



**College of
Occupational Therapists
of British Columbia**

**COTBC Practice Standards for
Professional Boundaries, 2017**

**Practice Standard #4:
Managing Professional
Boundary Issues**

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Practice Standards for Professional Boundaries



Practice Standard #4: Managing Professional Boundary Issues

Principle Statement:

The occupational therapist will manage and address any identified professional boundary crossings and violations.

Practice Expectations

The occupational therapist must do the following:

1. Accept responsibility for boundary crossings and violations as they occur.
2. Seek proper assistance as required.
3. Discuss any identified professional boundary issues or concerns with the client (e.g., those encountered when entering into an unavoidable dual relationship).
4. Clarify roles and set or reestablish professional boundaries, if possible.

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Practice Standards for Professional Boundaries



Practice Standard #4: Managing Professional Boundary Issues, continued

Principle Statement:

The occupational therapist will manage and address any identified professional boundary crossings and violations.

Practice Expectations, continued

5. Obtain and revisit informed consent, acknowledging that there are circumstances when it is never acceptable to cross a professional boundary despite the client's consent.
6. Document the circumstances, an account of why a dual relationship is unavoidable (if applicable), risk assessment, precautions taken, plan, client reactions, and informed consent process.
7. Where there is a potential or actual professional boundary issue that cannot be adequately resolved, arrange for care by another occupational therapist or appropriate health care professional, and end the client relationship, ensuring that the client is not adversely affected during this process.

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Practice Standards for Professional Boundaries



Practice Standard #4: Managing Professional Boundary Issues, continued

Principle Statement:

The occupational therapist will manage and address any identified professional boundary crossings and violations.

Practice Expectations, continued

8. Follow duty to report procedures where there are reasonable grounds to believe that an occupational therapist or other health professional has abused a client sexually, physically, verbally, psychologically, financially, or otherwise, or where an occupational therapist contravenes the standards of practice or COTBC Code of Ethics. Refer to the COTBC Bylaws and *Practice Standards for Preventing Sexual Misconduct*.