

**SENATE BILL NO. 49**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY SENATOR GIESSEL BY REQUEST

Introduced: 2/3/17

Referred: Labor and Commerce

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 **"An Act relating to the State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board;**  
2 **relating to the practice of physical therapy; and relating to the practice of occupational**  
3 **therapy."**

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 \* **Section 1.** AS 08.84.010 is amended to read:

6 **Sec. 08.84.010. Creation and membership of board.** (a) There is created the  
7 State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board, which consists of seven  
8 members. The membership consists of [ONE PHYSICIAN LICENSED TO  
9 PRACTICE MEDICINE IN THE STATE,] three physical therapists licensed in the  
10 state or two physical therapists and **one** [A] physical **therapist** [THERAPY] assistant  
11 licensed in the state, **three** [TWO] occupational therapists licensed in the state or **two**  
12 [AN] occupational **therapists** [THERAPIST] and **one** occupational therapy assistant  
13 licensed in the state, and one lay person with no direct financial interest in the health  
14 care industry. Members of the board shall be United States citizens domiciled in the

1 state.

2 (b) The board shall control all matters pertaining to the licensing of physical  
3 therapists, physical **therapist** [THERAPY] assistants, occupational therapists, and  
4 occupational therapy assistants and the practice of physical therapy and the practice of  
5 occupational therapy. The board shall

6 (1) pass upon the qualifications of applicants;

7 (2) provide for the examination of applicants;

8 (3) issue temporary permits and licenses to persons qualified under this  
9 chapter;

10 (4) suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue or renew a license under  
11 AS 08.84.120;

12 (5) keep a current register listing the name, business address, date, and  
13 number of the license of each person who is licensed to practice under this chapter;

14 (6) adopt regulations under AS 44.62 necessary to carry out the  
15 purposes of this chapter including regulations establishing qualifications for licensure  
16 and renewal of licensure under this chapter.

17 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 08.84.030 is amended to read:

18 **Sec. 08.84.030. Qualifications for licensing.** (a) To be eligible for licensure  
19 by the board as a physical therapist or physical **therapist** [THERAPY] assistant, an  
20 applicant, unless a graduate of a foreign school of physical therapy located outside the  
21 United States, shall

22 (1) have graduated from a **professional** [SCHOOL OF] physical  
23 therapy **education program that is accredited by a national accreditation agency**  
24 **and** approved by the **board** [COUNCIL ON MEDICAL EDUCATION AND  
25 HOSPITALS OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, OR THE  
26 AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION];

27 (2) pass, to the satisfaction of the board, an examination prepared by a  
28 national testing service approved by the board to determine the applicant's fitness for  
29 practice as a physical therapist or physical **therapist** [THERAPY] assistant, or be  
30 entitled to licensure without examination as provided in AS 08.84.060;

31 (3) meet qualifications for licensure established in regulations adopted

1 by the board under AS 08.84.010(b).

2 (b) To be eligible for licensure by the board as an occupational therapist or  
3 occupational therapy assistant, an applicant, unless a graduate of a foreign school of  
4 occupational therapy located outside the United States, shall

5 (1) have graduated from a professional [SUCCESSFULLY  
6 COMPLETED A CURRICULUM OF] occupational therapy education program that  
7 is accredited by a national accreditation agency and approved by the board  
8 [COMMITTEE OF ALLIED HEALTH EDUCATION AND ACCREDITATION OF  
9 THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OR THE AMERICAN  
10 OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION];

11 (2) SUBMIT PROOF OF SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION AND  
12 SUPERVISED FIELD WORK APPROVED BY THE BOARD

13 (A) FOR AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST, A MINIMUM  
14 OF SIX MONTHS OF SUPERVISED FIELD WORK;

15 (B) FOR AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT, A  
16 MINIMUM OF TWO MONTHS OF SUPERVISED FIELD WORK;

17 (3) pass, to the satisfaction of the board, an examination prepared by a  
18 national testing service approved by the board or an examination recognized by the  
19 American Occupational Therapy Association to determine the applicant's fitness for  
20 practice as an occupational therapist or an occupational therapy assistant, or be entitled  
21 to licensure without examination under AS 08.84.060; and

22 (3) [(4)] meet qualifications for licensure established in regulations  
23 adopted by the board under AS 08.84.010(b).

24 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 08.84.032 is amended to read:

25 **Sec. 08.84.032. Foreign-educated [FOREIGN-TRAINED] applicants.** (a)  
26 To be eligible for licensure by the board as a physical therapist or physical therapist  
27 [THERAPY] assistant, an applicant who is a graduate of a school of physical therapy  
28 that is located outside of the United States shall

29 (1) have completed, to the satisfaction of the board, a resident course  
30 of study and professional instruction substantially equivalent to a professional  
31 physical therapy education program that is accredited by a national accreditation

1 **agency in the United States** [THAT PROVIDED BY A SCHOOL APPROVED BY  
 2 THE COUNCIL ON MEDICAL EDUCATION AND HOSPITALS OF THE  
 3 AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OR THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL  
 4 THERAPY ASSOCIATION, AND FURNISH DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF  
 5 COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PARAGRAPH, TRANSLATED, IF NECESSARY,  
 6 INTO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE BY A PERSON VERIFYING THE  
 7 ACCURACY OF THE TRANSLATIONS];

8 (2) have completed, to the satisfaction of the board, an internship  
 9 under the continuous direction and immediate supervision of a physical therapist in an  
 10 institution that ordinarily provides physical therapy and is approved by the board, for  
 11 that period of time specified by the board, and furnish documentary evidence of  
 12 compliance with this paragraph;

13 (3) pass an examination recognized by the board that measures the  
 14 competence of the applicant in the English language **if the applicant's physical**  
 15 **therapist or physical therapist assistant education program was not taught in**  
 16 **English**;

17 (4) have met applicable requirements under the **8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.**  
 18 **(Immigration and Nationality Act)** [FEDERAL IMMIGRATION AND  
 19 NATIONALITY ACT (8 U.S.C. 1101 ET SEQ.)], unless a United States citizen;

20 (5) pass the examination administered by the board under  
 21 AS 08.84.030(a)(2); [AND]

22 (6) pay the fee required under AS 08.84.050; **and**

23 **(7) meet additional qualifications for licensure established in**  
 24 **regulations adopted by the board under AS 08.84.010(b).**

25 (b) To be eligible for licensure by the board as an occupational therapist or  
 26 occupational therapy assistant, an applicant who is a graduate of a school of  
 27 occupational therapy that is located outside of the United States shall

28 (1) have completed, to the satisfaction of the board, a resident course  
 29 of study and professional instruction **substantially** equivalent to **a professional**  
 30 **occupational therapy education program that is accredited by a national**  
 31 **accreditation agency in the United States** [THAT PROVIDED BY A

1 CURRICULUM APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE OF ALLIED HEALTH  
 2 EDUCATION AND ACCREDITATION OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL  
 3 ASSOCIATION OR THE AMERICAN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY  
 4 ASSOCIATION, AND HAVE FURNISHED DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF  
 5 COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PARAGRAPH, TRANSLATED, IF NECESSARY,  
 6 INTO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE BY A PERSON VERIFYING THE  
 7 ACCURACY OF THE TRANSLATIONS];

8 (2) have completed, to the satisfaction of the board, supervised field  
 9 work equivalent to that required under AS 08.84.030(b);

10 (3) pass an examination recognized by the board that measures the  
 11 competence of the applicant in the English language **if the applicant's occupational**  
 12 **therapist or occupational therapy assistant education program was not taught in**  
 13 **English;**

14 (4) have met applicable requirements under 8 U.S.C. 1101 - 1503  
 15 (Immigration and Nationality Act) unless a United States citizen;

16 (5) pass an examination administered or approved by the board under  
 17 AS 08.84.030; [AND]

18 (6) pay the fee required under AS 08.84.050; **and**

19 **(7) meet additional qualifications for licensure established in the**  
 20 **regulations adopted by the board under AS 08.84.010(b).**

21 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 08.84.060 is amended to read:

22 **Sec. 08.84.060. Licensure by acceptance of credentials.** The board may  
 23 license without examination an applicant who is a physical therapist, physical  
 24 **therapist** [THERAPY] assistant, occupational therapist, or occupational therapy  
 25 assistant licensed under the laws of another state, if the requirements for licensure in  
 26 that state, were, at the date of the applicant's licensure, substantially equal to the  
 27 requirements in this state.

28 \* **Sec. 5.** AS 08.84.065(c) is amended to read:

29 (c) A temporary permit issued to an applicant for licensure as a physical  
 30 therapist or physical **therapist** [THERAPY] assistant by examination is valid for eight  
 31 months or until the results of the first examination for which the applicant is scheduled

1 are published, whichever occurs first. If the applicant fails to take the first examination  
 2 for which the applicant is scheduled the applicant's temporary permit lapses on the day  
 3 of the examination.

4 \* **Sec. 6.** AS 08.84.075(b) is amended to read:

5 (b) The board may issue a limited permit to a person to practice physical  
 6 therapy in the state as a visiting, nonresident physical therapist or physical **therapist**  
 7 [THERAPY] assistant, if the person

8 (1) applies on the form provided by the board;

9 (2) has not previously been denied physical therapy licensure in the  
 10 state;

11 (3) is licensed to practice physical therapy in another state;

12 (4) provides proof satisfactory to the board that the person will not  
 13 practice in the state for more than 120 days in the calendar year for which the permit is  
 14 issued; and

15 (5) pays the fee required under AS 08.84.050.

16 \* **Sec. 7.** AS 08.84.075(c) is amended to read:

17 (c) A limited permit is valid for a period **of** [NOT EXCEEDING] 120  
 18 **consecutive** days in a calendar year.

19 \* **Sec. 8.** AS 08.84.075(d) is amended to read:

20 (d) A person may not receive more than

21 **(1) one limited permit in a 12-month period; and**

22 **(2)** three limited permits to practice occupational therapy or physical  
 23 therapy during the person's lifetime.

24 \* **Sec. 9.** AS 08.84.090 is amended to read:

25 **Sec. 08.84.090. Licensure.** The board shall license an applicant who meets the  
 26 qualifications for licensure under this chapter. It shall issue a license certificate to each  
 27 person licensed. A license certificate is prima facie evidence of the right of the person  
 28 to hold out as a licensed physical therapist, licensed physical **therapist** [THERAPY]  
 29 assistant, licensed occupational therapist, or licensed occupational therapy assistant.

30 \* **Sec. 10.** AS 08.84.120(a) is amended to read:

31 (a) The board may refuse to license an applicant, may refuse to renew the

1 license of a person, **may discipline**, and may suspend or revoke the license of a person  
2 who

3 (1) has obtained or attempted to obtain a license by fraud or material  
4 misrepresentation;

5 (2) uses drugs or alcohol in a manner that affects the person's ability to  
6 practice physical therapy or occupational therapy competently and safely;

7 (3) has been convicted of a state or federal felony or other crime that  
8 affects the person's ability to practice competently and safely;

9 (4) is guilty, in the judgment of the board, of gross negligence or  
10 malpractice or has engaged in conduct contrary to the recognized standards of ethics  
11 of the physical therapy profession or the occupational therapy profession;

12 (5) has continued to practice physical therapy or occupational therapy  
13 after becoming unfit due to physical or mental disability;

14 (6) has failed to refer a patient to another qualified professional when  
15 the patient's condition is beyond the training or ability of the person;

16 (7) as a physical **therapist** [THERAPY] assistant, has attempted to  
17 practice physical therapy that has not been initiated, supervised, and terminated by a  
18 licensed physical therapist; [OR]

19 (8) as an occupational therapy assistant, has attempted to practice  
20 occupational therapy that has not been supervised by a licensed occupational therapist;  
21 **or**

22 **(9) failed to comply with this chapter, a regulation adopted under**  
23 **this chapter, or an order of the board.**

24 \* **Sec. 11.** AS 08.84.130(a) is amended to read:

25 (a) A person not licensed as a physical therapist, or whose license is  
26 suspended, [OR] revoked, or [WHOSE LICENSE IS] lapsed, who uses in connection  
27 with the person's name the words or letters **"P.T.," "Physical Therapist,"**  
28 **"Physiotherapist," "L.P.T.,"** [,] "Licensed Physical Therapist," or other letters,  
29 words, or insignia indicating or implying that the person is a licensed physical  
30 therapist, or who, in any way, orally [,] or in writing, directly or by implication, holds  
31 out as a licensed physical therapist is guilty of a class B misdemeanor.

1 \* **Sec. 12.** AS 08.84.130(b) is amended to read:

2 (b) A person not licensed as a physical **therapist** [THERAPY] assistant, or  
 3 whose license is suspended, [OR] revoked, or [WHOSE LICENSE IS] lapsed, who, in  
 4 any way, orally [,] or in writing, directly or by implication, holds out as a licensed  
 5 physical **therapist** [THERAPY] assistant is guilty of a class B misdemeanor.

6 \* **Sec. 13.** AS 08.84.190 is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

7 (8) "physical therapist assistant" means a person who assists in the  
 8 practice of physical therapy or portions of it as initiated, supervised, and terminated by  
 9 a licensed physical therapist; a physical therapist assistant's responsibilities do not  
 10 include testing or evaluation.

11 \* **Sec. 14.** AS 11.41.470(1) is amended to read:

12 (1) "health care worker" includes a person who is or purports to be an  
 13 acupuncturist, advanced practice registered nurse, anesthesiologist, certified direct-  
 14 entry midwife, chiropractor, dentist, health aide, hypnotist, massage therapist, mental  
 15 health counselor, midwife, nurse, osteopath, naturopath, physical therapist, physical  
 16 **therapist** [THERAPY] assistant, physician, physician assistant, psychiatrist,  
 17 psychological associate, psychologist, radiologist, religious healing practitioner,  
 18 surgeon, x-ray technician, or a substantially similar position;

19 \* **Sec. 15.** AS 47.17.290(14) is amended to read:

20 (14) "practitioner of the healing arts" includes athletic trainers,  
 21 chiropractors, mental health counselors, social workers, dental hygienists, dentists,  
 22 health aides, nurses, nurse practitioners, certified nurse aides, occupational therapists,  
 23 occupational therapy assistants, optometrists, osteopaths, naturopaths, physical  
 24 therapists, physical **therapist** [THERAPY] assistants, physicians, **physician**  
 25 [PHYSICIAN'S] assistants, psychiatrists, psychologists, psychological associates,  
 26 audiologists and speech-language pathologists licensed under AS 08.11, hearing aid  
 27 dealers licensed under AS 08.55, marital and family therapists licensed under  
 28 AS 08.63, behavior analysts, assistant behavior analysts, religious healing  
 29 practitioners, acupuncturists, and surgeons;

30 \* **Sec. 16.** AS 08.84.190(7) is repealed.

31 \* **Sec. 17.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to



1 read:

2 APPLICABILITY. (a) AS 08.84.030, as amended by sec. 2 of this Act, and  
3 AS 08.84.032, as amended by sec. 3 of this Act, apply to applications for licensure under  
4 AS 08.84.040 submitted on or after the effective date of secs. 2 and 3 of this Act.

5 (b) AS 08.84.075(c), as amended by sec. 7 of this Act, and AS 08.84.075(d), as  
6 amended by sec. 8 of this Act, apply to applications for limited permits under  
7 AS 08.84.075(a) and (b) submitted on or after the effective date of secs. 7 and 8 of this Act.

8 \* **Sec. 18.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
9 read:

10 TRANSITION. (a) Notwithstanding AS 08.84.010, as amended by sec. 1 of this Act, a  
11 person who is a member of the State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board on  
12 the effective date of this Act may serve the remainder of the member's term. The governor  
13 shall make appointments under AS 08.84.010, as amended by sec. 1 of this Act, to fill  
14 vacancies and expired terms on the State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board  
15 that occur on or after the effective date of this Act.

16 (b) On and after the effective date of this Act, a person who holds a valid license to  
17 practice as a physical therapist assistant on the effective date of this Act may continue to  
18 practice as a physical therapist assistant until the license expires normally under AS 08.84, as  
19 AS 08.84 existed before the effective date of this Act, but shall otherwise comply with  
20 AS 08.84, as amended by this Act, and shall renew the license under AS 08.84, as amended  
21 by this Act.