



Alaska State Board of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy

Date: April 24, 2020

Adopted by: The Alaska State Board of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy

PURPOSE: COVID 19 crisis impact on Alaska Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Licensees

HISTORY – On March 11, 2020 Governor Mike Dunleavy issued a Declaration of Public Health Disaster Emergency under AS 26.23.020(c) for COVID-19. Governor Dunleavy has issued subsequent health mandates limiting health professionals from performing services unless they are following the Health and Social Service (HSS) guidelines. Information and recommendations are ongoing and it is anticipated that these may change regularly. All licensees are expected to stay informed and follow HSS mandates. <https://covid19.alaska.gov/health-mandates/>

On April 10, 2020 Governor Dunleavy signed SB 241 into law.

Statement from the Board – The Board held a meeting on March 26, 2020. In review of COVID 19 public emergency and mandates the Board recognized a need to clarify emergent/urgent procedures. They also recognized COVID 19 restrictions have created the inability for some licensees to complete the continuing competency requirements for renewal of their professional licenses by June 30, 2020. The regulations for renewal requirements and audits add another burden during this trying time. The Board reviewed and acknowledged SB241 Sec. 6 (b)(2) provides the ability to waive continuing education requirements to licensees.

Summary:

COVID 19 mandates from Health and Social Service impact professional practice for Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy. The Board crafted clarification of Emergent/Urgent Procedures which are published to the website.

<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl/CBPLCOVID-19Information.aspx>

Enactment of SB 241 licensees may renew their license for the July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022 license period without having met all regulatory renewal requirements. Note: this decision does not apply to any licensee for this license renewal period who have a consent agreement and are under mandatory audit.

The Alaska State Board of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy per authority of SB241 Sec. 6 (b)(2) waives the 2020 license renewal requirement to provide 60 hours of therapy services and 24 contact hours of continuing education. The Board waives the continuing competency and audit requirements of 12 AAC 54.400 - 12 AAC 54.435 and 12 AAC 54.700 - 12 AAC 54.725 for the June 30, 2020, license renewal.