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License Statistics (then and now)

Occupational Therapists

May 2011	2854
Jan. 2019	3834

Occupational Therapy Assistants

May 2011	628
Jan. 2019	1187

Board Members

Sheryl Zylstra, OT, Chair
Sunny Anderson, OTA, Vice Chair
Mary Spores, OT
Walter Gruenwald, OT
Di Irons, Public Member

Updated Continuing Competency Categories Effective August 1, 2018

The Occupational Therapy (OT) Practice Board adopted revisions to the continuing competency categories. Revised categories include:

Authoring a publication – The required documentation for this activity is a copy of the publication. For a peer reviewed journal article or chapter in a textbook a maximum of 10 hours is allowed per reporting period for this category. For non-peer reviewed professional publication a maximum of five hours is allowed per reporting period for this category.

Guest lecturing – Guest lecture must be on an occupational therapy-related topic in an academic setting. The occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant must not be primarily employed in academia to submit credit for this activity. The required documentation for this activity is a letter or other documentation from the course instructor. A maximum of ten hours is allowed per reporting period for this category. One hour of preparation time may be counted per hour of lecture time.

Continued on page 2

What is the HEAL-WA fee and why do I have to pay it?

Washington state law requires members of certain professions to pay an annual fee to use an online healthcare resources library through the University of Washington's HEAL-WA portal. The portal gives access to professional journals, research and other clinical information at lower costs than practitioners would pay for these resources individually.

The law doesn't allow individual licensees to opt out of paying the HEAL-WA fee. Also, the law doesn't allow individuals in other professions to pay the fee to gain access to the HEAL-WA portal.

Starting in 2012, some practitioners who hold licenses in multiple professions began paying only one HEAL-WA fee instead of two or more fees as in years past.

Updated Continuing Competency Categories (cont. from page 1.)

Mentoring – Mentoring for continuing competency means a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or knowledgeable person for the informal transmission of knowledge and support relevant to professional development. The required documentation for this activity is a written report of goals, objectives and analysis of mentee performance signed by both mentor and mentee. Mentoring credits do not count towards the requirement of 20 hours directly related to the practice of occupational therapy. A maximum of five hours is allowed per reporting period for this category.



Attending an OT Board meeting – A maximum of two credits per reporting period is allowed.

Licensed occupational therapists and licensed occupational therapy assistants must complete 30 hours of continued competency, from at least two different categories, every two years in the form of continuing education and professional development.

Please note, the board does not pre-approve continuing competency courses for presenters and licensees.

Access
Continuing
Competency Laws
Here

[WAC 246-847-065](#)
[WAC 246-847-066](#)

April is national
OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPY *month!*

Renew Your Credential Online



Occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants who are within 60 days of their license expiration date, may renew their active status licenses, registrations or certifications online.

To renew online, you must register with Secure Access Washington and sign-in to the Department of Health Online Services. Go to the [Secure Access Washington \(SAW\) website](#).

Here is a link to [online renewal frequently asked questions](#).

The next Occupational Therapy Practice Board Meeting is being held in Kent on April 26, 2019. Updated meeting information can be found on the program's webpage at:
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/ProfessionsNewReneworUpdate/OccupationalTherapist/BoardMeetings>

Supervision of Educational Assistants in School Settings

School districts in Washington state are employing occupational therapy aides (often referred to as educational assistants, or para professionals in the school setting) to help meet the high demand for school-based occupational therapy. While the practice of employee aides in this capacity can help occupational therapy departments meet the demands of increasing caseloads, it is imperative that aides are being properly supervised.

According to the law occupational therapy aides must be supervised by licensed occupational therapists or certified occupational therapy assistants providing “in person contact at the treatment site.” Additionally, supervision must be documented, and documentation must be maintained in a pre-determined location. Finally, the occupational therapy supervisor must provide the aide with training on client- and non- client related tasks at least monthly. This training must also be documented and maintained in a pre-determined location.

Occupational therapists in the state of Washington are governed by both RCWs and WACs. There are several RCWs and WACs are specific to the employment of occupational therapy aides. All occupational therapy RCWs and WACs can be accessed from the following Department of Health site: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/ProfessionsNewReneworUpdate/OccupationalTherapist/Laws>

Content provided by: Board Chair, Sheryl Zylstra DOT, OTR, BCP

Reader Input

The board is looking for reader input. If you want to read about something specific, [please let us know.](#)



Meet Di Irons, Public Member

My name is Di Irons and this is a short walk through my life.

My early years were spent across the U.S.; from Alaska to Florida, Connecticut to Guam and many wonderful two-year stops in-between. Being a U.S. Coast Guard brat, traveling our country and meeting new people every few years was an exciting way to grow up. As an adult I settled in the Pacific Northwest, attended college, married, had children and started my career working mostly in the private business sector.

Over my 64 years I have worked as a pre-school teacher, legislative aide to King County Council, owner and operator of a photography school, vice president of a cable TV company and current president of a wholesale distribution corporation.

Throughout my life I have found time and satisfaction in volunteering to give back to my community. Serving on a Washington state gubernatorial board is one way of fulfilling this civic responsibility. My first board experience was as a public member on the Board of Hearing and Speech. I was impressed with the professional staff and the dedication of the board members. My current public member position on the Occupational Therapy Practice Board has been equally gratifying. I continue to be impressed with the dedicated staff and the commitment of my fellow board members.

Content provided by: Di Irons, Public Member

