



Fact Sheet: Practitioners and the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact

The Basics

- The **Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact** (OT Compact) is an **interstate compact**, which is a constitutionally authorized contract between states.
- The OT Compact is the same in form and function as other occupational licensure compacts like the Nurse Licensure Compact, the Physical Therapy Compact, and the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact.
- The OT Compact authorizes in-person practice and telepractice based on a valid, unrestricted home state license in other compact member states for both Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs).
- The OT Compact will take effect when 10 states have enacted authorizing legislation.
- The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) is leading the initiative in collaboration with the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT®). The National Center for Interstate Compacts at the Council of State Governments facilitated the development of the Compact and is providing technical assistance.

The Bottom Line for Practitioners

The OT Compact will allow licensed OTs and OTAs to practice *in all states that join the compact*. This will remove the hurdle of getting an individual license in each state where they want to practice. The broad goal is to eliminate barriers to OT practice and patient care by ensuring cooperation among state regulatory entities for those states that join the compact.

Benefits

- Preserve and strengthen state licensure systems
- Enhance public safety
- Improve access to occupational therapy services
- Increase market opportunities for OTs and OTAs by authorizing practice in member states (including via telehealth)
- Enhance mobility for OT practitioners
- Support relocating military spouses
- Improve continuity of care when clients travel or relocate
- Encourage cooperation among compact member states in regulating the practice of occupational therapy

Dispelling the Myths

- The compact will have no impact on scope of practice; state OT practice acts will not be affected.
- OTs and OTAs are licensed in all 50 states, with consistency in licensure requirements.
- The compact will not affect the authority of states to protect public health and safety or regulate the OT profession as they have been.
- There is no financial beneficiary of the licensure compact, and it is not intended to generate profits. Any fees collected will offset basic administrative costs.

The Stages of the Process

- Interstate compacts require a great deal of time to both develop and implement.
- Legislation must be introduced and passed in each state for each state to become a member.
- The goal is for this legislation to be introduced in states by the 2021 legislative sessions, which follows a stakeholder review process (during summer 2020) of the draft legislation.
- The OT Compact will take effect when 10 states have enacted legislation. **The goal is to begin state participation by 2024.**

What can I do to help as an OT/OTA?

Advocate! Should your state take up legislation to enter into the interstate licensure compact, you can help AOTA and your state association advocate in favor of the compact. AOTA and NBCOT will work closely with state boards and state associations to support state-by-state efforts to get the compact legislation signed into law.

For questions on advocating in your state please email stpd@aota.org

For more information and updates, please visit <https://otcompact.org> or email otcompact@csg.org

The Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact is a joint initiative by AOTA and NBCOT®

