



# Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand

Kaihaumanu Tūroro o Aotearoa

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION  
FOR REGISTERED OCCUPATIONAL  
THERAPISTS RETURNING TO PRACTICE IN NZ  
AFTER THREE YEARS**

# **REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS RETURNING TO PRACTICE IN NEW ZEALAND AFTER THREE YEARS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In order to work legally as an occupational therapist in New Zealand it is necessary to:

- be registered by the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand (OTBNZ), which is the regulatory body governing the practice of occupational therapy; *and*
- hold a current practising certificate.

**This document contains information for practitioners who are already registered with the OTBNZ and who wish to apply for a practising certificate.**

The practising certificate application process does not usually exceed four weeks in total - from the time the OTBNZ receives a complete application. However, it may take longer than four weeks if you are required to provide a competence assessment application. This should be taken into account when making travel and employment plans.

## **CONTINUING COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK FOR RECERTIFICATION**

The OTBNZ requires all practising certificate holders to participate in the OTBNZ's Continuing Competence Framework for Recertification (CCFR). This framework, which records self-assessments and continuing competence goals and activities, is completed on-line via the practitioners' only area of the OTBNZ's website at [www.otboard.org.nz](http://www.otboard.org.nz).

Please note that individuals are not required to participate in the CCFR until their practising certificate has been issued and they have started practising in New Zealand.

## **PRACTISING CERTIFICATE APPLICATION**

In order to work legally in New Zealand, registered practitioners are required to hold a current practising certificate. The OTBNZ ensures that all practitioners with a current practising certificate are competent to practise.

## **Recognition is given to the differing levels of knowledge and experience of occupational therapists returning to the workforce in New Zealand**

The OTBNZ recognises that occupational therapists returning to practice in New Zealand have differing levels of knowledge and experience, and therefore differentiates when requiring practitioners to demonstrate competence to practise, or imposing conditions.

## **Returning therapists will fall into one of the following two categories:**

1. Practitioners who have not practised in New Zealand during the last three years, but who have practised overseas for at least two of the last three years.<sup>1</sup> OR

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<sup>1</sup> The two years does not need to be continuous.

2. Practitioners who have not practised in New Zealand during the last three years, and have not practised overseas for at least two of the last three years.

The practising certificate application requirements for each of these categories are shown below.

**1. Practitioners who have not practised in New Zealand during the last three years, but who have practised overseas for at least two of the last three years**

These occupational therapists are required to:

- Provide an attestation to their competence from an occupational therapist who has no conditions on their scope of practice, either in New Zealand or overseas,<sup>2</sup> with whom they have worked with for **at least six months continuously during the last three years; and**
- Provide a standard supervisor's report three months after returning to practice in New Zealand. The report must assess their competence across the seven competencies for registration. In addition, the supervisor must comment on the practitioner's knowledge and understanding of current legislation, practice area changes and related regulatory changes in the healthcare environment.

These practitioners will not have a condition on their scope of practice.

**N.B.** Practitioners who are unable to provide an attestation to their competence from an occupational therapist with whom they have worked for at least six months continuously, will need to meet the requirements for Category 2 below, and will be subject to the 'Return to Practice in New Zealand' condition.

**To apply for a practising certificate when providing an attestation of competence from an occupational therapist colleague.** (Refer to the Notes section below for additional guidance).

You will need to provide the following:

- a. Practising certificate application and fee
- b. Attestation to your competence from an occupational therapist with whom you have worked for six months continuously
- c. Certified copies of:
  - The attesting occupational therapist's licence to practise (if he/she is registered in another country)
  - A certificate or letter of good standing or verification from every registering authority with which you have been registered – no older than six months when received by the OTBNZ
  - Record of criminal convictions or a police certificate from every country in which you have lived for 12 months or more during the 10 years preceding your application, **only if you have not previously provided a police report** – no older than six months on receipt by the OTBNZ
- d. Additional information (if applicable) on:
  - health issues

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<sup>2</sup> The attesting occupational therapist must be registered/licensed if practising in a country or state with a registration/licensing authority and must provide a certified copy of his/her licence to practise.

- disciplinary issues
- convictions

**2. Practitioners who have not practised in New Zealand during the last three years, and have not practised overseas for at least two of the last three years**

These practitioners must demonstrate their competence to practise. They are required to complete the online Mauriora *Foundation Course on Cultural Competency* (available at [www.mauriora.co.nz](http://www.mauriora.co.nz)), and submit a competence assessment application.

Applicants who satisfactorily meet the OTBNZ's competence requirements will be eligible for a practising certificate in the General Scope of Practice: Occupational Therapist, and will be subject to a standard condition on their scope of practice. (See below).

**Condition on the scope of practice of some occupational therapists returning to practice in New Zealand**

The scope of practice of some occupational therapists returning to practice in New Zealand is subject to the condition 'Return to Practice in New Zealand', and this will be noted on the practising certificate and the public Register. This condition requires that practitioners receive fortnightly supervision for the first six months of practice. Sometimes the condition is personalised, depending on individual circumstances.

**To apply for a practising certificate when submitting a competence assessment application.** (Refer to the Notes below for additional guidance).

You will need to provide the following:

- Practising certificate application and fee
- Certificate of completion of *Foundation Course in Cultural Competency*
- Competence assessment application and fee
- Curriculum vitae
- Three references
- Certified copies of:
  - A certificate or letter of good standing or verification from every registering authority with which you have been registered – no older than six months when received by the OTBNZ
  - Record of criminal convictions or a police certificate from every country in which you have lived for 12 months or more during the 10 years preceding your application, **only if you have not previously provided a police report** – no older than six months on receipt by the OTBNZ
- Additional information (if applicable) on:
  - health issues
  - disciplinary issues
  - convictions

**NOTES**

**1. Fees and payments**

A list of fees and the [Payment Form](#) are available on the OTBNZ website. The OTBNZ accepts payment in New Zealand dollars only. At present it is not possible for applicants to pay online - the following payment options are available:

- Personal cheque
- Bank cheque
- Visa or Mastercard credit cards or debit cards

If paying by credit card, applicants should provide payment details on the OTBNZ payment form on the OTBNZ website or in a covering letter stating:

- type of card
- name on card
- number
- expiry date
- amount you are authorising the OTBNZ to deduct

## **2. Practising certificate application form**

The [Practising Certificate application form](#) is available on OTBNZ website. Do not complete the section on the form which relates to a third party sign-off.

## **3. Attestation to your competence**

The [Attestation of competence](#) form is available on OTBNZ website.

## **4. Mauriora Foundation Course on Cultural Competency**

This is available at [www.mauriora.co.nz](http://www.mauriora.co.nz). The OTBNZ requires individuals who successfully complete this course to submit a copy of their certificate of completion.

## **5 Competence assessment application**

Before undertaking the [Competence Assessment Application](#) applicants should complete the Mauriora *Foundation Course on Cultural Competency* and read and familiarise themselves with:

- The [Competencies for Registration](#) - this document outlines the performance criteria relevant to each of the competency areas
- [Code of Ethics](#) available on the OTBNZ website.

## **6. Employer/Supervisor/Referee Declaration**

The Employer/Supervisor/Referee section of the competence assessment application should be completed by individuals who are familiar with an applicant's occupational therapy practice.

## **7. Curriculum Vitae (Resume)**

The curriculum vitae and/or work history should cover the last five years, with evidence of experience and competence in the seven registration competencies.

## **8. OTBNZ Reference form**

The OTBNZ [Reference form](#) is available on the OTBNZ website. The reference allows your referees to attest to your fitness for registration in terms of such issues as communication, health and criminal history. The information on the reference form is not intended to support the contents of your competence self-assessment.

The reference form should be completed by a previous or current occupational therapy supervisor or manager, who is also an occupational therapist, and/or another professional in good standing whom you have known for at least 12 months.

The OTBNZ requires three references which should be sent directly to the OTBNZ by referees.

### **9. Certified documents**

A certifying official may be a Justice of the Peace, Commissioner for Oaths, Solicitor or Notary Public, and must comply with all the following:

- Sign the copy
- Print his/her name under the signature
- State his/her position or designation
- Endorse the copy with his/her official seal (where applicable)
- Provide his/her postal address to enable the OTBNZ to seek verification and
- Ensure that the certified copy being provided to this OTBNZ includes the statement "Certified true copy of original document sighted".

### **10. Translations**

Documents not written in English must be accompanied by an official translation, which must be on official translation service letterhead, and bear the appropriate signature or stamp, together with full address details.

### **11. Certificate/letter of good standing**

A certificate or letter of good standing is not the same as a certificate of registration. A certificate or letter of good standing confirms your registration and also advises whether or not there have been any complaints, investigations or disciplinary action taken during the time you were registered.

### **12. Record of criminal convictions/police certificate**

For NZ police reports go to: [the Ministry of Justice website www.justice.govt.nz](http://www.justice.govt.nz). Please visit [the New Zealand Immigration Service website](http://www.immigration.govt.nz) for information on how to obtain a police certificate in other countries.

Police reports must be no older than six months on receipt by OTBNZ. However, the OTBNZ may accept a police report that is older than six months on receipt, if the applicant can satisfactorily demonstrate that they have not lived in the relevant country or countries since the issue of the police report/s.

## **APPLICATION TIMEFRAMES**

Please send your complete application in one package. A complete application consists of:

- the appropriate fees
- all supporting documentation, excluding references, in the format required by the OTBNZ.

Please allow four weeks **from the time the OTBNZ receives your complete application.**