

★ WELCOME TO ★

# YOUR GUIDE TO LEGISLATIVE & ADVOCACY KEY TERMS

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[NJOTA.ORG/ADVOCACY](https://www.njota.org/advocacy)

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## ABOUT NJOTA'S LEGISLATIVE GOALS

NJOTA has identified that within the New Jersey Occupational Therapy Licensing Act and the OT Regulations, critical areas are required to evolve with the current healthcare system. Such as missing the requirement of continuing education courses; adding this to the OT Licensing Act is necessary to join the OT National Compact. Clarity involving supervision for OTS and OTAs during therapy services via teletherapy, clarifying OT's scope of practice with Orthotics and mental health, drastically limiting accessible and equitable care. The current legislative restraints limit occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants' ability to provide flexible, accessible, and client-centered care to all New Jersey consumers in need of services. NJOTA aims to address these areas via statute and regulatory changes.

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# KEY TERMS

## ADVOCACY

- having public and proactive support for a profession (occupational therapy), idea, or organization (NJOTA) (Cambridge English Dictionary, n.d.)

## CONSTITUENT

- being a voting member of an organization (AOTA or NJOTA) or community (your voted representatives) and having the power to elect these representatives (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.).

## CONTINUING EDUCATION/CE

- The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) (2019) defines continuing education (CE) as “Structured educational experiences beyond entry-level academic degree work that are intended to provide advanced or enhanced knowledge in a particular area.”

## FIRST READING

- when a bill is introduced to the Senate or Assembly by its sponsor during a session. The Senate Secretary or Assembly Clerk reads the bill's title, marking its first reading (Disabilities Rights New Jersey, 2021).

## LEAD SPONSOR/PRIMARY SPONSOR

- A legislator that becomes the primary champion for that bill and will request, via the Office of Legislative Services, a non-partisan agency, to draft and provide assistance in getting the bill written into the proper technical form (Office of Legislative Services, 2020).

## LEGISLATOR

- An elected official who represents the views and concerns of the people in their part of the state, i.e., their district (Disabilities Rights New Jersey, 2021).

## LEGISLATURE

- Branch of government that makes new laws and changes old ones (Disabilities Rights New Jersey, 2021).

## LICENSED PRACTITIONER OF THE HEALING ARTS

- An individual recognized within the New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMAHS) as a mental/behavioral practitioner.

## LOBBYIST

- An organization or individual that works to influence governmental processes, legislative or regulatory, by using the services of governmental affairs agencies (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2021).

## NJ OT REGULATIONS

- New Jersey OT rules based on our current statutes to explain further and clarify the laws and OT's scope of practice. Regulations are interpreted by agencies (like the Occupational Therapy Advisory Council) (New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, n.d.).

# KEY TERMS CONT.

## NJOTA'S POLICY SURVEY/NEEDS

- NJOTA surveyed 8,043 current, active, licensed OT practitioners, reaching 21% of the targeted population on five areas of scope of practice within the current OT Licensing Act and Regulations. To see the results of this survey, go to [NJOTA.org/advocacy](https://njota.org/advocacy).

## CONTINUING EDUCATION/CE

- An OTP is either an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant who is licensed, actively engaged, and practicing in the profession (Merriam-Webster, n.d.; AOTA, n.d.).

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY LICENSURE COMPACT

- (OT Compact) is an interstate compact establishing a constitutionally sanctioned contract between states. There are many benefits of creating and enacting an OT Compact. This allows OTs from states within the compact to practice across state lines without the “red tape” of getting an additional license in said state. The OT Compact will significantly increase accessible and affordable occupational therapy services to underserved individuals (AOTA & National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy [NBCOT], 2020).

## OT ADVISORY COUNCIL

- This agency within the New Jersey Department of Consumer Affairs protects occupational therapy consumers (OT clients). It ensures OTs provide competent, ethical, and well-rounded care for them. This agency also has the authority to make regulatory changes.

## NEW JERSEY OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY LICENSING ACT/THE ACT

- Occupational therapy practitioner’s laws/statutes that establish the scope of practice within the state.

## SECOND READING

- A bill's title is read aloud again during a session. The bill is eligible for amendments during this step, allowing for further refinement before it advances (Office of Legislative Services, 2020).

## STAKEHOLDER

- This term encompasses any persons who are affected, impacted by, or is involved in a course of action, enterprise, or organization (Merriam-Webster, 2023).

# KEY TERMS CONT.

## STATUTE

- A law passed by the New Jersey legislature and has been voted on and vetted through the New Jersey legislative process. (Ex. The New Jersey Occupational Therapy Licensing Act) (Library of Congress, n.d.).

## THIRD READING

- It is scheduled by the Speaker or President. During this third reading, the bill is posted for a vote, and members can still debate the bill. The bill passes when it receives a majority vote of the members (41 votes in the Assembly and 21 votes in the Senate) (Office of Legislative Services, 2020).

# REFERENCES QR CODE



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