

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE



ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES OF PRACTICE FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS IN CANADA

This guide sets out the essential competencies – the knowledge, skills and attitudes – that occupational therapists in either clinical or non-clinical practice in Canada must consistently demonstrate throughout their career.

The guide lists competencies at their highest level only. For a deeper description and performance indicators of these competencies, please consult the full document entitled: Essential Competencies of Practice for Occupational Therapists in Canada: Third Edition.

HOW MIGHT YOU USE THIS GUIDE?

Occupational therapists, clients, students, professors, regulators, employers, and the public at large may use this guide for a variety of purposes including:

- to support their day-to-day practice
- to provide information regarding the requirements for occupational therapy practice
- to support self-reflection, evaluation, and professional development
- to provide a foundation upon which further competencies may be developed
- to provide information for credentialing and assessment purposes
- to inform expectations around the role and services provided by occupational therapists

WHO PRODUCED THE ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES?

The Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations is the national organization of occupational therapy regulators in Canada. Our ten provincial members work to protect the public by fulfilling their statutory mandate to regulate the practice of occupational therapy in their respective jurisdictions. We developed the Essential Competencies as part of our effort to promote consistency and excellence within the occupational therapy practice environment across Canada.

ASSUMPTIONS

The Essential Competencies:

- are interpreted at the provincial regulatory level
- reflect the standards, regulations, guidelines, codes of ethics, and bylaws for practice in a given jurisdiction
- are all equally essential
- are overarching to accommodate current and future public policy and trends



ACOTRO
ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
REGULATORY ORGANIZATIONS

ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE

UNIT 1: Assumes Professional Responsibility: Occupational therapists assume professional responsibility for safe, ethical and effective practice.

- 1.1 Demonstrates a commitment to their clients, public and profession.
- 1.2 Practices within scope of professional and personal limitations and abilities.
- 1.3 Adheres to the Code of Ethics recognized by the provincial regulatory organization.
- 1.4 Applies ethical frameworks to solve ethical situations.
- 1.5 Demonstrates professional integrity.

UNIT 2: Thinks Critically: Occupational therapists use critical reasoning and reflection approaches for safe, ethical and effective practice.

- 2.1 Demonstrates sound professional judgment and clinical reasoning in decision-making.
- 2.2 Engages in reflection and evaluation and integrates findings into practice.

UNIT 3: Demonstrates Practice Knowledge: Occupational therapists demonstrate practice knowledge for safe, ethical and effective practice.

- 3.1 Uses current occupational therapy foundational knowledge in day-to-day practice.
- 3.2 Demonstrates awareness of the physical, social, cultural, institutional and economic environment relevant to the jurisdiction of practice.
- 3.3 Demonstrates awareness of experiential knowledge of client and occupational therapist.
- 3.4 Demonstrates awareness of legislative and regulatory requirements relevant to the province and area of practice.

UNIT 4: Utilizes an Occupational Therapy Process to Enable Occupation: Occupational therapists use systematic approaches to enabling occupation for safe, ethical and effective practice.

- 4.1 Clarifies role of occupation and enablement when initiating services.
- 4.2 Demonstrates a systematic client-centred approach to enabling occupation.
- 4.3 Ensures informed consent prior to and throughout service provision.
- 4.4 Assesses occupational performance and enablement needs of client.
- 4.5 Develops client-specific plan with client, inter-professional team members, and other stakeholders.
- 4.6 Implements plan for occupational therapy services.
- 4.7 Monitors plan to modify in a timely and appropriate manner.

UNIT 5: Communicates and Collaborates Effectively: Occupational therapists use effective communication and collaboration approaches for safe, ethical and effective practice.

- 5.1 Communicates effectively with client, inter-professional team and other stakeholders using client-centred principles that address physical, social, cultural or other barriers to communication.
- 5.2 Communicates using a timely and effective approach.
- 5.3 Maintains confidentiality and security in the sharing, transmission, storage and management of information.
- 5.4 Collaborates with client, inter-professional team and other stakeholders.
- 5.5 Works effectively with client, inter-professional team and other stakeholders to manage professional relationships.

UNIT 6: Engages in Professional Development: Occupational therapists engage in professional development for safe, ethical and effective practice.

- 6.1 Uses self-evaluation, new learning and evidence in professional development.
- 6.2 Demonstrates commitment to continuing competence.
- 6.3 Enhances personal competence through integration of on-going learning into practice.

UNIT 7: Manages Own Practice and Advocates Within Systems: Occupational therapists manage the quality of practice, and advocate within systems for safe, ethical and effective practice.

- 7.1 Manages day-to-day practice processes.
- 7.2 Manages assignment of service to support personnel, other staff, students and others under the occupational therapist's supervision.
- 7.3 Contributes to a practice environment that supports client-centered occupational therapy service, which is safe, ethical and effective.
- 7.4 Demonstrates commitment to client and provider safety.
- 7.5 Participates in quality improvement initiatives.
- 7.6 Advocates for the occupational potential, occupational performance and occupational engagement of clients.

ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES FOR NON-CLINICAL PRACTICE

UNIT A: Assumes Professional Responsibility: Occupational therapists assume professional responsibility for safe, ethical and effective development, delivery, oversight and/or improvement of systems and services.

- A.1 Demonstrates a commitment to their work, the public and the profession.
- A.2 Works within scope of professional and personal limitations and abilities.
- A.3 Adheres to the Code of Ethics recognized by the provincial regulatory organization.
- A.4 Applies ethical frameworks to solve ethical situations.
- A.5 Demonstrates professional integrity.

UNIT B: Thinks Critically: Occupational therapists use critical reasoning and reflection approaches for safe, ethical and effective development, delivery, oversight and/or improvement of systems and services.

- B.1 Demonstrates sound professional judgment and reasoning in decision-making.
- B.2 Engages in reflection and evaluation, and integrates findings into work.

UNIT C: Communicates and Collaborates Effectively: Occupational therapists use effective communication and collaboration approaches for safe, ethical and effective development, delivery, oversight and/or improvement of systems and services.

- C.1 Communicates using a timely and effective approach.
- C.2 Maintains confidentiality and security in the sharing, transmission, storage and management of information.

UNIT D: Engages in Professional Development: Occupational therapists engage in professional development for safe, ethical and effective development, delivery, oversight and/or improvement of systems and services.

- D.1 Uses self-evaluation, new learning and evidence in professional development.
- D.2 Demonstrates commitment to continuing competence.
- D.3 Enhances personal competence through integration of on-going learning.

UNIT E: Manages Own Work and Advocates Within Systems: Occupational therapists manage the quality of practice and advocate within systems for safe, ethical and effective development, delivery, oversight and/or improvement of systems and services.

- E.1 Demonstrates commitment to safety.
- E.2 Participates in quality improvement initiatives.

