



Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand

Kaihaumanu Tūroro o Aotearoa

**INFORMATION FOR REGISTERED PRACTITIONERS
WHO HAVE NOT COMMENCED PRACTISING 12
MONTHS AFTER REGISTRATION**

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INFORMATION FOR REGISTERED PRACTITIONERS WHO HAVE NOT COMMENCED PRACTISING 12 MONTHS AFTER REGISTRATION

INTRODUCTION

In order to practise legally as an occupational therapist in New Zealand (NZ) it is necessary to:

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

The registration and 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 for an application to go through the necessary processes leading to an OTBNZ decision. This should be taken into account when making travel and employment plans.

Requirements for an annual practising certificate

Section 27(1) of the HPCA Act sets out the criteria to be satisfied in order to be issued with a practising certificate.

In order for a practitioner who has not commenced practising occupational therapy for 12 months or more since registration, to be issued with a practising certificate they must provide satisfactory information that demonstrates that they:

1. have maintained the required standard of competence; and
2. that a mental or physical condition does not prevent them from performing the functions required for the practice of occupational therapy

Practising Certificates

While registration is a one-off process, a practising certificate must be applied for every year that you wish to practise. An annual practising certificate is valid from 1 April to 31 March each year.

Practising certificates are issued electronically on approval. Your electronic practising certificate (ePC) will be available from your login page on the

registration database. On approval you will receive an email directing you to your login page.

ePortfolio

The ePortfolio is the OTBNZ's recertification programme in terms of section 41 of the HPCAA. When you commence practising, you will be required to participate in the OTBNZ's recertification programme: the ePortfolio. It is an online platform that permits you to demonstrate continuing competence, goals and development activities online via the practitioners-only area of the website. Participation in the ePortfolio is a compulsory requirement while you are practising. Practitioners must actively participate and meet the requirements of the OTBNZ's ePortfolio. For further information refer the ePortfolio Handbook.

To apply for a practising certificate you will need to provide the following:

Checklist (refer to the Notes section below for additional guidance)

1. Practising Certificate application and fee - Visit the OTBNZ's website: www.otboard.org.nz to submit an application electronically and refer to [Fees](#)
2. Your letter of explanation
3. Professional development plan. **OR**
4. Attestation of Competence (If you have practiced overseas for at least two of the last three years.)
5. Certified information on postgraduate course of study (if applicable).
6. Curriculum vitae
7. Three fitness references
8. Original or correctly certified copies of:
 - a) marriage certificate or other legal proof of name change (if applicable)
 - b) Letter(s) of good standing →*from every authority with which you have been registered.*
9. Criminal convictions report/Police report(s) →*from every country in which you have lived after registration.*
10. Additional Information (*if applicable*) on:
 - Health issues
 - Disciplinary issues

- Convictions

If you are applying to have your condition removed you will need to provide the following:

Checklist (refer to the Notes section below for additional guidance)

1. Removal of condition application and fee - refer to [Fees](#)
2. Curriculum vitae
3. A satisfactory supervisor's report in all core competency areas → *if you have practised in NZ*
4. A copy of the supervision log → *if you have practised in NZ*
5. A self-assessment → *in the form of a letter reflecting on your overseas practice in relation to the overseas competence standards and linking these to the OTBNZ's Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice 2015;*
6. A letter from an occupational therapist → *must have known you for six months or and have a current practising certificate and no conditions on scope. They must confirm they have read and agree with the information you have provided in your self-assessment;* and
7. An attestation to your competence → *from an overseas occupational therapist¹ with whom you have worked for at least six months continuously;* and
8. The attesting occupational therapist's licence to practise (*if they are registered in another country*)

Three month supervisor's report

If the condition on scope has been removed before completing 12 months of practice in NZ, you are required to provide a standard OTBNZ supervisor's report three months after practising in NZ following the removal of your condition.

The report must assess your competence across all competencies for registration. In addition, the supervisor/s must comment on your knowledge and understanding of current legislation, cultural awareness, practice area changes and related regulatory changes in the healthcare environment

¹ The attesting therapist must be registered/licensed if residing in a country or state with a registration/licensing authority.

NOTES

1. Applications

An annual practising certificate costs NZ \$558.00 and a short term (three month) practising certificate costs NZ \$165.00

Re-Registration fee if removed from register (\$322)

[Practising certificate application](#)

[Removal of condition application](#) (if applicable)

2. Fees

[Refer to the OTBNZ's payment form](#)

The OTBNZ accepts payment in NZ dollars only. If you have access to your online site on myOTBNZ you can pay online.

If you are unable to pay online the following payment options are available:

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

3. Payment

If you are not paying online but paying by credit card, you should provide payment details on the OTBNZ [Payment Form](#) or in a covering letter including:

- Type of card
- Name on card
- Number
- Expiry date
- Amount you are authorising the OTBNZ to deduct

4 Certified documents

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

- 1) Sign the copy
- 2) Print his/her name under the signature

- 3) State his/her position or designation
- 4) Endorse the copy with his/her official stamp &/or seal (where applicable)
- 5) Provide his/her contact details to enable the OTBNZ to seek verification

Certified documents must also be sent in hard copy, not electronically or faxed, and the certification should be done on the same page as the document.

5 Letter of explanation

Your letter should clearly explain why you did not commence practising in New Zealand directly after registration and explain why you consider yourself competent to begin practice in NZ. It would be helpful if you could let us know how you have maintained current knowledge of occupational therapy and if applicable, provide details of specific information such as any courses undertaken, books read etc.

6. Professional development plan

This plan must demonstrate how you intend to maintain and develop your occupational therapy knowledge and skills.

Tips for formulating this plan

- a. What are my practice goals?
- b. Where am I now and where do I wish to be in three to six months' time
- c. What have I got to do to achieve my goal/s?
- d. How do I plan to grow and develop as a practitioner?
- e. How do I intend to use supervision for my professional development?

7. Curriculum Vitae (Resume)

Your curriculum vitae should provide information on your work history and experience as this is considered as part of your assessment of competence.

Your work history should be recorded in chronological order beginning with the most current employment/practice/volunteer work. Please record the

month and year you commenced and ended each employment/voluntary work period. If there are periods during which you have not done any occupational therapy work, please document these and explain what you were doing during this period/s. Please also explain any gaps in your work history.

8. Self-assessment → *If you are applying for removal of condition*

The self-assessment should demonstrate your competence. It should be in the form of a letter where you reflect on your overseas practice in relation to the overseas competence standards and link these competence standards to the OTBNZ's *Competencies for Registration and Continuing Practice 2015*.

9. Letter from an occupational therapist → *If you are applying for removal of condition*

This letter should be from an occupational therapist who has known you and your practice for six months or more. They must have a current practising certificate and no conditions on scope. They must confirm they have read and agree with the information you have provided in your self-assessment;

10 [Supervision report and supervision log](#)

11 Attestation of competence

The [Attestation of competence](#) must be provided by an occupational therapist colleague with whom you have worked for at least six months continuously in the last three years.

The attesting occupational therapist must provide a certified copy of their licence to practise (if they are registered in another country).

12 Fitness reference form

The OTBNZ [Reference form](#) allows your referees to attest to your fitness for registration.

Who can complete reference forms?

- a) At least two previous or current occupational therapy supervisors or managers, who are also occupational therapists who have known you for 12 months; *or*
- b) another health professional in good standing whom you have known for at least 12 months.

How do I submit them?

- a. Each reference form must have the declaration section completed and signed by yourself, before you pass it on to your referees to complete.
- b. Following completion, your referees must sign and submit the reference themselves to the OTBNZ in hard copy, or by email, if they are emailing from a work email address. The OTBNZ will not accept references submitted by yourself.

13 Criminal convictions/police certificate

You must give consent to the OTBNZ as a third party, to obtain a criminal convictions report on their behalf from the New Zealand Ministry of Justice. To do this, download the Ministry of Justice [Request for Criminal Conviction History – Third Party](#) from the OTBNZ website, complete it and send it to the OTBNZ.

If you have lived overseas after your registration with the OTBNZ, you will need to submit a police report from every country you have lived.

A police report must:

- Be dated no older than six months - However, the OTBNZ may accept a police report that is older than six months, if you can satisfactorily demonstrate that you have not lived in the relevant country or countries since the issue of the police report/s. *This can be done by way of a [statutory declaration](#)*
- Search you in every name you have ever been known by (including nicknames and aliases) – *unless the search has been done by fingerprint and the report contains a statement to this effect;*
- Be an original document or a correctly certified copy.

- If the initial criminal convictions report/police report becomes dated before a decision is made on your application, we may ask you for a further report.

14 Certificate/letter of good standing

This is required if you have ever been registered with any other regulatory authority, either in NZ or overseas. Certificates of good standing must be no older than three months

This document is not the same as a certificate of registration. As well as confirming your registration with the authority, it also provides information on whether there have been any complaints, investigations or disciplinary action taken during the time you were registered.

If you have practised in a country that does not regulate occupational therapists, you will be asked to provide documentation acceptable to the OTBNZ to demonstrate your good standing. This could also be by way of a [statutory declaration](#).

If the initial certificate or letter of good standing becomes dated before a decision is made on your application, we may ask you for a further certificate/letter.

15 Additional information *(if applicable)* on:

- a. Health issues;
- b. Disciplinary issues;
- c. Convictions.

16 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. Refer the OTBNZ's [Requirements for Translating Documents](#).

17 APPLICATION TIMEFRAMES

Please send your complete application in one package. A complete application consists of the appropriate fees, and all supporting documentation, excluding the fitness references, in the format required by the OTBNZ.

The OTBNZ will start processing your application only when it receives a complete application.

The assessment and practising certificate application process does not usually exceed four weeks from the time the OTBNZ receives your complete application.

If you have also applied to have a condition removed please allow four weeks from the time the OTBNZ receives your complete application.

18 Complete application

For avoidance of doubt, a complete application consists of:

- a) The application fee(s); and
- b) All supporting documents.