients directly. Do I still need liability insurance?

**A.** Professional liability insurance is a regulatory requirement for all occupational therapists regardless of the practice setting.

**Q.** I am on leave from work but wish to remain licensed as an occupational therapist. Do I still need to carry insurance?

**A.** Yes, occupational therapists that wish to remain licensed while on leave must meet the regulatory requirement to carry valid professional liability insurance.

Registrants have the option to surrender their license while on leave. While surrendered, you are unable to practice occupational therapy, identify yourself as an occupational therapist, or use title. If you wish to resume practice, you will be required to apply for re-registration of your license.

**Q.** I have 20+ years of experience as an occupational therapist. Do I still need to carry insurance?

**A.** Professional liability insurance is a regulatory requirement for all occupational therapists regardless of the practice experience.

**Q.** The insurance company is taking a long time to get back to me so I may have a lapse in insurance. Is that a problem?

**A.** Occupational therapists must always have the appropriate professional liability insurance coverage while licensed. It is the responsibility of each registrant to ensure that they have sufficient time planned for any potential delays as part of the insurance renewal process. A lapse in insurance coverage is a breach of our regulations and the College is required to address this issue.

**Q.** Is it true that I only need to send in my proof of insurance at registration renewal?

**A.** Occupational therapists are required to send in proof of insurance within 30 days of a change in policy. For example, if insurance expires on October 1st, the new insurance policy must be provided to the College no later than October 30th. Proof of insurance is required for the College to verify that registrants are meeting their regulatory requirements.



## Vulnerable Sector Check Update

On September 1, 2021, the College implemented a requirement for a Vulnerable Sector Check as part of their application for registration. Current registrants will be required to provide a Vulnerable Sector Check every 5 years, as requested by the College. To register as an occupational therapist in Nova Scotia, all applicants must provide evidence as to whether you have been found guilty of any offence arising in any jurisdiction, including, any criminal offence, or any offence relating to the practice of occupational therapy. The College uses the results of the Vulnerable Sector Check to verify self-declarations the applicant or registrant has made on their application. The good conduct eligibility fits with the mandate of public protection.

The College recognizes that the results of criminal record screening may not predict future conduct nor guarantee good character. However, the College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia endorses criminal record screening as an important tool for helping to ensure public safety. It should be noted that a conduct history does not automatically result in a denial of registration. However, there must be nothing in your previous conduct that will impact your ability to practice occupational therapy safely and ethically.

For more information, please see the Vulnerable Sector Check page of our website. If you have any questions please contact Kevin Wong, Registrar, [registrar@cotns.ca](mailto:registrar@cotns.ca)

### Vulnerable Sector FAQs

**Q.** When do I need to send in a Vulnerable Sector Check?

**A.** Registrants that have received a request to provide a Vulnerable Sector Check must provide the Check to the College prior to the completion of the 2022 registration renewal. In order for a Check to be valid, it must have been obtained within the last three (3) months when submitted to the College.

**Q.** I have one now, can I send that in?

**A.** Registrants may send in a valid Check now, as long as it was obtained within the last three (3) months.

**Q.** Do you need the original hard copy, or can I scan that to you?

**A.** Registrants are required to upload a copy of their Vulnerable Sector Check to the appropriate area of their online COTNS profile. You do not need to send in the original hard copy (if provided to you); however, it should be retained if requested by the College in the future.

**Q.** Do I need a letter to take with me to the police station?

**A.** Depending on where you are requesting your Vulnerable Sector Check, you may be required to take in an authorization letter. This authorization letter is available on the College website. If your local detachment requires additional clarification or a personalized authorization letter, please contact the Registrar at [registrar@cotns.ca](mailto:registrar@cotns.ca), or, (902) 455-0556.

**Please Note: Registrants chosen to provide a Vulnerable Sector Check with their 2022 renewal have been contacted by letter. The letter has been uploaded to their profile. If you have any concerns whether you have been selected to provide a Vulnerable Sector Check, please check your profile or contact the College.**



## Upcoming Events

### Registration Renewal

Registration will be open to registrants on April 1, 2022.

If you have been thinking about joining the Payroll deduction Program for renewals, we will be sending an email to registrants in February 2022. If you would like more information on the payroll deduction program, contact [admin@cotns.ca](mailto:admin@cotns.ca).

Where can I view and print my receipt?

Registrants can find their receipts within "My Applications" on their online profile.

### Professional Corporation Permits

Occupational therapists that are opening their practice through a corporation are required to apply for a professional corporation permit. Permits can be applied for at any time of the year and are renewed annually by December 31st. Please contact the College for information on registering or renewing your corporation.

### Regional Sessions

The Registrar is interested in meeting with occupational therapists across Nova Scotia to discuss standards, initiatives, and learning more about your practice in the province. These sessions will be hosted in consideration of evolving Public Health measures and guidance. Please contact the Registrar to express your interest in a session for your workplace via e-mail: [registrar@cotns.ca](mailto:registrar@cotns.ca)

### COTNS Office Hours

The College office will be closed Friday December 24, 2021, and will re-open Tuesday, January 4, 2022.

We wish you a happy, health, and wonderful holiday season.



## College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia

#### COTNS Board

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