

ESTABLISHING REGISTRATION ELIGIBILITY

This fact sheet outlines the process and requirements for becoming registered with the College of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba (COTM). For more detailed information on specific requirements, refer to the other fact sheets and the information outlined at <https://cotm.ca/registration>

What is the difference between establishing eligibility and becoming registered?

The Occupational Therapists Regulation outlines that COTM can only grant registration to practice to a person who can provide evidence that he/she will be practising in MB. Many provinces in Canada can grant registration to an occupational therapist even if they have no employment in that province. This Fact Sheet confirms that if an applicant can complete Phase 1 and 2 of the COTM Application for Registration process, COTM will commit to formally communicating that status.

How do I become registered to practise occupational therapy in Manitoba?

You must apply to The College of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba (COTM). There are three parts to the application process:

- Phase 1) Establishing Academic Eligibility
- Phase 2) Establishing Professional Eligibility
- Phase 3) Establishing Employment Eligibility

All parts of the application can be completed at the same time, or if you prefer, you can complete the application process in phases. Applying in phases is most relevant to internationally educated OT's who may need to determine if they can be registered in Manitoba before beginning the immigration process.

If you are currently practising occupational therapy elsewhere in Canada, you may want to review the Labour Mobility Support Agreement (LMSA) to see if you are eligible to apply under the LMSA.

What is required for Phase 1 - Establishing Academic Eligibility?

To establish academic eligibility (Phase1), you must submit to COTM:

- a completed Application for Registration Form (available online at www.cotm.ca)
- proof of identity that includes a photograph
- an Initial Application Fee of \$50.00 (non-refundable), and
- education and / or educational equivalency documents (see the COTM website for the detailed information on this item at www.cotm.ca/registration)

Can I complete Phase 1 before I arrive in Manitoba?

Yes. You do not need to be in Manitoba to complete Phases 1 and 2. If you are establishing your Academic Eligibility through completion of the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO) Substantial Equivalency Assessment System (SEAS). SEAS results are valid for three years; that is, even if the standards for assessment change, your results would still be seen as meeting COTM's academic requirements.

What is required for Phase 2 - establishing professional eligibility?

To establish professional eligibility (Phase 2), you must submit:

- evidence of English language proficiency if you graduated from a university program outside of Canada that is not on the exemption list and you are not eligible to apply under the Labour Mobility Support Agreement (Refer to Language Fact Sheet for exemption list)
- results of Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists National Occupational Therapy Certification Exam (NOTCE) or proof that you have applied to write the examination.

You must also ensure COTM receives:

- verification of your work history as an occupational therapist is mailed directly from your employer(s) to COTM
- a Regulatory History Form is completed by the regulatory organization(s) with which you are currently registered or have been registered with in the past 5 years. Regulatory History Forms must be mailed directly to COTM by the regulatory organization(s); and
- a Criminal Record Check is made available to COTM and that it is no older than 6 months.

Can I complete Phase 2 - Establishing Professional Eligibility before I arrive in Manitoba?

Yes. Professional eligibility is valid for 6 months. If it takes longer than 6 months to complete the registration process, you may need to get a new criminal record check. If you have continued to practise OT elsewhere, you will need to update your regulatory history and employment history. When Phase 1 and Phase 2 have been completed, COTM will send you a letter confirming that you are eligible for registration in Manitoba.

What is required for Phase 3 - Establishing Employment Eligibility?

To establish employment eligibility (phase 3) and complete the registration process, you must:

- have an offer of employment in Manitoba;
- provide proof of malpractice insurance coverage;
- pay the Annual Registration Fee (see the COTM Fee Schedule at <https://cotm.ca/registration/initial-registration-ieot/phase-three>)

Can I complete Phase 3 before I arrive in Manitoba, or from outside of Canada?

Yes, as long as you can provide evidence of prospective employment / practice in Manitoba that will begin within the subsequent three months.

If I disagree with COTM's assessment of my application, can I appeal the decision?

Yes. An appeal must be made in writing and must be filed within 30 days of receiving the decision.

What will happen when I have completed all three phases of registration?

If you meet all of the eligibility requirements, COTM will add your name to the COTM Register of Practising Members. You will receive a registration card. Then you can then legally practise occupational therapy in Manitoba.

If you are unable to meet all of the eligibility requirements, you may be eligible for registration on the Register of Provisional Members if you:

- need to complete course work or practical work to achieve academic equivalency;
- have not yet successfully completed the NOTCE;
- are unable to communicate proficiently in English but have achieved the minimum acceptable language competencies; or
- do not have the required work experience (600 hours in the past three years).

All provisional registrants must practise under supervision.

Can I volunteer in an OT department or begin my orientation and training before I complete the registration process?

No. It is illegal to present yourself as an occupational therapist and begin work as an occupational therapist before the registration process is complete. This includes beginning orientation to a new job, even if you are not working with clients, volunteer work as an OT, or work as an OT in a non-traditional setting.

You can do volunteer work that is not the practice of occupational therapy, in an OT department / with occupational therapists, to gain exposure to the work environment. You should discuss any plans to volunteer with COTM to make sure the kind of work is acceptable.

How long do I have to complete my initial application?

COTM will provide you with deadlines related to each of the phases. However, after one year of no activity on an initial application file, it will be closed.

For more information, please contact COTM at (204) 957-1214 or by email at OTinfo@cotm.ca

This publication is provided for general information. For more specific information see
The Essential Competencies of Practice for Occupational Therapists in Canada,
The COTM *Code of Ethics* for Occupational Therapists and
The Occupational Therapists Act and Regulation.
COTM publications are available on our website at www.cotm.ca