



**COTBC**

College of Occupational Therapists  
of British Columbia

## **Health Professions and Occupations Act FAQS**

**Q: Bill 36, the *Health Professions and Occupations Act*, has received Royal Assent and is now law in British Columbia. What does this mean for the people of British Columbia?**

A: The BC Government has not yet released an implementation schedule or an in-force date for the [Health Professions and Occupations Act](#).

BC health regulatory colleges, including COTBC, will continue to operate under the *Health Professions Act* until there is an in-force date for the new legislation. When the new legislation is in force, it will replace the *Health Professions Act* as the governing legislation for health regulatory colleges in BC.

COTBC will communicate with registrants, applicants, and other stakeholders as more information is confirmed about the implementation of the *Health Professions and Occupations Act*.

**Q: What does “in force” mean?**

A: “In force” refers to the time when the legislation is implemented and put into action. We are in a transition stage right now. Like other regulatory bodies in the province's healthcare sector, we are planning and preparing to operate under this new legislation.

While the Act is now the law of the Province of BC, the date when the Act will come into force and replace the current *Health Professions Act* is still to be determined by Cabinet.

**Q: When do you expect the Act to come into force?**

A: At this time, we don't have an exact date. However, the Ministry of Health has indicated that their preparatory work will take some time, and they will update us on expected timing for implementation as soon as it has been determined.

**Q: How will things change when the *Health Professions and Occupations Act* is in force?**

A: At this stage, it is difficult to outline the specifics of how things will change. There will be an amalgamation of the colleges for dietitians, occupational therapists, opticians, optometrists, physical therapists, psychologists, and speech and hearing professionals into one regulator.

The new Act contains important changes to the way regulatory colleges fulfill their mandate to serve and protect British Columbians. To read highlights of what is included in the new legislation, please see the Ministry of Health's news release: [Patients the focus of new health legislation](#).

The College of Occupational Therapists of British Columbia will continue to work within the framework of the legislation, and as we transition into the amalgamation, we will serve the people of British Columbia as we support and provide oversight for our registrants.



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**Q: What does this mean for me, as a registrant of the College of Occupational Therapists of British Columbia?**

A: While it is expected that there will be administrative and by-law changes that impact our registrants, at this time, there are no specific changes in how the College works or how we provide oversight and support for our registrants.

When the Ministry provides us with information that is relevant to our registrants, we will share that with you.

**Q: If I am a member of the public and have a complaint about an occupational therapist – what do I do now, given that new legislation is in place?**

A: At this time, the complaint process stays the same. You can learn more about it here: <https://cotbc.org/public/complaints-process/>.

**Q: Why was such a big change announced and then we were told to hold steady and wait for more information?**

A: We know that change is difficult – even more so when you don't have all of the information regarding that change. This time of transition is challenging for everyone involved.

The reality is that this is a far-reaching revision to the Act and to a range of regulatory bodies. This scope of change takes time to plan and implement. Changes to the Act were needed in order to take the next steps in planning for the implementation.

We ask for your patience as we go through the transition. We will provide updates as they become available and will continue to update this Q&A.