



# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

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## Final Analysis

Audra Tidball

### **Sub. H.B. 131**

132nd General Assembly  
(As Passed by the General Assembly)

**Reps.** Gavarone and Reineke, Blessing, Lepore-Hagan, Anielski, Antonio, Arndt, Ashford, Greenspan, Hambley, Henne, Holmes, Hoops, Manning, Patton, Pelanda, Rogers, Ryan, Schaffer, Scherer, Schuring, Seitz, Slaby, Stein, M. Sweeney, West, Wiggam

**Sens.** Gardner, Beagle, Tavares, Sykes, Burke, Dolan, Hackett, Kunze, Thomas

**Effective date:** March 20, 2019

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## **ACT SUMMARY**

- Revises the physical therapy licensing law's description of the components and purpose of the practice of physical therapy.
  - Authorizes a physical therapist to determine the following in evaluating a person: (1) a physical therapy diagnosis (but not a medical diagnosis), (2) a prognosis, and (3) a plan of therapeutic intervention.
  - Extends a physical therapist's authority to perform massage by authorizing the use of other manual therapy techniques.
  - Allows a physical therapist assistant licensed or registered in another country to qualify for licensure in Ohio by demonstrating equivalency to Ohio's licensing requirements.
  - Modifies certain procedures to be followed by physical therapists and physical therapist assistants when submitting license applications.
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## **CONTENT AND OPERATION**

### **Physical therapy**

The act revises the physical therapy licensing laws that describe the activities a physical therapist may perform, as well as their purpose. The practice of physical

therapy continues to be described generally as the evaluation and treatment of a person by physical measures and the use of therapeutic exercises and rehabilitative procedures, with or without assistive devices, for preventing, correcting, or alleviating certain conditions.<sup>1</sup>

### **Purpose**

In place of prior law, which described the purpose of physical therapy in relation to any disability, the act specifies that the purpose of physical therapy applies with respect to disabilities that are physical. The act also specifies that physical therapy's purpose applies in the case of physical impairments and functional limitations.

### **Patient evaluation and diagnosis**

The act authorizes a physical therapist, in the evaluation of a person, to determine the following:<sup>2</sup>

(1) A physical therapy diagnosis, which is defined as a judgment made after examining the neuromusculoskeletal system or evaluating or studying its symptoms and that uses physical therapy techniques and science to establish a plan of therapeutic intervention. The act specifies that a physical therapy diagnosis is made in order to treat a person's physical impairments, functional limitations, and physical disabilities, but it does not include a medical diagnosis.

(2) A prognosis.

(3) A plan of therapeutic intervention.

### **Manual therapy techniques**

In addition to the preexisting authority to use massage in the practice of physical therapy, the act permits a physical therapist to use other manual therapy techniques.<sup>3</sup>

### **Adequate training specification**

The act retains a provision specifying that adequate training is a condition of a physical therapist's activities involving assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, prosthetics, and orthotics.<sup>4</sup> Although the act removes the adequate training condition

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. 4755.40.

<sup>2</sup> R.C. 4755.40(A)(1) and (B).

<sup>3</sup> R.C. 4755.40(C).

<sup>4</sup> R.C. 4755.40(A)(1).

from other physical therapy activities, the requirement to be licensed to perform those activities is not altered.<sup>5</sup>

## Physical therapist assistants

### Endorsement of foreign licensure

The act establishes procedures whereby a physical therapist assistant who is licensed or registered in another country may apply and qualify for licensure in Ohio by virtue of holding the foreign country's license or registration. These procedures are based on comparable procedures used by the Physical Therapy Section of the Ohio Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Athletic Trainers Board when licensing a physical therapist assistant by endorsing a license or registration from another state.

An applicant for a license under the act's procedures must be able to demonstrate that the applicant's education was reasonably equivalent to the requirements in effect in Ohio when the applicant was initially licensed or registered in the other country. The applicant also must meet all other requirements for Ohio's license, including a passing score on the national examination required by the Physical Therapy Section. An applicant for licensure by endorsement does not apply to the Section for approval to sit for the examination, as other applicants do under the general application procedures,<sup>6</sup> but still must complete the application process within one year. If not completed within that time, the applicant must reapply.<sup>7</sup>

The act requires the Board to adopt rules identifying credentialing organizations that conduct acceptable equivalency evaluations of foreign physical therapist assistant education. The Board also must adopt rules specifying other evidence that will be considered in evaluating whether an applicant's education is reasonably equivalent to Ohio's educational requirements.<sup>8</sup>

Regardless of the results of a credentialing organization's evaluation, the act permits the Physical Therapy Section to deny a license if it determines that the applicant's education was not reasonably equivalent to Ohio's educational

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<sup>5</sup> R.C. 4755.48 and 4755.99, not in the act.

<sup>6</sup> R.C. 4755.421(C). See also 4755.431, not in the act, and *PT/PTA Applications: Application Instructions and Forms*, available at <https://otptat.ohio.gov/Physical-Therapy/Applications>.

<sup>7</sup> See *Ohio OTPTAT Board: Physical Therapist/Physical Therapist Assistant Endorsement Application Instructions*, available at [https://otptat.ohio.gov/Portals/0/PTForms/PYT\\_PT%20ENDORSE\\_ELIC%20PACKET%202018.pdf](https://otptat.ohio.gov/Portals/0/PTForms/PYT_PT%20ENDORSE_ELIC%20PACKET%202018.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> R.C. 4755.411(K).



requirements. In that case, the Section must mail a notice to the applicant within 30 days and state the specific reason for the denial.<sup>9</sup>

### **Educational programs**

Under the general application procedures for a physical therapist assistant license, an applicant must submit proof of completing a program of education accredited by a national physical therapy association agency. The act specifies that the program must be for physical therapist assistants. It eliminates a requirement that the program be specifically two years.<sup>10</sup>

### **License application procedures**

Regarding the application procedures for a license to practice either as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant, the act makes the following revisions:<sup>11</sup>

(1) Requires that the application be filed with the Physical Therapy Section, rather than with the secretary of the Section as previously required;

(2) Eliminates the requirement that the application be notarized.

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## **HISTORY**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Introduced	03-16-17
Reported, H. Health	03-21-18
Passed House (95-0)	04-11-18
Reported, S. Health, Human Services & Medicaid	12-05-18
Passed Senate (31-0)	12-13-18
House concurred in Senate amendments (85-1)	12-13-18

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<sup>9</sup> R.C. 4755.451(B).

<sup>10</sup> R.C. 4755.421(A)(4).

<sup>11</sup> R.C. 4755.42(A) and 4755.421(A).

