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# FACT Sheet - Internationally Educated

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# Occupational Therapists



# Access to the occupational therapy profession in Ontario

This document was updated in Dec 2006 in collaboration with the Access to Professions and Trades Unit, Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. Requirements may have changed by the time you apply. Please contact the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario before you complete your application.

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Occupational therapists in Ontario are regulated by the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario (the College). You cannot call yourself an 'occupational therapist' or hold yourself out to be an occupational therapist unless you are registered with the College.

Occupational therapists are health care professionals who assist individuals to develop or maintain life roles and activities at home, in the community and at the workplace when they are experiencing difficulties in functioning on their own because of accident, disability, emotional problems, developmental difficulties or disease. Occupational therapists use a variety of assessment and treatment techniques. Their work may include training clients in daily living activity and community life skills; prescribing specialised equipment; evaluating and modifying home, work or school environments; and education and counselling.

Occupational therapists work in a variety of settings including hospitals, schools, long-term care facilities, community agencies, private homes, and vocational evaluation/training centres. Many occupational therapists also have their own private practice.

## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS IN ONTARIO

To practise occupational therapy in Ontario, you must be a registered member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario (the College). All applicants applying for registration must meet the following requirements:

- be legally entitled to work in Canada
- be a graduate from an occupational therapy program from a school, college or university approved by the College
- meet the current practice hours required by the College
- pass the examination approved by the College (see Step 3 below)

- be fluent in English or French
- have professional liability insurance which includes a sexual abuse therapy and counselling fund endorsement

## REGISTRATION APPLICATION PROCESS

### STEP 1 – Proof of English or French Fluency

If your first language is English or French, or you completed your occupational therapy education in English or French, you do not need to provide proof of fluency. Otherwise you must get an acceptable score on a standardised English or French fluency test (both written and spoken) that is recognised in Canada and approved by the College. You must have your results sent directly to the College. Please refer to the table below for a list of the Language Tests and minimum scores the College accepts. Please note that this information may change over time. Visit the College web site, [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org) for the most up-to-date information.

Test	Details	Minimum Score	
1a) Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)	i) Internet based test (iBT)	Speaking	26/30
		Writing	22/30
		Reading	22/30
		Listening	22/30
		Overall score	92/120
1b) TOEFL	i) Computer Based Test (CBT)	230	
	ii) Paper based test (PBT)	580	
1b) Test of Spoken English (TSE)	Oral test (in conjunction with TOEFL CBT and PBT)	50	
2) Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB)	Written component of test	85	
	Oral component of test	4 -	
3) International English Language Testing System (IELTS)	Written component of test (overall band)	7.5	
	Oral test	7.5	
4. TestCan	Test of French language fluency	5 on each section	

## STEP 2 - Send Application Documents to the College

Contact the College for the *Registrant Application Form* or print it from the web site: [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org). Complete this form and pay the required fees. Fees are listed at the end of this document. You will also need to send the following information with your application:

- photocopy of your Record of Landing, Permanent Resident card or work authorization
  - official transcripts from your educational institution. You must arrange for this institution to send the transcripts directly to the College. Your school should also verify that you completed 1000 hours of clinical fieldwork.
  - If you completed your education and fieldwork more than 18 months before applying for registration, you must show that you have completed:
    - 750 hours of professional practice within the last 3 years
- or
- 1550 hours of professional practice within the last 5 years
- or
- a refresher or upgrading program in Occupational Therapy, approved by the College, within the last 18 months.
- documentation stating you have purchased professional liability insurance that includes a sexual abuse therapy and counselling endorsement. You can get this insurance in Ontario through the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) or from the Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists (OSOT).
- an academic assessment report from a credential agency approved by the college (This is a requirement for all applicants who have obtained their OT qualification outside of Canada. For more information refer to the College website at: [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org) )
- a completed Employer Acknowledgement Form (if applying for a provisional certificate)
- confirmation that you have passed the CAOT certification exam (if applying for a general certificate)

If you do not yet meet all of the above requirements, you can still start the application process by submitting your application form, application fee, academic documents, and any other documentation available at the time of submission.

The Registration Committee of the College will require an additional credential review if the program you graduated from has not been approved by the College. You will need to provide the College with your transcript along with valid course descriptions including the names, contents and hours of the courses in your program. In these situations, the College will notify

you of specific requirements and fees.

If you meet the education and currency hour requirements, the College will inform you with a written statement of eligibility. You will then be able to go on to apply to write the national examination administered by the CAOT.

### **Provisional Practising Certificate**

While you are waiting to write the exam, the college may grant you a “provisional practising certificate”. This certificate will allow you to practise as an occupational therapist with the conditions that you practise under the supervision of a general practising OT, and that you write the first available exam from your date of registration. Refer to the pamphlet, *Provisional Practising Certificate of Registration – Responsibilities and Requirements* found on the College web site at [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org).

### **STEP 3 - Take the National Examination**

All candidates who want to become registered as occupational therapists in Ontario must pass an examination. The exam the College requires you to pass is the National Certification Examination administered by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT). You will need to contact the CAOT to take this exam. Their address and telephone number are listed at the end of this document.

The examination is 6 hours long. It includes questions that test your knowledge of specific areas of Canadian occupational therapy practice and theory. The examination is offered twice a year, in July and November. The CAOT will be able to provide you with all other relevant information regarding the exam.

### **Currency Refresher Program**

If you do not meet the currency hours for registration, you will be required to complete a re-entry program. The College will notify you of the number of hours required and explain the re-entry process. You will be required to secure a clinical setting to complete the volunteer hours under the supervision of a registered occupational therapist. An evaluation of your performance during the review period is required. A Practice Supervisor Agreement Form and Learning Contract will need to be completed by you and approved by the College before starting the volunteer practice hours.

The Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists (OSOT) may have resources to assist you in your pursuit of a re-entry program. Many facilities require group accident insurance, which is available through OSOT. You can contact OSOT for more information. Their address is listed at the end of this document.

### **REQUESTS FOR REVIEW**

Applicants who do not meet the registration requirements as specified may request a review

by the Registration Committee of the College. Decisions of the Registration Committee may be appealed to the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB).

## **LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION**

There is a continuing demand for occupational therapists because of an ageing population, increased attention to the needs of persons with disabilities and an increase in home care services. Areas of employment include health care, educational institutions, social agencies, private business and industry. Job growth may be found in the area of home based care.

For information about working conditions, wages and job descriptions for occupational therapists see the Ontario Job Futures web site, [www1.on.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca](http://www1.on.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca). You will find additional resources at the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) web site, [www.hrsdc.gc.ca](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca). This information is also available at public libraries or HRSDC Employment Resource Centres in Ontario.

The professional associations for occupational therapy may also provide assistance in finding a job. Visit the web sites of OSOT and CAOT at [www.osot.on.ca](http://www.osot.on.ca) and

[www.caot.ca](http://www.caot.ca) to access a list of current job opportunities.

## **COLLEGE FEES (in Canadian dollars):**

- Initial application fee ..... \$ 200.00 +GST
- Registration Fee (pro-rated quarterly) ..... \$ 657.55 + GST
- Annual Registration Fee ..... \$ 657.55 +GST
- Credential Review fee .....\$ 150.00 + GST

## **ADDITIONAL FEES:**

- External Credential assessment report .....\$ 115 (approximately, fee may vary)
- National Certification Exam fee ..... \$ 407 + tax

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**For further information about applying to register as an occupational therapist in Ontario, please contact:**

The Registrar  
College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario  
20 Bay Street, Suite 900, PO Box 78  
Toronto , ON M5J 2N8  
CANADA  
Tel: 416-214-1177  
Toll Free: 1-800-890-6570 ( N. America)  
Fax: 416-214-1173

E-mail: [registration@coto.org](mailto:registration@coto.org)  
Website: [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org)

**For information on obtaining an assessment report of your academic credential:  
please contact:**

World Education Services  
45 Charles St. East Suite 700  
Toronto ON M4Y 1S2  
CANADA  
Tel: 416-972-0070  
Fax: 416-972-9004  
E-mail: [wes@wes.org](mailto:wes@wes.org)  
Website: [www.wes.org/ca](http://www.wes.org/ca)

**For information on the National Exam, please contact:**

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists  
Carleton Technology and Training Centre  
Suite 3400 , Carleton University  
1125 Colonel By Drive  
Ottawa , ON K1S 5R1  
CANADA  
Tel: 613-523-2268  
Fax: 613-523-2552  
Toll Free: 1-800-434-2268 (in Canada only)  
E-mail: [caot@caot.ca](mailto:caot@caot.ca)  
Website: [www.caot.ca](http://www.caot.ca)

**For information on resources to assist with a re-entry program, please contact:**

Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists  
55 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 201  
Toronto , ON M4N 1G8  
CANADA  
Tel: 416-322-3011  
Fax: 416-322-6705  
E-mail: [osot@osot.on.ca](mailto:osot@osot.on.ca)  
Website: [www.osot.on.ca](http://www.osot.on.ca)

**For a government contact about accessing professions and trades in Ontario please  
contact:**

Government of Ontario  
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration  
Labour Market Integration Unit

Tel: 416 - 326-5656  
Toll Free: 1-800-387-5656  
Fax: 416 - 326-6265  
E-mail: [aptinfo@mci.gov.on.ca](mailto:aptinfo@mci.gov.on.ca)  
Website: [www.citizenship.gov.on.ca](http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca)

**For information on where and how to get help with settlement in Ontario please visit [www.settlement.org](http://www.settlement.org)**

**You may also contact:**

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)  
110 Eglinton Avenue West, Suite 200  
Toronto , Ontario M4R 1A3  
CANADA  
Telephone: 416-322-4950  
Fax: 416-322-8084  
E-mail: [generalmail@ocasi.org](mailto:generalmail@ocasi.org)  
Website: [www.ocasi.org](http://www.ocasi.org)

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