

# Guide to Re-Entry to Practice

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## Introduction

To apply for re-entry to practice occupational therapy in Ontario if you do not meet the currency requirement:

1. Complete the application form including information about:
  - Education and fieldwork
  - Currency
  - Language fluency
  - NOTCE results
  - Regulatory history
  - Suitability to practice, and
  - Work eligibility.
2. If requested by the College: you may be required to complete a re-entry to practice Self-Reflection and a Registration Competency Assessment (RCA) interview to identify any learning needs.
3. If requested by the College: you may be required to complete a period of supervised practice under the supervision of a registered occupational therapist to obtain currency.
4. To satisfy the learning needs identified through the interview, the learning needs must be added to a learning contract for supervised practice to be approved by the College.
5. Satisfy any other requirements to hold registration such as obtain professional liability insurance, recent vulnerable sector check, eligibility to work in Canada.

This provides the College with evidence that an applicant is up to date with the knowledge, skills, and judgement to practice occupational therapy safely and ethically; the registrant may receive a certificate of general registration upon completion.

A refresher program can include successful completion of:

- a College-approved period of supervised practice to gain currency hours; and
- an individualized learning plan based on needs identified during the Registration Competency Assessment.
- completion of the National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE)

The supervised practice period consists of meeting the requirements of temporary certification, and employment with a period of supervised practice. The length of the supervised practice period is between 150-600 hours, depending on how long an applicant has been out of practice.



The College policy [Currency Requirement for Applicants](#) specifies the length of the placement.

This Re-Entry Guide provides information for applicants, employers, and supervisors. Participants in the program are asked to review the contents of this package and are encouraged to contact the College any time during the process if they have questions or concerns.

## Apply to the College

The College determines eligibility for re-entry to practice. Applicants are required to submit the following to the College:

- A completed [online application](#), including application fee.
- Evidence they meet the education requirement (for example: a Canadian occupational therapy university program transcript or successful completion of the Substantial Equivalency Assessment System [SEAS]).
- Evidence of most recent occupational therapy employment that indicates the last date of work (for example: a letter from an employer or record of employment)
- Information regarding their suitability to practise (this includes a current [Vulnerable Sector Check](#) and, if applicable, a completed [Regulatory History Form](#) sent to our office directly from anywhere else the applicant has been licensed/registered)
- Evidence the applicant meets the language fluency [requirement](#) (for example: approved language test results, if first language is not English or French)

## Participate in a Registration Competency Assessment

Upon receiving a complete application, the applicant may be required to complete a [Self-Reflection form](#) and a Registration Competency Assessment interview. The assessment is based on the [Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada](#) and link to the [National eLearning module](#).

Upon completion of the assessment the applicant will receive a letter from the College outlining their learning needs and required refresher program.

## Supervised practice for currency requirement

Applicants who do not meet the currency requirement at the time of application are required to complete a period of supervised practice under the supervision of a registered occupational therapist to obtain currency.

In Ontario, once re-entry applicants have met all registration requirements aside from the currency requirement, they obtain a temporary certificate of registration from the College for the duration of their supervised practice. The cost to obtain a temporary certificate is **\$74.31**.



When a re-entry applicant is granted a temporary certificate:

- They will be registered with the College and appear on our public register with a limitation which states they must practice under supervision.
- They can use the title “occupational therapist” or “OT” and designation OT Reg. (Ont.). They are considered an occupational therapist because they’ve been issued a certificate of registration by the College. They can be paid for occupational therapy work done in the placement since registration is required to work as an OT.
- The temporary certificate is time-limited to the duration of their re-entry refresher program.
- If the temporarily registered OT successfully completes the placement and the College approves completion through the final learning contract, the OT can be granted a General Certificate of registration and supervision is no longer required.

Applicants are responsible for securing a placement/employment and a supervisor.

Keep in mind:

- Employment should be at least three days per week. Alternative arrangements must be approved by the College.
- To assist in finding supervision, applicants may search for occupational therapists by location using our public register (Find an Occupational Therapist) at [coto.org](https://coto.org).
- Employment may be completed at multiple locations but must be at least 150 hours each. Each location will require a supervisor.

## Selecting a supervisor

The supervisor must be approved by the College prior to starting. Supervisors play an important role in determining the applicant’s current level of knowledge, skill, and judgement.

Supervisors will be required to sign the Supervisor Agreement Form and develop a learning contract with the applicant. The learning contract needs to be approved by the College within the first week of employment. A [Learning Contract Guide](#) is included in this package. The supervisor and registrant will discuss and agree upon the objectives and way these objectives will be met. It is important that the evidence of accomplishment is as objective as possible, so the applicant’s performance can be evaluated.

A supervisor’s role includes:

- Creating a learning contract with the applicant and supporting them in fulfilling the objectives.



- Being fully accountable for the applicant's practice during the supervised employment period and co-signing all notes/charts.
- Providing feedback and advising the registrant about learning needs to be added to the contract as appropriate.
- Reporting to the College during and upon completion of the approved supervised practice period.
- Ensuring that the supervised practice period follows the terms outlined in the learning contract including the required objectives from COTO related to competencies.

Minimum criteria for supervisor selection:

- The supervisor must hold a general certificate of registration and not be restricted from supervising others. See the [College Policy to Approve Agents of the College](#) for full details.
- The supervisor must have a minimum of three years' experience in the practice of occupational therapy, two of which must be in Ontario.
- The supervisor cannot be placed in a conflict-of-interest situation as a result of working with the registrant. A conflict of interest would not include continuing to work for or with the supervisor after the supervision period ends.
- The supervisor should understand and support the College mandate, and the principles, standards, and regulations of the profession.

## Guide to the Learning Contract for Re-Entry to Practice

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As an individual applying to re-enter practice you may be asked to develop a learning contract together with your practice supervisor to assist them in structuring and evaluating your learning experience. Learning contracts are required to focus on the specific clinical aspects of occupational therapy, competencies for occupational therapy practice, and the regulatory and legislative knowledge that is required for successful practice.

### Important notes:

- Learning needs that were identified in your Registration Competency Assessment interview and Currency Ruling letter, are required to be reflected in the learning contract.
- Think of other specific learning needs related to your supervised practice setting and add these as objectives in the learning contract.
- Identify and include any individual or additional learning needs.



## How to develop and implement the learning contract

1. Provide your practice supervisor with an orientation to your practice history and discusses your learning needs based on the specific nature and requirements of the clinical setting, experience, and current level of knowledge and skill.
2. You will have received a letter from our registration program outlining the learning needs identified during your Self-Reflection and Registration Competency Assessment interview-these learning needs must be addressed in your learning contract.
3. Develop your specific learning objectives related to the identified learning needs and ensure that they are clear and measurable. When completing the learning contract, use the listed objective statements provided in the letter you receive from our registration program and the Learning Contract Guide. Include objectives for personal learning needs within the learning contract.
4. Identify strategies and choose learning experiences best suited to your required learning needs and personal learning style.
5. During your supervised practice period, consult with your practice supervisor on the evidence of accomplishments used for the evaluation (for example: behaviours, reports, direct observation, presentations). Ensure that this section is very objective, following the SMART format - this will help both the supervisor and applicant determine whether the objective has been met during the evaluation.
6. You and your practice supervisor will determine how the evidence will be evaluated (for example: what is the required performance, what standards are being used to measure performance and under what conditions will the learning occur?). The criteria must specify what evidence will be provided to demonstrate if the learning objective has been met or not.
7. You and your practice supervisor have a mutual responsibility to meet and evaluate your performance through the learning contract. In preparation for evaluations, both you and your supervisor should reflect on your learning and acquisition of skills. Documentation of the evaluation outcomes can take place directly on the learning contract. Space is provided so that you and your supervisor can identify which learning objectives have been met and provide any comments.

## Sample learning contract

<b>1. Objective</b>	To demonstrate clinical reasoning by integrating knowledge, skill, and experience, by developing & demonstrating skill in interpreting assessment findings (use appropriate communication skills, problem identification, program planning and implementation) independently.
<b>2. Resources and Approach / Strategy</b>	<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada, 2021</a> all 6 domains; and</li> <li>• <a href="#">Standard for Assessment and Intervention, 2023</a></li> <li>• The Canadian Occupational Performance Measure, Standardized assessment, clinical experience, articles on problem identification, program planning, and treatment</li> </ul> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look up articles &amp; read client charts</li> <li>• Discuss goals &amp; objectives for the client during the session.</li> <li>• Identify any necessary assessments (i.e., MoCa, Functional Independent Measure etc.) to be utilized</li> </ul> <p>Approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administer assessment or intervention session</li> <li>• Discuss future goals and objectives for services</li> </ul>
<b>3. Evidence of Accomplishments</b>	<p>A. Identify the client's strengths &amp; weaknesses through discussion using the occupational performance model</p> <p>B. Identify problems, goals, objectives &amp; intervention measures in a written summary for a minimum of three clients</p> <p>C. Demonstrate knowledge of administration of the MoCa assessment with one client &amp; critically appraises the findings, the overall assessment and subsequent services</p> <p>D. Give self-appraisal of each session, ask for practice monitor evaluation, and problem solve on how to improve the next session</p> <p>E. Prepare a written summary of assessment or intervention findings, strengths, weaknesses and observations for a minimum of three clients</p>
<b>4. Timelines / Checkpoints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify three articles in two weeks.</li> <li>• Review and trial two new tools within one month.</li> <li>• Use tools with the appropriate client within six weeks.</li> <li>• Prepare a written assessment report within one week of assessment.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Determining Accomplishment</b>	<p>Objective met if A – E are demonstrated within three months</p> <p>Objective not met if by three months any of A-E are not demonstrated</p>
<b>6. Objective Met?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>7. Comments</b>	

## Important notes for supervisors:

- Individuals completing this supervised practice period are unique in that they have practiced successfully as an occupational therapist in the past; however, their practice was too long ago to be considered “current” by the College. Alternately, they may have graduated with an occupational therapy degree but never integrated into practice.
- The supervisor must contact the College with any concerns about the performance of the applicant. The College can assist with problem solving or, in rare circumstances, termination of the placement. If serious concerns are noted, the supervisor may be asked to document these concerns and any steps already taken to address them and the response of the applicant.

## Draft initial learning contract

The learning contract is made up of several learning plans. Each learning plan starts with a description of a specific learning need/gap that has been identified by the Registration Committee as an area for further development.

### 1. Learning need

The development of each learning plan starts with the applicant's results from the Registration Competency Assessment. Registration will confirm the learning needs with the applicant in the learning contract.

The registrant should share the learning needs identified by competency assessment to start the creation of the learning contract. These are linked with specific [Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada](#) or COTO's [Standards of Practice](#).

Together the registrant and the supervisor determine: *what knowledge, skills and behaviours the registrant needs to develop now to meet their identified learning needs.*

### 2. Learning goals and activity

This section answers the “how” question: *What is it that I want to demonstrate and how am I going to accomplish this new learning in my practice?*

Learning goals and activities should be clearly outlined using a structured format, for example: S.M.A.R.T (Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, Time-limited) goals.

Complete these questions with your supervisor and submit to the College within 5 business days for approval.



## Final learning contract

### Demonstrated/evidence

Together you and your supervisor decide how new learning will be demonstrated as evidence of performance and completion of the activity. Specific changes to practice should be explicitly stated and evidence available if requested.

This section also answers a “how” question: *How are these learning activities demonstrated? Describe practical changes to practice that provide evidence of this enhanced competency.*

### Scoring

Supervisors are asked to provide scoring on 3 scales:

- Assess the status of completion
- Insight demonstrated by the applicant, and
- The level of application of learning to the registrants' practice.

### Supervisor comments

Supervisors are asked to provide general comments about the applicant's learning plan including strengths, improvements and any outstanding items or concerns.

### Registrant self-reflection

Use this area to describe how learning has enhanced your practice. Please indicate how this has impacted you, clients, and the organization if applicable.

## Forms required for completion of the clinical re-entry program

- Registration Application Form
- Self-Reflection Form and Registration Competency Assessment
- Supervisor Agreement Form - Must be approved by the College prior to starting placement
- Initial Learning Contract - Must be submitted to the College for approval within one week of starting the supervised practice
- Final Learning Contract - Must be submitted to the College for approval at the conclusion of the supervised practice