

Registration Guide for New Graduates from Canadian Programs

May 2023

The College of Occupational Therapists of British Columbia (COTBC) is the regulatory organization established under the *Health Professions Act (HPA)* to regulate the practice of occupational therapy in British Columbia. An individual must be registered with COTBC in order to use the title Occupational Therapist (OT), represent oneself as an occupational therapist, or practice legally in BC.

The College's mandate is to protect the public by:

- Setting standards for practice and ethical conduct (the *Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada* and the Code of Ethics);
- Registering only those occupational therapists who meet established education and practice standards;
- Monitoring and supporting registrants' continued competence (Quality Assurance Program and practice support); and
- Responding fairly to concerns and complaints raised about a registrants' practice (inquiry and discipline processes).

Registration with the College requires the completion of the online application form, submission of all required documents and payment of all fees. All forms required for registration are available on our website at www.cotbc.org. Just click on **Registration Forms** on the home page. Check out the [Notes for New Graduates](#) web page too.

For a smooth registration process, follow these steps:

1. Online Application

[Online Application Form](#) (Read all steps/requirements below first before clicking link)

Apply for registration in the *Provisional Registration* category. Be sure to upload the available documents in the appropriate sections. If your documents are not available email them to registration@cotbc.org once you receive them. The application fee and criminal record fee are required at time of application. The annual registration fee will be invoiced once all other requirements have been received and your registration reviewed/approved by the registration committee.

2. Notarized ID

Provide and upload TWO (2) pieces of **notarized ID**. You cannot submit your application without uploading your notarized ID. Identification documents must be:

- valid and not expired
- notarized and verified in their original form by a notary public or lawyer; other professionals will not be accepted
- one of the pieces of identification must be government issued and include the applicant's name, date of birth, signature and photo
- please click [here](#), for information on acceptable pieces of primary and secondary identification.

3. Submit your official transcript – If your final official transcript stating “degree conferred” is not ready:

Request through the university's transcript office to have an official final transcript (the one that states the degree conferred) sent **directly** to the College. Verify this by providing a photocopy of your request made to the university with your application.

Request that an original letter signed by the Occupational Therapy Education Program Division Head or designate be sent to the College, confirming you have met all requirements (including fieldwork) for graduating with a degree in occupational therapy.

Provide in either a cover letter or in a notation on the application form that you understand that an Official Final Transcript stating degree conferred is required by the College and will undertake to ensure this is on file. The College will notify you should another transcript request be required. (This is required only if the university provides an incomplete transcript.)

Please note that submission of all documents above is considered **only** an interim verification of completion of education requirements and does not replace your obligation to provide an official transcript to the COTBC. You will be notified if we do not receive a final official transcript stating “degree conferred” and informed of any required action.

4. Successfully complete the National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE)

Provide verification that you are registered to write the exam, e.g. an email from CAOT confirming exam registration is acceptable.

Indicate clearly on the College application form the date that you are registered to write the exam.

Once you have successfully completed the NOTCE exam, **you must submit verification of successful completion to COTBC**. Upon providing this documentation to the College, your registration status will be changed to full registration with no conditions.

Note: if you are unsuccessful on the NOTCE you must provide a copy of your exam results to COTBC and meet additional requirements stipulated by the Registration Committee.

5. Criminal Record Check

Criminal Record Check: All applicants are required to complete a new criminal record check at time of application and every 5 years thereafter. Follow the instructions on the application form to give COTBC consent to initiate the criminal records on your behalf. You will be providing consent for the initial criminal records and the 5 year re-check while you are registered with COTBC. You will be invoiced the \$28.00 fee.

6. Eligibility to Work in Canada

You are required to provide proof that you are authorized to work in Canada as a health care professional. If you are a Canadian citizen a copy of your birth certificate, current passport, or Canadian Citizenship card is required. If you are not a Canadian citizen, evidence of landed immigrant status, permanent residency, or employment authorization under the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, 2001 is required. Forwarding a photocopy of the document is sufficient.

7. Obtain professional liability insurance

Registrants must obtain and at all times maintain professional liability insurance with a limit of liability of not less than five million dollars (\$5,000,000) per occurrence insuring against liability arising from an error. In BC, some employers provide occupational therapists with liability insurance that meets the COTBC requirements. Professional liability insurance may also be purchased through CAOT or AON Healthcare Advantage.

8. Employer Acknowledgment Form

[Employer Acknowledgement Form](#). As a provisional registrant you may legally work as an OT in BC, but only under the general supervision of an OT registered with full registration in COTBC. Provisional registrant applicants must ensure that the OT providing general supervision and/or employer complete the "[Employer Acknowledgement Form](#)" and return the signed original to the College.

For more information on general supervision, please review the documents entitled "[Guidelines for General Supervision of Provisional Registrants](#)" and the "[Employer Acknowledgement Form and Information](#)." General supervision must be in place until you have met all requirements for full registration and the College receives verification of your successful completion of the National Occupational Therapy Certification Exam (NOTCE). Once the College receives this verification from you, your registration status is changed to full registration and the requirement for supervision is removed.

9. Pay the Fees

Fees

- Application Fee: \$325.00 (this is required at the time you submit your application)
- Criminal Record Fee: \$28.00 (this is required at the time you submit your application)
- Annual Registration Fee: \$525.00 or pro-rated amount (this is required once all requirements have been met and your application for registration has been reviewed/approved by the registration committee)

The College's registration year is from July 1st to June 30th. There is an application fee of \$325.00 which is required with your application. The annual registration fee is \$525.00 and is pro-rated to \$350.00 for initial registration between November 1st and June 30th and \$175.00 for initial registration between March 1st and June 30th.

Final notes...

The Registration Committee is responsible for granting registration and has a process in place to expedite applications from students graduating from Canadian programs. This means, that when the College receives a completed application, including the letter from your university program confirming your recommendation to graduate, it can act quickly.

You are not required to wait for the confirmation letter from your university in order to begin the application process. You may submit all required documentation and fees to the College and indicate you have requested the confirmation letter from your University program. Once the confirmation letter from the university is received, your registration will be forwarded to the Registration Committee for review.

One of the most frequently asked questions from new graduates is, “When will I be able to work?”

You cannot practice (**including attending an orientation**) until your registration has been finalized and approved by the Registration Committee. Once your Provisional registration is approved, you will receive your COTBC registration number and be able to begin work as an occupational therapist. Remember: You must practice under the general supervision of an occupational therapist registered with the College in the Full Practicing category. This condition will be removed once the College receives verification of successful completion of the NOTCE.

If you have any further questions about this information, please visit our website at www.cotbc.org or contact the College at (250) 386-6822 or registration@cotbc.org