



## **Notice of Proposed Changes in The Regulations of the State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board**

### **Proposed Regulations - FAQ**

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*March 2021*

#### **1. What is the purpose of the proposed regulations? What will this regulation do?**

##### **12 AAC 54.030. Requirements for physical therapy license by examination.**

The proposed regulations will require proof of receipt of passing exam scores directly from the testing agency. It will also eliminate the exam candidate from being required to be approved by the board prior to taking the national exam. The current regulations delay the license application process. Removing the requirement for the board to approve to test will reduce steps and allow applicants to work towards meeting requirements prior to submitting an application for license. The applicant will now be able to schedule to take the exam without prior board approval and will understand that requesting release of the passing scores are required for licensure.

- **Who does a new graduate contact if they have questions about applying for the National Physical Therapy Exam?** Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT).

- **Will this change the passing score?** No, passing score is set by the FSBPT with a minimum of 600.

- **What if I applied for examination prior to this regulation change?** The regulation change will only apply to new applications by examination for exam approval. Every applicant must pass the national exam prior to a license being issued.

- **If I applied prior to this regulation change, and did not pass the NPTE, do I have to reapply for the examination through FSBPT?** Yes, contact the FSBPT to schedule for the next exam. The FSBPT will inform the board and the board will work with you on the approval process.

##### **12 AAC 54.040. Foreign-trained physical therapy applicants.**

The proposed regulations will direct applicant to current regulation requirements for examination, and to conform with the changes being made under 12 AAC 54.030. The proposals also update the required minimum scores for Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet-Based Test (TOEFL-iBT), which is administered by the Education Testing Service.

**12 AAC 54.080. Passing scores.**

The proposed regulations will remove barriers in current regulations and allow the board to meet the FSBPT Alternate Approval Pathway (AAP) contract. The acceptance of the AAP contract will allow the FSBPT to approve exam candidates to take the national exam prior to graduation and release their scores when all educational requirements are met. The regulation would no longer address the education required if the exam is failed. The FSBPT sets the standards for all exam eligibility and limits the number of times a person could take the exam.

**12 AAC 54.510 and 12 AAC 54.810. Supervision of physical therapy assistants and occupational therapy assistants.**

The proposed regulations will clarify that Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists may supervise their respective assistants via telemedicine while the assistant is onsite with the patient or when the assistant is providing telemedicine services. PTs and OTs are required to provide periodic supervision to Physical Therapy Assistants and Occupational Therapy Assistants at least once per month. By clarifying that the supervision can be provided onsite or via telemedicine opens the opportunity to better maintain compliance with the supervision of assistants in situations where onsite supervision is not practical (i.e. in bush communities or home health) or safe (pandemics).

**12 AAC 54.530 and 12 AAC 54.825. Standards for practice of telerehabilitation by physical therapists and occupational therapists.**

The proposed regulations will provide PT or OT to a patient who do not have access to a PT or OT in person due to geographic location in this state or health and safety constraints.

**2. What are the costs to comply with the proposed regulations?**

None known.

**3. When will the regulations be effective?**

After the public comment deadline, comments received are compiled and given to the Board for consideration. The Board may adopt the regulation as written/publicly noticed, may amend and adopt them, choose to take no action, or may withdraw the proposed regulations in part or in its whole. After Board action, the adopted regulations goes to Department of Law (DOL) for final review/approval. DOL either approves or disapproves regulations. Once approved by DOL, it goes to the Lt. Governor for filing. Regulation takes effect on the 30th day after they have been filed by the Lt. Governor.

Do you have a question that is not answered here? Please email [RegulationsAndPublicComment@alaska.gov](mailto:RegulationsAndPublicComment@alaska.gov) so it can be added.