

TBOTE news

The Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners

March 2026

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Previous newsletters, forms, and FAQs are available from the website: ptot.texas.gov.

Next Board Meeting

May 1, 2026*

* Subject to change

TBOTE BOARD

Stephanie Johnston, OTR, Chair
Karen Gardner, OTR, Secretary
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Chelsea Howell, Public Member
Eddie Jessie, Public Member
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Erin Smith, OTR
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Notes from the Coordinator

Proposed and Adopted Rules

The Board proposed rule changes at its last meeting. See further information in this newsletter. The Board did not adopt rule changes.

New Licensing System Reminder and Tip

The Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners (ECPTOTE) transitioned in March, 2025, to a new licensing system that allows for a greater integration of certain online and licensing functions, including concerning online renewal and initial licensure applications.

In order to access the system, any existing licensees will need to create an account in the new system and link their license to their online account.

Please note that this new system is different from the renewal portal on the ECPTOTE website that licensees renewing online must use to enter their CE activities and take the jurisprudence examination. Licensees still must complete these steps on the ECPTOTE website prior to submitting the online renewal application and fee in the new system.

Licensees must create an account in this new system in order to renew online and access other online features, such as online name change or replacement license applications, online license verification requests, etc.

Licensees may create an account for the new system and link their license to such at any time, though those approaching their three-month renewal window who are planning to renew online may wish to do so as soon as possible. These steps take some time and licensees are encouraged to not wait until the last minute in order to avoid unexpected issues, etc.

New System Tip:

On-Demand Contact Information Changes

Create an account in the new system as early as possible, even if you are not in your renewal window. By doing so, you will be able to access from your account an alternative form to change your contact information, from which you may verify and make changes to contact information yourself, rather than submitting the Change Your Contact Info form on our website. This will also allow agency staff to save time they may use to meet other licensee needs as our website's form requires staff to manually process such.

Introduction to Proposed Rule Changes from the February Board Meeting

These are PROPOSED rule changes. The current rules are in effect.

The Board has proposed an amendment to §374.1, Disciplinary Actions. The amendment will correct a typographical error.

Notice of the proposal has been published in the March 27, 2026, issue of the [Texas Register](#), and a PDF of such has been uploaded to the [Act and Rules](#) page.

Comments:

Comments on the proposal may be submitted in writing to Lea Weiss, Occupational Therapy Coordinator, Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners, 1801 Congress Ave Ste 10.900, Austin, Texas 78701 or to lea@ptot.texas.gov within 30 days following the publication of this notice in the *Texas Register*. Any interested person or a person required to comply with the proposed rule may submit information related to the cost, benefit, or effect of the proposed rule, including any applicable data, research, or analysis.

It is requested when sending a comment that individuals include the rule section to which the comment refers and that comments sent by email include "Public Comment" in the email's subject line.

A general overview of the proposed changes appears below; refer to the full published proposal for further information.

Proposed Rule Changes

§374.1. Disciplinary Actions

The amendment to §374.1 will correct a typographical error in the section.

CE Reminder

As part of the minimum hours of required continuing education for each renewal, OTs and OTAs must complete a training course on human trafficking that is approved by the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).

Verify that your course appears on HHSC's list of approved human trafficking training courses prior to your renewal. See our [Continuing Education](#) page for further information regarding the training requirement and accessing that list.

Scam Alert: Impersonation of TBOTE Investigators

The Board has received reports of individuals posing as agency investigators to solicit personal information from licensees. Please be aware of the following:

How the Scam Works

Fraudsters are calling from numbers that may appear to be official (spoofing). They often use fake names and provide fake case numbers to claim your license is under investigation for out-of-state misuse or failure to renew.

Red Flags to Watch For

- **Urgency and Fear:** Scammers try to panic you into providing information immediately.
- **Requests for Data:** Agency investigators will never ask for your Social Security number or credit card information over the phone to "clear" a case.
- **Suspicious Case Numbers:** Agency investigations do not follow court-style case numbering (e.g., numbers ending in "-CR").

Scammer Tactics

The "Transfer": Scammers transfer victims to a "senior official" to build credibility and keep victims on the phone so they don't have time to think or verify facts.

The License Hook: Claiming a license was "used outside the state" is a common scare tactic designed to make victims think their identities have been stolen, making them more likely to "verify" their Social Security numbers or banking information.

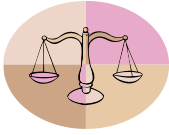
Public Data: Professional license numbers are often public record. Scammers pull these numbers from online databases to sound official.

Remember

- **We aren't in a rush:** Agency investigators will never contact you with an urgent demand for immediate action. Scammers love to create "fake emergencies"; we prefer a calm conversation without name calling, abuse, and launching into a diatribe.
- **Your private information stays private:** Agency investigators will never ask for sensitive personal information or payments over the phone.
- **Trust, but verify:** If you receive a suspicious email or call claiming you are "under investigation" or owe something, don't panic. See below.

What to Do

If you receive a suspicious call, before you hang up, ask for your case number. Then, call the Board using the number on our website and ask to speak with Investigations or submit a Contact Us message. Do not provide any personal information. You can verify your current license status directly from <https://vo.licensing.hpc.texas.gov/datamart/selSearchType.do> (which is also accessible from our website's Look up a License feature) and verify any legitimate pending actions by submitting a Contact Us message. Our Look up a License and Contact Us features are both accessible from the Looking For? menu on our website, <https://ptot.texas.gov/>.



**FEBRUARY 6, 2026, BOARD MEETING
FORMAL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS TAKEN**

Matthew Hall, OTA #208650 (Mexia) - failed to properly renew license during the audited renewal period. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 367 of the board rules. ***Board Order required 30 hours of community service.***

Lorie Hughs, OT #107373 (Durant, OK) - failed to properly renew license during the audited renewal period. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 367 of the board rules. ***Board Order required 30 hours of community service.***

Molly Ortega, OT #122449 (Amarillo) - failed to properly renew license during the audited renewal period. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 367 of the board rules. ***Board Order required 30 hours of community service.***

Erica Nelson, OT #113624 (Midlothian) - failed to properly renew license during the audited renewal period. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 367 of the board rules. ***Board Order suspended license to practice for 15 days.***

Julia Reddout, OT #112436 (Aledo) - failed to properly renew license during the audited renewal period. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 367 of the board rules. ***Board Order suspended license to practice for 30 days.***

Sarah Germain, OT #123372 (Cleburne) - failed to properly renew license prior to renewal. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 367 of the board rules. ***Board Order required 30 hours of community service.***

Kathleen Baker, OT #109731 (Boerne) - practiced in a detrimental manner by practicing occupational therapy after the expiration of the license. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. ***Board Order suspended license to practice for 30 days.***

Morgan Goff, OTA #214657 (Axtell) - practiced in a detrimental manner by practicing occupational therapy after the expiration of the license. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. ***Board Order suspended license to practice for 30 days.***

Susan Dezelle, OT #117956 (Austin) - practiced in a detrimental manner by practicing occupational therapy after the expiration of the license. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. ***Board Order suspended license to practice for 30 days.***

Jennifer Wolfe, OT #214966 (Tomball) - practiced in a detrimental manner by practicing occupational therapy during the suspension of the license. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. ***Board Order suspended license to practice for 30 days.***

Utakarsh Malge, OT #124598 (Derby, KS) - practiced in a detrimental manner by failing to document occupational therapy services or inaccurately recording, falsifying, or altering client records. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. ***Board Order suspended license to practice for 30 days.***

Ramonia Forbes, OT #118295 (Dallas) - practiced in a detrimental manner by failing to document occupational therapy services or inaccurately recording, falsifying, or altering client records. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. ***Board Order suspended license to practice for 30 days.***

Melody Lloyd, OTA #213794 (Pittsburg) - practiced in a detrimental manner by failing to provide sufficient prior written notice of resignation of employment resulting in the loss or delay of occupational therapy services. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapter 374 of the board rules. ***Board Order suspended license to practice for 30 days.***

Lindsey Drass, OT #122903 (Keller) - failed to cooperate with the agency by not responding to agency correspondence addressed to the individual's designated address(es) within 90 days, failed to notify the Board in writing of changes in contact information within 30 days of such change, and failed to document occupational therapy services. Violation of Section 454.301 of the Act and Chapters 369, 372, and 374 of the board rules. ***Board Order suspended license to practice for 10 days.***