

2026 Continuing Competency Profile

for the Occupational Therapist
Registered OTR[®]

OTR[®]

NBCOT[®] National Board
for Certification in
Occupational Therapy

OTR Continuing Competency Profile

Domain 1: Core Occupational Therapy Expertise

Apply foundational and advanced occupational therapy knowledge to support client-centered occupational participation and performance.

Competencies:

- 1.1 Integrate knowledge of complex health conditions, diagnoses, and contextual factors to determine how they impact occupational participation and performance.
- 1.2 Apply relevant OT models, theories, and frames of reference to guide services across the occupational therapy process.
- 1.3 Select and administer evaluations and assessments and interpret the results to develop a plan of care, monitor client progress, and revise goals as needed.
- 1.4 Develop and facilitate client-centered interventions using activity/task analysis.
- 1.5 Establish discharge plans based on the client's personal and contextual factors.

Domain 2: Clinical Reasoning and Evidence-Based Practice

Apply clinical reasoning and evidence-based decision-making across the occupational therapy process.

Competencies:

- 2.1 Observe, analyze, and interpret patterns in client performance to inform clinical reasoning when developing and adapting the plan of care and interventions.
- 2.2 Critically appraise appropriate resources and synthesize evidence to inform best practice throughout the therapeutic process.
- 2.3 Assess the efficacy of evidence-based interventions by measuring outcomes.
- 2.4 Integrate best evidence, clinical experiences, and client factors to advance therapeutic outcomes.

Domain 3: Client-Centered Care

Uphold equitable, inclusive, and client-centered occupational participation throughout the plan of care.

Competencies:

- 3.1 Develop an occupational profile to establish goals and guide client-centered intervention and treatment planning.
- 3.2 Acknowledge and respect clients' values, identities, and lived experiences to deliver client-centered care.
- 3.3 Collaborate with the client and relevant others to identify meaningful goals, activities, and occupations
- 3.4 Utilize therapeutic use of self to engage with clients and promote positive health outcomes.
- 3.5 Adapt interventions in response to evolving client needs and contextual factors.
- 3.6 Provide care with awareness of the principles of equity, cultural humility, and trauma-informed care and their impact on client outcomes.
- 3.7 Empower clients by addressing their needs, facilitating resource access, and fostering self-advocacy.

Domain 4: Collaboration and Communication

Apply clinical reasoning and evidence-based decision-making across the occupational therapy process.

Competencies:

- 4.1 Communicate with clarity, empathy, and responsiveness across all audiences and modes of communication.
- 4.2 Engage in collaborative interprofessional care that fosters respect and trust while remaining within the OT scope of practice.
- 4.3 Foster healthy intraprofessional communication with occupational therapy practitioners to promote goal-directed client-centered care.
- 4.4 Facilitate interprofessional and intraprofessional learning and teamwork.
- 4.5 Address conflict using appropriate and constructive strategies and model self-awareness and empathy.
- 4.6 Document skilled occupational therapy services accurately, ethically, and in sufficient detail to support continuity of care.
- 4.7 Adapt communication across various levels of learning and understanding to effectively communicate with clients, caregivers, and other relevant parties.

Domain 5: Leadership and Advocacy

Advocate for practice environments and systems that improve outcomes and advance the profession.

Competencies:

- 5.1 Mentor, supervise, and coach students, occupational therapy practitioners, and other professionals.
- 5.2 Serve as a resource and leader within interdisciplinary teams, organizations, and communities.
- 5.3 Advocate for the OT profession by providing education on occupational therapy's distinct value in established and emerging practice areas.
- 5.4 Address occupational injustices by advocating for marginalized or underserved populations who receive or may benefit from OT services.

Domain 6: Professionalism and Accountability

Uphold high standards of ethical, safe, and evidence-based care.

Competencies:

- 6.1 Apply ethical decision-making in everyday practice while adhering to relevant laws and regulations.
- 6.2 Utilize and uphold the supervisory process to exchange information, collaborate, and problem solve.
- 6.3 Identify and mitigate risks to ensure the safety of clients, self, and others.
- 6.4 Model professionalism by adapting practice through self-assessment, reflection, and peer feedback.
- 6.5 Model self-awareness and adaptability by taking ownership of outcomes and actions across the therapeutic process.
- 6.6 Prioritize self-care to sustain personal well-being, prevent burnout, and uphold quality care in occupational therapy practice.
- 6.7 Demonstrate professionalism by prioritizing tasks and meeting clinical, administrative, and client-centered responsibilities in a timely and organized manner.
- 6.8 Apply knowledge of billing, insurance, and reimbursement within relevant practice settings to support accurate documentation and compliance with funding and regulatory requirements.

Domain 7: Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Engage in lifelong learning with a growth mindset and contribute to individual and practice advancement.

Competencies:

- 7.1 Identify individual learning needs and pursue ongoing professional development to advance competence.
- 7.2 Utilize quality improvement initiatives, research, and outcome tracking to determine best practice.
- 7.3 Engage in ongoing critical analysis of research findings to inform occupational therapy practice and enhance professional competency.
- 7.4 Integrate new and emerging technologies, techniques, and strategies, including applications of artificial intelligence, when appropriate, to enhance service delivery.
- 7.5 Evaluate and adapt to sociopolitical changes as needed to sustain effective service delivery to individuals, communities, and populations.
- 7.6 Lead or contribute to initiatives that integrate new knowledge into current practice.
- 7.7 Keep current with emerging practice areas and apply insights to foster professional innovation.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without prior written permission of the copyright owners.

©2026 National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc. “NBCOT” (formerly American Occupational Therapy Certification Board AOTCB) is a service and trademark of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc.

“OTR” is a certification mark of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc. “COTA” is a certification mark of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc.

All marks are registered in the United States of America.



National Board for Certification
in Occupational Therapy

One Bank Street, Suite 300
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
nbcot.org