

COLLEGE COMMUNIQUÉ

REVISED: February 9, 2018



Sexual Misconduct: What You Should Know

The College of Occupational Therapists of BC (COTBC) is responsible for ensuring that every client's right to safe, competent, and ethical care is respected. Occupational therapists are responsible for anticipating, establishing, maintaining, and communicating appropriate profession boundaries with clients, regardless of the client's actions, consent, or participation.

What is Sexual Misconduct?

Sexual misconduct is professional misconduct. The College considers sexual misconduct by an occupational therapist to include any of the following:

1. Sexual intercourse or other forms of physical sexual relations between the occupational therapist and the client,
2. Touching of a sexual nature of the client by the occupational therapist, or
3. Behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature by the occupational therapist towards the client.

This does not include touching, behaviour and remarks by an occupational therapist to a client that are of a clinical nature appropriate to the service being provided.

You have the right to:

- Understand the services that you will be receiving from the occupational therapist both prior to and during the services.
- Have a family member or friend present with you when you are being assessed and for treatment.
- Stop the occupational therapist at any time to ask questions if you do not understand what is happening during treatment or why it is happening.
- Withdraw your consent to continued services from the occupational therapist at any time.

When Should You Contact the College?

You should contact the College if you have questions or believe that your contact with an occupational therapist may indicate sexual misconduct by them. If you are uncomfortable reporting concerns regarding potential sexual misconduct, you can ask someone to report on your behalf.

If you report concerns regarding potential sexual misconduct to another regulated health professional, they will talk with you regarding their obligations to report it to the College, including their requirement to obtain your consent to do so. They may also help you to make the report yourself.

All concerns are taken seriously and complaints investigated. The College staff recognizes the sensitive nature of such allegations and will provide an accessible process that is fair to all parties. When warranted, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against an occupational therapist.

Note to Employers

If a complaint is made to you regarding the professional conduct of an occupational therapist under your employ, report this immediately to the College.

Additional Information

To prevent allegations of sexual misconduct, the College has developed the following standards that occupational therapists must follow:

- [COTBC Practice Standards for Preventing Sexual Misconduct](#)
- [COTBC Practice Standards for Professional Boundaries](#)

More information about the complaints process and occupational therapy services is available on the [College website](#).

Don't Hesitate to Contact Us

If you have any questions, concerns, or a complaint, we can be reached at:

[College of Occupational Therapists of British Columbia](#)

#402-3795 Carey Road

Victoria, BC

V8Z 6T8

Tel: (250) 386-6822

Toll free in BC: (866) 386-6822

Email: info@cotbc.org

The College of Occupational Therapists of BC (COTBC) is the governing body responsible for regulating the practice of occupational therapy in BC under the Health Professions Act and the Occupational Therapists Regulation. All occupational therapists who practise in BC must be registered with the College.

This communiqué was revised to reflect the changes to the College Bylaws that came into force on October 2, 2017. College Communiqués are published by the College of Occupational Therapists of British Columbia (COTBC) to inform both direct and indirect recipients of occupational therapy services, of the release of documents, changes in regulation and college procedures that influence the provision of occupational therapy care in British Columbia. Communiqués are available on the [College website](#). Questions should be addressed to the College registrar at: (866) 386-6822 or info@cotbc.org