

TBOTE *★news*

The Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners

July 2006

TBOTE UPDATE from the June 2nd Board meeting:

Proposed (not adopted) Rules: The full text of the proposed rules is up on the website. Should you wish to comment on the proposed rules, send your comments by letter, fax or email during this 30 period for public comment. The next board meeting where these rules will be considered for adoption is August 4th.

§371.2, Retired Status is a new status created by HB 2680, which allows licensees who are on active or inactive status to move to the new retired status in order to practice as an OTR or COTA for non-profit, volunteer work, without compensation.

§373.2, Supervision of a Temporary Licensee. This amendment is a re-organization with one substantive change requiring documentation of supervision.

§367.1-3 Continuing Education. Re-organization with added language for clarification and several items added to the list of acceptable and unacceptable CE activities.

§376.3 & §376.6, OT Facility Registration and Renewal An OT linked facility will be established. An OT linked facility has the same owner, the same tax ID number, the same location as the PT facility with which it is associated. Instead of a fee waiver, the OT linked facility will pay a new fee of \$40 for a primary OT linked facility and \$30 for an additional OT linked facility for application and for renewal. If it is adopted, the linked facilities will be able to apply and renew online with the TexasOnline system just like the other facilities.



§651.1 OT Fees. New fee categories are established for retired status and OT linked facilities.

[Click here to read the proposed rules.](#)

Recent Agency Changes

1. The CE Submission Form has been added to the renewal process, whether online or by paper. Every efforts is being made to get licensees to pay attention and comply with the Rules for mandatory continuing education. The number of licensees who fail the audit is alarming and un-necessary. Filling out the CE form is another roadblock in the renewal process which should make licensees aware of their responsibility.
2. OT and PT Consumer Complaint Signs are now available to download from the *Forms* pages on the website.
3. New blue-colored parchment paper has replaced the manila color for new licenses. The change happened June 1, and should help in differentiating the NBCOT certification and the Texas license.

[Did you know that the CE you completed for your Texas license renewal satisfies the CE required for NBCOT's certification renewal? Read this and other information on the website at *Got A Question?*](#)

TBOTE Board

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Occupational Therapy: an integral part of therapy treatment at Brooke Army Medical Center

“How are the therapists motivating the patients? This question is often heard at Brooke Army Medical Center. Heather Soto, COTA, whose job is community re-integration, says, “We are not motivating the patients. They are motivating us.”

And it's true; a palpable feeling of inspiration is the mood at the amputee center at Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) at Fort San Houston, San Antonio, Texas. The amputee center was opened in January, 2005, as a result of the new traumatic combat injuries sustained in the current war on terror, when it was apparent that multi-injuries meant longer rehabilitation. OT's roots are in military rehabilitation, and this time is no different.

Nowadays, the wounded arrive at BAMC faster and begin their rehabilitation earlier. New medical advances, protective gear, improved flight evacuation, new prosthetics all contribute to faster care. The multidisciplinary team works on all aspects of the rehabilitation. The OT practitioners provide hand therapy and outpatient rehabilitation, treat inpatients, provide intervention for ADLs and participate in community reintegration. The emphasis is on bringing the wounded to BAMC quickly and fitting the prosthetics as soon as possible. Generally speaking, 50% of injuries are from blasts, 21% from gunshots and 29% from blunt force.

The early prosthetics fittings allow the wounded to move to an erect position and use the prosthetics at an earlier phase, so wheelchairs are generally rejected, even wheelchair sports. At top physical condition, the soldiers are working hard, with daily, sometimes twice a day therapy to return to optimal functioning. Heather finds activities the soldiers enjoy, and for those who can travel, she schedules Friday trips, which include fly fishing, sailing, rafting, paint ball, rock climbing, Paralympic events, shooting range visits, and other active sports they enjoy. The goal is to return the soldiers to active military duty, if possible, and if not, to provide the maximum functionality possible.

Funding for the Friday outings, comes from donations to the Soldiers and the Family Assistance Fund.

Besides serving the wounded active military BAMC serves the retired military, dependents, and also as a civilian trauma center in the San Antonio and the environs.

Specialist John Chrzanowski from Michigan has spent more than a year at BAMC, recovering from 40% burns. He now lives in the barracks on post, and attends the outpatient burn center daily. He has had several surgeries, but is proud that he can dress himself, shower, shave, cook for himself and has come so far. OTRs and COTAs provide therapy to improve his hand mobility, the site of his worst injuries.

Activities of daily living are practiced in a newly remodeled apartment made possible by a grateful parent was a decorator to make the place gorgeous and up-to-date. Soldiers learn ADLs, which include diapering their infants, as many servicepersons are new parents. The latest software, including voice recognition software, is available on the apartment's computer.

Burn patients have been transferred to BAMC for a long time, and now the new amputee center is receiving patients from the San Antonio area as well as from the war.

The big news at BAMC is the construction of a new 65,000 square foot rehabilitation facility adjacent to BAMC. The new outpatient rehabilitation center will be called the Center for the Intrepid (CFI), an oval 4-story building which will include an OT floor, a PT floor, a track, pool, rock climbing wall, shooting range, wave pool, and lots of other activities. Initial funding for the project came from Mr. Arnold Fisher who was interested in building a world class amputee care center and making a large donation to initiate that effort. Through his donation and those of others, including the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund, the building is becoming a reality and should open approximately January, 2007.

The Center for the Intrepid will be dedicated to the rehabilitation of active duty service members having sustained major limb

amputation, limb salvage procedures with residual functional loss, and burns. The BAMC employs approximately 16 active duty therapists plus additional civilian therapists. To provide hand therapy, whether outpatient, inpatient, or at the burn unit.

Director, Rebecca Hooper, PT, PhD, COL, (ret.) is the Program Manager, planning the move of these services to the new Intrepid. She says they have hired the needed therapists and are now just looking to hire a receptionist and full time researcher. Collaborative staffing, research and educational efforts are being explored through the Veterans Health Administration and the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Colonel Leonard Cancio, OTR, CHT, and Chief OTR, reports that as a result of the recent Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). Walter Reed Army Medical Center has been identified for closure. This will bring the first clinical rotation of OT student officers to BAMC this summer. Wilford Hall on the Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio will become an ambulatory care facility. BRAC will mean multi-service medical centers. Brooke Army Medical Center will be taking on a larger role, both with the new Intrepid Center and the expanded role of medical services.

Colonel Cancio says that he was attracted to the military when we found the expanded role of the OTR in the military more attractive than the limitations in his civilian practice. Clearly everyone in the center is moved and motivated by their involvement and successes to try even harder, to do more for the service man and woman. They see that the soldiers motivate each other and enjoy their camaraderie. War time always brings medical advances, and OTRs are an essential part of that effort.

Two new Fisher Houses are also planned. Fisher Houses are the military equivalent of Ronald McDonald houses, providing housing for visiting family members. The military pays for up to 3 family members to join the wounded serviceperson. Read more about the Fisher Houses [here](#).

Donations for Friday outings may be mailed to: Soldier and Family Assistance Fund, 2010 Stanley Rd #95 Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234

Frequently Asked Questions About Continuing Education

Q: How should I pro-rate my CE for my first license?

A: §367.1 states that the first regular license, which has a duration of less than 2 years, does not have a continuing education requirement.

Q: Can I carry over extra CE to the next licensure period?

A: No. You must collect the CE during the period of current licensure. You would only be collecting CE after expiration if you have not finish the CE and need to take more CE in order to renew.

Q: Are there special arrangements for military licensees called into active duty?

A: Yes. Several rules were passed in December of 2005 for late renewal and late CE. The rules allow for late renewal and late CE, but the procedures must be completed before return to civilian practice.

Q: Do AOTA or TOTA's approved providers mean the course is approved for CE for my license?

A: TBOTE accepts AOTA's courses and TOTA's courses and those of their Approved Providers. Providers may designate Type 1 or Type 2 on the certificate, however it is your responsibility to determine if their designation is correct -- whether the course falls into the Type 1 or Type 2 category.

Q: The course does not tell me if it is Type 1 or Type 2.

A: The course may not tell you, but it is your responsibility to know the definitions for Type 1 and Type 2 in Chapter 367 and make the determination.

Q: I was already audited, so will I be audited again?

A: The computer randomly selects licensees and some licensees have been audited more than once.

Q: How will I know that my CE will "count?"

A: TBOTE rules outline the definitions for Type 1 and Type 2 CE so that any practitioner can make that determination for him or herself. OT practitioners who are audited fill out a form explaining how their Type 2 choices meet the requirements. For Type 2 CE, Practitioners should be looking for CE that builds on the knowledge of occupational therapy treatments or interventions for their clients or patients. There is also a [list of types of courses](#) on the website to give you a sample of what would meet each definition.

Customer Service Survey Results, Comments and Replies

ECPTOTE has a customer service survey online at the end of the renewal process. It is also accessible on our website. The results of completed surveys are collected and tabulated through our contract with The University of Texas. Many licensees have written about how easy and convenient the online renewal process is. However, some have written criticisms, suggestions, and comments, mostly submitted without inclusion of a name or contact information. Here are some of those comments, suggestions, or complaints.

"It was difficult to find and then get to the JP exam. On one attempt I was asked a question about licenses in N. Carolina, I am in Texas...."

The question was whether you can accept a referral from a doctor in North Carolina. This would be relevant if you had a new patient or client who had just moved from another state. Can an OTR accept an out-of-state referral? The answer is yes.

"I had some difficulty locating the needed info. however this may have caused me to study the material more thoroughly in an attempt to locate info."

"I was unable to find or access the jurisprudence info to review before taking the test"

"when renewing license, please provide study questions."

The Board requires a JP exam with each renewal and expects the licensee to read & review the TBOTE Rules before taking the JP exam. There is also a link to open the rules from the renewal page, so you can refer to them while taking the exam. Exam questions are randomly chosen from a database of questions. These questions are changed when rules change, and new questions are added from time to time. The OT Practice Act and Rules are the study materials.

"Where is the key code?"

"...key code number looked like a 5 and was an S..."

The key code is unique to each licensee; it is computer generated mix of letters and numbers. All letters will be capitals. When you pass the JP exam the key code is displayed.

"Would like to see the verification of licensure updated by the first day of the month. Our organization's HR department will not let us allow therapists to work if their name is not on that site & their hard copy is still in the mail."

The Verifications section of our website is now being updated almost daily. Check it out!

"It is a hassle to download the rules, etc. I liked it much better when it was updated and mailed to me." Printing and mailing out rules and newsletters is a very expensive proposition, and the agency budget is small. We try to do at least one mailing each year. However, rules can and do change after we print the newsletter. Keep in touch by signing up for [Board E-News](#). You will receive an email when there is a new rule or newsletter to read. The link to sign up may be found on our homepage. Remember that employers, HR departments, insurers, CE Providers and others who don't get our mailings are accessing the rules too!

"I had a lot of trouble online and liked the paper renewal."

There is a link on the renewal page so that you can download a paper renewal. If you are using a paper renewal, we ask that you take the jurisprudence exam online, since it is quicker for all of us that way. However, if you really want the jurisprudence exam on paper, you may request that one be mailed to you by the Board. It will increase the length of time your renewal process.

"The only part I would change is when I was in the ECPTOTE website and clicked onto 'renew license,' I was thrust into a whole different looking website with all sorts of professions and had to locate mine."

We've changed the interface and you no longer see that page. Thanks for the feedback.

"I had a hard time getting the webpage to accept 'none' as a valid response in the business address."

This is an issue as we use a template which is designed to be used by many agencies and their licensees. The template does not accept blanks in required Business Address fields, which means you must enter the word "none" in the name, address, and city fields, and select Texas for the state field. Use the number "9" for all digits in the zip code and phone number fields. We continue to work with the designers about this issue.

"I am licensed in several states, and trust me when I tell you some other states could take a lesson or two from the Texas board. I never have any trouble getting through to a real live person and this website makes my life so easy come renewal time. Thanks so much."

Now that's what we like to read on our Consumer Service Survey! Seriously, we do read your comments and share them with the Board. We do make changes when possible. Most of our responders wrote to say that they like the online renewal process and find it quick and easy.

Bookmark the Board website and sign up for the free service, **E-News**. This is a broadcast email to all who sign up, and is an announcement of any news from the Board. The sign up for **E-News** is located at: <http://www.ecptote.state.tx.us/lists/subscribe.php>

Read previous newsletters online at: <http://www.ecptote.state.tx.us/ot/newsletter.html>



OT Board Formal Disciplinary Actions

Taken June 2, 2006

- (1) **Christine Adair, OTR #111387 (Houston)** – practiced with an expired license. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. **Board Order required thirty (30) hours of community service.**
- (2) **Rode Noriega, COTA #209178 (Houston)** – practiced with an expired license. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. **Board Order suspended her license for fifteen (15) days.**
- (3) **Bianca Georgakakis, OTR #11596 (The Colony)** – practiced with an expired license. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. **Board Order required thirty (30) hours of community service.**
- (4) **Catherine Plasencia, OTR #102940 (Canyon Lake)** – practiced with an expired license. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. **Board Order required thirty (30) hours of community service.**
- (5) **Doris Ramos, COTA #209068 (Houston)** – failed to properly renew her license (**CE audit**). Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 367 of the board rules. **Board Order required that she give two one-hour presentations to OT/OTA schools about her experience with this investigation and the board's findings.**
- (6) **Christine Evah Conques, COTA #208848 (Harker Heights)** – practiced in a detrimental manner by documenting treatments provided on dates that no such services were rendered. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. **Board Order suspended her license for thirty (30) days.**
- (7) **Linda Allard, COTA #208471 (Sealy)** – **Board Order reinstated her previously revoked license with the stipulation that she comply with all of the terms of her probation as ordered by the US Probation Office.**

Unethical or Unlicensed Practice Hotline: 800-821-3205 or 512/305-6900

Other state laws affect your license! We cannot renew a license where the licensee is in default with child support or student loan payments.

Frequently Requested Contacts



Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners (TBOTE)

Act & Rules, complaints, and practice of OT in Texas

512/305-6900 telephone

512/305-6970 fax

Website: www.ecptote.state.tx.us

Email: info@ecptote.state.tx.us

Texas Occupational Therapy Association (TOTA)

512/454-8682 telephone

512/450-1777 fax

www.tota.org

American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

Specialty certification, student fieldwork, national issues, etc.

301/652-2682 telephone

www.aota.org

National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT)

National certification exam, and score reports

301/990-7979 telephone

301/869-8492 fax

www.nbcot.org

Dept. of Assistive and Rehab. Services (DARS)

Division of Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)

512/424-6790 telephone

512/424-6799 fax

www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis/

Medicare and Medicaid

Trailblazer Health Enterprises
(Medicare Program Administrator)
www.the-medicare.com

Medicare Part A

888/7639836 (Rehab Dept, hospital)

Medicare Part B

903/463-0720 (independent practitioners)

Medicaid 800/252-8263

SHARS

www.tea.state.tx/interagency/shars.html

Texas Dept. Aging and Disability Services (DADS)

800/458-9858 Long term care

800/252-8016 Nursing homes

512/719-3521 Licensing boards

800/228-1570 Home health agency

www.dads.state.tx.us

Texas Dept. of State Health Services (TDSH)

512/834-6650 Hospital licensing

www.tshs.state.tx.us

Texas Online Services

License applications, renewals, profile

www.texasonline.com

877-452-9060 Help desk