

Fact Sheet: OT Compact in Mississippi

The **Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact** (OT Compact) makes it easier for licensed Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs) to practice *in all states and jurisdictions that join the compact*. The OT compact is voluntary; however, for practitioners who wish to obtain a privilege to practice through the compact, it will remove the need for them to get an individual license in each state where they want to practice.

The Basics

- The OT Compact is an interstate compact, which is a constitutionally authorized, legally binding contract between states.
- The OT compact is the same in form and function as other occupational licensure compacts that have passed in Mississippi, like the Physical Therapy Compact, the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Compact, the EMS Compact, and the Counseling Compact.
- The OT Compact authorizes in person practice and tele practice based on a valid, unrestricted home state license in other compact member states for both Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs).
- The OT Compact legislation must be passed in each state for each state to become a member. **22 states have enacted the OT Compact**, including neighboring states Alabama and Tennessee; Louisiana and Arkansas are considering the legislation this year.
- The American Occupational Therapy Association and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT®) are leading a joint effort. The National Center for Interstate Compacts at the Council of State Governments facilitated the development of the OT Compact and is providing technical assistance.

The Occupational Therapy Compact Will Increase Access to Care for Consumers

- **Improves continuity of care when clients travel or relocate:** If Mississippi residents travel to a compact state, they will be able to continue to consult and receive services from their occupational therapy practitioner either in person or through telehealth.
- **Improves access to occupational therapy services:** Compacts make it easier for occupational therapy practitioners to travel to Mississippi to provide services at hospitals, long-term care, home care settings, and school settings for special education services.

Building Health Care Workforce in MS

- **Improved Recruitment for Health Programs and Facilities:** Health care facilities are struggling to recruit and retain health care professionals, including occupational therapy practitioners. Compacts allow all types of health care facilities more flexibility in recruiting practitioners who live in other jurisdictions.
- **Preserve and strengthen state licensure systems:** The OT Compact has no impact on a state's scope of practice. The OT compact will also enhance states' authority to protect the public and regulate the OT profession. OTs and OTAs are licensed in all 50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, and Guam with consistency in licensure requirements.

The Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact is a joint initiative by AOTA and NBCOT®