



## National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc.

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The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc. (NBCOT) is a not-for-profit credentialing agency that provides certification for the occupational therapy profession. NBCOT serves the public interest by developing, administering and continually reviewing a certification process that reflects current standards of competent practice in occupational therapy. We also work with state regulatory authorities, providing information on credentials, disciplinary actions, and regulatory and certification renewal issues.

Above all else, the mission of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc., is to serve the public interest. We provide a world class standard for certification of occupational therapy practitioners. The National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc., will develop, administer, and continually review a certification process based on current and valid standards that provide reliable indicators of competence for the practice of occupational therapy. In pursuit of our mission and in all we do, the members of the board, committees, and the staff of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc., will be guided by the following Principles:

- We will ensure fairness, accuracy, validity, and integrity in the development and administration of the certification program.
- We will build public confidence in the quality and credibility of the occupational therapy community.
- We will engage in research that clarifies the full range of professional activities and validates the competencies essential for every occupational therapy practitioner.
- We will endeavor to anticipate changes in the delivery of health care services in all sites (including hospitals, schools, industry, and communities) and the new competencies needed in occupational therapy.
- We will ensure that our credentialing process meets the highest standards of measurement and competency assessment as defined by experts in that field.
- We will support the safe, proficient, competent practice of occupational therapy, and the willingness and capacity of the practitioner to improve. We see the certification process as a lifelong tool for the development of occupational therapy practitioners.
- We will be ever mindful of the prudent use of resources and cost-effective principles of good management in administering the certification process. Toward this end, we will support efforts to improve the regulatory process, supporting actions which recognize competency rather than adherence to established mechanisms.
- We will involve the public in the continuous review of the competence, practice, and contributions of occupational therapy practitioners.

- We will protect the health and welfare of the public by, for example, removing or restricting certification of any practitioner who demonstrates an inability or failure to safely, proficiently or competently practice occupational therapy.
- We will support the development of board members and staff by recognizing the diversity of their contributions, assessing their needs, and providing support for their professional growth.

The examinations are developed by the Certification Examination Development Committee (CEDC) of NBCOT, a group of content experts (COTAs and OTRs) drawn from a wide variety of work environments, geographical areas and diverse backgrounds. As objective measures of the knowledge and skills required of entry-level COTAs and OTRs, the certification examinations are based on NBCOT's practice analysis, "*National Study of Occupational Therapy Practice.*" These examinations are based on the important and essential tasks and knowledge associated with occupational therapy entry-level practice identified in the study.

The examination items are written by COTA and OTR content experts who are trained item writers. Items which appear on the certification examination have been subjected to rigorous review and have been validated by the CEDC as appropriate for the assessment of the knowledge and skills which are essential and important for entry-level performance. The items are also reviewed for bias, making sure that the context setting, language, descriptions, terminology and content of the item are inoffensive, free of stereotype and equally appropriate for all segments of the candidate population.

The NBCOT certification examinations are computer delivered and administered at more than 300 Prometric Test Centers (PTC) throughout North America, including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Professional Examination Service (PES), NBCOT's testing agency, has contracted with Prometric (formerly Sylvan Prometric) for examination delivery on behalf of NBCOT. Prometric is a well-known technology-based testing and assessment company. Once candidates have completed the NBCOT certification examination registration process, they will receive an Authorization to Test (ATT) letter that provides instructions on contacting Prometric to schedule their test date and location. Candidates are encouraged to submit their applications, fees, transcripts and any documentation required as early as possible during the examination registration period to maximize access to the examination location, date and time preferred. Administrations are offered throughout the week except on Sunday.

#### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR US GRADUATES TAKING THE COTA OR OTR EXAMINATION

**Prior to being admitted to the examination, US graduates must have:**

1. Successfully completed the appropriate assistant-level or therapist-level fieldwork required/arranged by the education program.
2. Been awarded the appropriate degree/certificate in occupational therapy/occupational therapy assistant or be "cleared for graduation" (graduation is "certain" – all grades have been recorded, the thesis is complete (if required for the degree) and there are no outstanding financial obligations to the institution) from an education program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE).

**Candidates must have been awarded the degree/certificate or be "cleared for graduation" on or before the postmark deadline for the submission of the transcript**

**or the NBCOT Academic Credential Verification Form (ACVF). See these deadlines in the table “Examination Related Dates”.**

3. Submitted official documentation (i.e., official final transcript or NBCOT Academic Credential Verification Form (ACVF) directly from their registrar prior to the transcript/ACVF receipt deadline) confirming examination eligibility.

4. Candidates who have submitted only an Academic Credential Verification Form (ACVF) in order to gain admission to the certification examination will have their certificate held upon passing the exam, pending receipt of the official final transcript. All candidates, passing or failing candidates, submitting the ACVF are to submit the official final transcript to PES as soon as it is available, within forty-five (45) days of taking the examination.

***Further information regarding test eligibility can be found at [www.nbcot.org](http://www.nbcot.org)***

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