

Board of Physical and Occupational Therapy

Republic Act No. 5680

An Act Creating the Board of Examiners for Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists.

Section 1. *Short title of Act.*- This Act shall be known as the Philippine Physical and Occupational Therapy Law.

Section 2. *Definition of Terms.*- As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- a. Physical therapy is the art and science of treatment by means of therapeutic exercises, heat, cold, light, water, manual manipulation, electricity, and other physical agents.
- b. Physical therapy technician is a person, who not having acquired a bachelor's degree in Physical Therapy is qualified through in-service training and practical experience to assist in the application of physiotherapeutic procedures and to undertake specific assignments as directed by a qualified physical therapist in carrying out the prescription of a licensed physician. Such assignments shall be confined within the limits of a hospital or institution of employment.
- c. Rehabilitation medicine, at the patient level, is the "clinical management of the problems associated with disability, with the objective of improving to the maximum level the physical, socio-economic and physiological functioning of a disabled individual. Medical rehabilitation is an integral part of total medical care. Total rehabilitation is best achieved through the coordinated work of various health disciplines like medicine, psychology, social work, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and hearing, nursing, vocational evaluation, dietetics, and special education."
- d. Physical therapist is a person legally qualified and licensed to practice physical therapy under this Act.
- e. Physiatrist is a legally qualified and licensed physician specializing in the practice of rehabilitation medicine.
- f. Occupational therapy is a paramedical discipline concerned with the administration of medically prescribed treatment, in the form of supervised activity, to persons disabled by disease or injury. The objective of occupational therapy is to contribute to the development of the disabled person's independence, to improve his emotional, social, and physical well-being and his ability to care for himself both at home and on the job, and to begin early evaluations and experimentation for future job training and employment. Occupational therapy may be prescribed by a general medical practitioner or a specialist in any of the recognized branches of medicine and is administered under the direction of a registered occupational therapist.
- g. Occupational therapist is a legally qualified person licensed to practice occupational therapy under this Act and who by accepted academic training and professional clinical experience possesses the knowledge and skills to achieve the objectives as defined and set by the occupational therapy profession. The occupational therapist functions through the use of the basic methods, approaches and procedures of occupational therapy (creative, manipulative, educational, pre-vocational evaluation and self-care activities) which are designed to assess and develop the actual and potential abilities of the individual. The occupational therapist plans, organizes, evaluates, and participates in a medically oriented treatment program to assist the disabled person towards physical independence, productivity, and constructive personal or social relationship. The occupational therapist functions in general and special hospitals, rehabilitation and welfare centers, pediatric clinics, psychiatric clinics, specialized schools, geriatric institutions, home care programs, and work-adjustments units.
- h. Occupational therapy technician or assistant is a person who, not having acquired a bachelor's degree in occupational therapy, is qualified, as determined by a bona fide national professional association of occupational therapists in the Philippines through in-service training under practical experience, to function as an assistant to and under the direct supervision of an occupational therapist to assist in rehabilitating patients in hospitals and similar institutions.
- i. Disability is a loss or reduction of a person's capacity to effectively cope with the demands of his environment as a result of disease or injury, including birth trauma.

Section 3. *Board of Examiners for Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists.*- There is hereby created a Board of Examiners for Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists,¹ hereinafter called the Board, to be composed of a chairman and four members who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines with the consent of the Commission on Appointments.² The chairman shall be a physiatrist and for members shall be two professionally qualified occupational therapists and two professionally qualified physical therapists. The physiatrist shall be appointed from the lists of qualified physiatrists, submitted by the society of physical medicine and rehabilitation and the occupational therapists and physical therapists by their respective bona fide national professional organization or association and submitted to the President of the Philippines through the Commissioner of Civil Service.³ Succeeding Board shall consist of a chairman who shall be a physiatrist recommended and appointed as hereinabove stated, two members shall be registered physical therapists recommended by the Philippine Physical Therapy Association, and two members who shall be

registered occupational therapists who shall be recommended by the Occupational Therapy Association of the Philippines, Incorporated. The chairman and members of the Board shall be appointed within six months from the approval of this Act.

Section 4. Qualifications of Board Members.- The chairman and members of the Board, at the time of their appointment, shall each be:

- a. A citizen and resident of the Philippines for at least five years;
- b. At least thirty-five years of age if he is a chairman, or thirty years of age if he is a member;
- c. Of good moral character and must not have been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude;
- d. A physiatrist if he is the chairman, or a holder of a bachelor's degree in physical therapy or occupational therapy with at least five years experience as a physical therapist or occupational therapist as the case may be; and
- e. Not member of the faculty of any school, college or university conferring a bachelor's degree in physical therapy or occupational therapy as a major study at the time of his appointment nor have any pecuniary interest, directly or indirectly, in such institution: *Provided*, That this subparagraph shall not be applicable to the chairman and members of the first Board.

Section 5. Powers and Duties of the Board.- The Board shall have the following powers and duties:

- a. To issue, suspend, revoke, or re-issue any certificate of registration for the practice of physical therapy or occupational therapy as defined in this Act;
- b. To study, promote and improve the conditions of the practice of physical therapy and occupational therapy in the Philippines;
- c. To give examinations to applicants for the practice of physical therapy and occupational therapy in accordance with the provisions of this Act;⁴
- d. To look into the conditions affecting the practice of physical therapy and occupational therapy in the Philippines and, whenever necessary, adopt such measures as may be proper for the maintenance of good ethics and high professional standard in the practice of such professions;
- e. To study the condition affecting physical therapy and occupational therapy education; to study and examine facilities and prescribe the basic curricula of any school, college or university seeking permission to open or offering practice of physical therapy and occupational therapy program or course; and to require the employment of qualified members of the faculty in such educational institutions. No school, college or university shall be authorized to offer courses in physical therapy and occupational therapy without the favorable written recommendation of the Board;
- f. To exercise such other powers, functions and duties as may be necessary to carry into effect the purposes of this Act and to maintain an efficient, ethical, moral and professional standard in the practice of physical therapy and occupational therapy in the Philippines.

Section 6. Term of Office of Board Members.- The chairman and members of the Board shall hold office for a term of three years and until their successors shall have been appointed and qualified: *Provided*, That of the first Board, two members, a physical therapist and occupational therapist, shall hold office for a term of two years and the other two members belonging to the same two professions shall hold office for a term of three years. Any vacancy in the Board for any cause other than the expiration of the term shall be filled by appointment until the expiration of the term of the member to be replaced.

Section 7. Removal of members.- Any member of the Board may be removed by the President of the Philippines for neglect of duty, incompetence, malpractice, or unprofessional, unethical, immoral or dishonorable conduct after having been given the opportunity to defend himself in a proper administrative investigation: *Provided*, That pending the final disposition of the case against him, a member may be suspended by the President and another appointed to fill the temporary vacancy in the Board.

*Section 8. Executive Officer of the Board.*⁵- The Commissioner of Civil Service shall be the executive officer of the board, and shall conduct the examination given by it according to the rules and regulations promulgated by him and approved by the President, the secretary of the board of examiners appointed in accordance with Section ten of Republic Act Numbered Four Thousand Seven, as amended, shall be the Secretary of the Board. All records of administrative proceeding and investigation of the board shall be kept by the Civil Service Commission. The secretary of the board shall keep separate registers of all persons to whom certificates of registration for the practice of physical therapy and occupational therapy, respectively, have been issued. Such registers shall contain the name and sex of the physical therapist of the occupational therapist registered therein and the name of the school, college of university from which he graduated or in which he studied. He shall keep such registers up to date.

Section 9. Compensation of Board Members.- The members of the Board shall each receive as compensation the sum of ten pesos for each applicant examined. Any member of the Board who is in the service of the Government shall receive the compensation herein provided in addition to his salary.⁶

Section 10. Rules and Regulations.- Subject to approval of the President of the Philippines and with the advice of the Commissioner of Civil Service,⁷ the Board shall adopt rules and regulations to carry out the

provisions of this Act and shall set ethical and professional standards of the practice of physical therapy and occupational therapy in the Philippines.

Section 11. *Annual Report.*- The Board shall submit an annual report to the President of the Philippines and the President of the Senate⁸ and Speaker of the House of Representatives⁹ after the close of each fiscal year, giving a detailed account of the proceedings of the Board during the year and embodying such recommendations as the Board may desire to make.

Section 12. *Inhibition Against the Practice of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy.*- No person shall practice or offer to practice physical therapy and occupational therapy in the Philippines as defined in this Act, without the prescription of a duly registered physician and a valid certificate of registration as a physical therapist or an occupational therapist, as the case may be issued by the Board of Examiners for Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists.¹⁰

A person shall be deemed to be practicing physical therapy within the meaning of this Act, who for a fee or other consideration applies or advises the use of heat, cold, light, electricity or other means for the treatment or prevention of disorders or neuro-muscular or musculoskeletal systems of the human body or subject a patient to passive mobilization or physical rehabilitation procedures repeatedly.

A person shall be deemed to be practicing occupational therapy within the meaning of this Act, who for a fee or other consideration, applies or advises the use of the treatment or prevention of disorders of the physical or psychological formation of the human body, or subjects a patient to occupational therapy procedures repeatedly.

Section 13. *Exemptions.*- Nothing in this Act shall be construed to apply or affect the practice of (a) any registered physician; (b) any physical therapy and occupational therapy student as part of their undergraduate training in an approved school, college or university for physical therapy and occupational therapy, as the case may be; (c) all physical therapist who are already in the government service who became eligible by virtue of the testimonial examination given by the Civil Service Commission on December twenty-nine, nineteen hundred and sixty-seven in the City of Manila.

Section 14. *Holding of Examinations.*- Except as otherwise specifically provided, all applicants for registration for the practice of physical therapy in the Philippines shall be given by the Board¹¹ on the first Saturday of June and December of each year, and for the practice of occupational therapy one week thereafter, at the City of Manila or at such other places as may be deemed necessary or expedient by the Board,¹² subject to the approval of the Commissioner of the Civil Service and the President of the Philippines.

Section 15. *Qualifications of Applicants.*- In order to be admitted to the physical therapists' examination or the occupational therapists' examination, as the case may be, an applicant must, at the time of the filing of his or her application, establish to the satisfaction of the Board that:

- a. He is a citizen of the Philippines, or if a foreigner, must prove that the country of which he is a subject or citizen permits Filipino physical therapists and occupational therapists to practice within its territorial jurisdiction on the same basis as the subjects or citizens of such country;
- b. He is least twenty-one years of age;
- c. He is of good health and of good moral character;
- d. He has finished a standard academic high school course or its equivalent in a school, college or university legally established or duly recognized by the government;
- e. He has received a degree, if he is an applicant for the physical therapy examination, in Physical Therapy from a school of physical therapy duly recognized by the Government: *Provided*, That such educational institution offers at least the following academic subjects prior to the admission in the main physical therapy course, namely, English, Mathematics, Speech, Political Science, Social Science, Humanities, Psychology, Spanish, Physics, Zoology and Chemistry: *Provided, further*, That such educational institution offers at least the following academic subjects in the main therapy course, namely: Anatomy, Physiology, Applied Kinesiology, Introduction to Nursing, Theory and Practice of Massage, Electrotherapy, Prosthetics, Splinting, Bandaging and Plasterwork, Exercise Therapy, General Medical and Surgical Conditions, Neurological and Orthopedic Conditions, Principles of Rehabilitation, Pathology, Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation, Selected Medical and Surgical Conditions, Administration and Ethics, Medical Psychology; or He has received a degree, if he is an applicant for the occupational therapy examination, in Occupational Therapy or any other title of equivalent standard from a school of occupational therapy duly recognized by the Government: *Provided*, That such educational institution offers at least the following academic subjects prior to admission in the main occupational therapy course, namely, English, Spanish, Humanities, Zoology, Chemistry, Sociology, Philippine History and Works of Rizal, Mathematics: *Provided, further*, That such educational institution offers at least the following academic subjects in the main occupational therapy course, namely, Biological Sciences consisting of Human Anatomy and Physiology, Neuroanatomy and Neurophysiology, and Kinesiology (Principles of Human Motion); Behavioral Sciences consisting of Human Development, Personality Development, Group Processes, Interpersonal and Interprofessional Relationships; Physical and Psychological Dysfunction Basic, General Pathology subjects including General and Medical Conditions, Neurological and Orthopedic Conditions, Pediatrics and Psychiatry; Occupational Therapy Skills consisting of Creative and Manual Arts, Vocational and Avocational Activities, Daily Living Skills and Teaching Techniques;

Occupational Therapy Orientation Evaluation and Treatment, Principles of Physical and Psychosocial Dysfunction consisting of Organization and Administration, General Medical and Surgical Conditions Neurological and Orthopedic Conditions, Psychology, Prevocational;

- f. He has completed at least nine months of internship in Physical Therapy in an adequate Physical Therapy Department of a hospital or clinic as certified by the Department of Health;¹³ or has at least nine months clinical experience under the supervision of a competent and duly registered occupational therapist in an accredited hospital or institution, as the case may be. Clinical experience shall include the effective treatment of psychosocial and physical dysfunction of patients of wide age range and of both sexes.

Section 16. *Scope of Examination.*- The examinations for the practice of physical therapy and occupational therapy in the Philippines shall consist of written and practical examinations of the scope which shall be determined by the Board, taking into consideration the teaching plan of the schools legally constituted in the Philippines. It shall be the duty of the Board to prepare the schedule of subjects mentioned in subparagraph (e) of the preceding section of this Act, as well as practical and clinical examinations of all candidates, and to submit the same to the President of the Philippines for approval through the Commissioner of Civil Service, and to publish the same as approved at least two months before the date of examination wherein such subjects are to be used. Any alteration or amendment that may be made in the schedule of subjects shall likewise be approved by the President.

Section 17. *Ratings in the Examination.*- In order to pass the first examination, a candidate must obtain a general rating of not below seventy-five percent in the written examination with no rating below sixty percent. Any applicant who failed in the first examination but obtained seventy-five percent in each of at least five of the subjects may be permitted to take a second examination within one year from date of the first examination. In order to pass in the second examination, the examinee must obtain a rating not below seventy-five percent in each of the subjects repeated: *Provided*, That an applicant who failed in the set of subjects repeated on the second examination must take a reexamination in all the subjects within one year from the date of the second examination: *Provided, further*, That should he still fail in the third re-examination, the applicant shall be required to undertake a prescribed course of study and to show proof of the completion of such course before he will be admitted to the fourth examination.

Section 18. *Report of the Results of the Examinations.*- The Board of Examiners for Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists¹⁴ shall, within one hundred twenty days after each examination, report the ratings obtained by each candidate to the Professional Regulation Commission, who shall, with his recommendation, submit such ratings to the President for his approval.

Section 19. *Issuance of Certificates.*- Certificates of registration as physical therapists or occupational therapist shall be issued to any applicant who passes the respective examination after approval for his ratings by the President of the Philippines upon payment of the required fees. Every certificate of registration shall show the full name of the registrant, have a serial number, bear the signatures of the members of the Board attested by the secretary of the Board and duly authenticated by the seal of the Board of Examiners for Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists. The issuance of certificate of registration by the Board to the registrant shall evidence that the person named therein is entitled to all right and privileges of a registered physical therapist or a registered occupational therapist, as the case may be, until the said certificate for just cause, is revoked temporarily or canceled. For all intents and purposes of this act members of the first Board shall be considered as having duly qualified and registered as occupational therapists and physical therapists as the case may be.

Section 20. *Initial.*- The initials PTRP and OTRP, which stand for Physical Therapist Registered, Philippines and Occupational Therapist Registered, Philippines, may be added after the name of the physical therapist or occupational therapist, as the case may be, who successfully passes the examination given by the Board.

Section 21. *Registration by reciprocity.*- Any physical therapist, physiatrist or occupational therapist holding valid certificate of registration issued under the laws of a foreign country may practice his profession in the Philippines without passing an examination given by the Board;¹⁵ if the requirements for the registration and licensing of a physical therapy, physiatrist or occupational therapist in such foreign country are substantially the same as those provided for in this Act and that the laws of such country or state grant the same privileges to physical therapist, physiatrists and occupational therapists registered in the Philippines on the same basis as the subjects or citizens of such foreign country or state.

Section 22. *Examination and Registration Fees.*- Applicants for examination for the profession of physical therapy or occupational therapy shall pay an examination fee of twenty-five pesos each. Successful applicants shall pay a registration fee of ten pesos each.

Section 23. *Refusal to Issue Certificate in Certain Cases.*- The Board of Examiners for Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapist shall not issue a certificate of registration to any person convicted of any criminal offense involving moral turpitude by a court of competent jurisdiction, and to any person guilty of illegal practice, unethical advertising, or other immoral or dishonorable conduct. The Board shall give the applicant a

written statement of the reason or reasons for its action, which statement shall be incorporated in the records of the Board.

Section 24. *Re-issuance of Revoked Certificate and Replacement of Lost Certificate.*- The Board¹⁵ may, for reasons of equity and justice and upon proper application therefore, issue another copy, original or duplicate, upon the payment of ten pesos, of a certificate which has been revoked. A new certificate of registration to replace a lost, destroyed or mutilated certificate may be issued subject to the rules of the Board and upon the payment of ten pesos.

Section 25. *Professional Licenses Fee.*- A registered physical therapist or occupational therapist shall pay a professional license fee of fifty pesos per annum, payable annually or semi-annually.

Section 26. All laws, parts of laws, orders, or ordinances, or regulations in conflict with the provisions of this Act pertaining to physical or occupational therapeutic duty and practice shall be, and are hereby repealed.

Section 27. *Prohibition in the Practice of Physical Therapy or Occupational Therapy; Penalty.*- Any person who shall practice physical therapy or occupational therapy in the Philippines within the meaning of this Act, without a valid certificate of registration issued by the Board of Examiners for Physical Therapist and Occupational Therapist or any person presenting as his or her own the certificate of another, or any person giving any false or forged evidence to the Board in order to obtain a certificate of registration or admission to examination, or any person assuming or advertising himself or herself as a registered physical therapist or registered occupational therapist, or any person violating any provision of this Act shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine of not less than one thousand pesos nor more than five thousand pesos or to suffer imprisonment for a period of not less than one year nor more than five years, or both such fine and imprisonment at the discretion of the Court.

Section 28. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved, June 21, 1969.