

*Commonwealth of Virginia*



**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
PROFESSIONS  
REGULATIONS  
GOVERNING THE PRACTICE OF PHYSICAL  
THERAPY**

**Title of Regulations: 18 VAC 112-20-10 et seq.**

**Statutory Authority: Chapter 34.1 of Title 54.1 of the *Code of Virginia***

*Effective: August 23, 2006*

9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300  
Richmond, Virginia 23233-1463

[www.dhp.virginia.gov](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov)

(804) 367-4674 (TEL)

(804) 527-4413 (FAX)

[ptboard@dhp.virginia.gov](mailto:ptboard@dhp.virginia.gov) (email)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	2
Part I. General Provisions.....	3
18VAC112-20-10. Definitions.....	3
18VAC112-20-20. (Repealed).....	4
18VAC112-20-25. Current name and address.....	4
18VAC112-20-26. Criteria for delegation of informal fact-finding proceedings to an agency subordinate.....	4
Part II. Licensure Requirements.....	5
18VAC112-20-30. General requirements.....	5
18VAC112-20-40. Education requirements: graduates of approved programs.....	5
18VAC112-20-50. Education requirements: graduates of schools not approved by an accrediting agency approved by the board.....	5
18VAC112-20-60. Requirements for licensure by examination.....	7
18VAC112-20-65. Requirements for licensure by endorsement.....	7
18VAC112-20-70. Traineeship for unlicensed graduate scheduled to sit for the national examination.....	8
18VAC112-20-80. (Repealed).....	8
Part III. Practice Requirements.....	8
18VAC112-20-90. General responsibilities.....	8
18VAC112-20-100. Supervisory responsibilities.....	9
18VAC112-20-110. (Repealed).....	9
18VAC112-20-120. Responsibilities to patients.....	9
Part IV. Renewal or Relicensure Requirements.....	10
18VAC112-20-130. Biennial renewal of license.....	10
18VAC112-20-131. Continued competency requirements for renewal of an active license.....	10
18VAC112-20-135. Inactive license.....	11
18VAC112-20-136. Reinstatement requirements.....	12
18VAC112-20-140. Traineeship required.....	12
18VAC112-20-150. Fees.....	13
18VAC112-20-151. (Repealed).....	14

## CHAPTER 20

### REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PRACTICE OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

#### Part I. General Provisions.

##### **18VAC112-20-10. Definitions.**

In addition to the words and terms defined in § 54.1-3473 of the Code of Virginia, the following words and terms when used in this chapter shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“Active practice” means a minimum of 160 hours of professional practice as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant within the 24-month period immediately preceding renewal. Active practice may include supervisory, administrative, educational or consultative activities or responsibilities for the delivery of such services.

"Approved program" means an educational program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education of the American Physical Therapy Association.

"CLEP" means the College Level Examination Program.

"Contact hour" means 60 minutes of time spent in continuing learning activity exclusive of breaks, meals or vendor exhibits.

"Direct supervision" means a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant is physically present and immediately available and is fully responsible for the physical therapy tasks or activities being performed.

"Evaluation" means the examination, assessment or screening of a patient in order to plan and implement a treatment intervention, provide preventive care, reduce risks of injury and impairment, or provide for consultation.

"Face-to-face" means learning activities or courses obtained in a group setting or through interactive, real-time technology.

"FCCPT" means the Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy.

"General supervision" means a physical therapist shall be available for consultation.

“National examination” means the examinations developed and administered by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy and approved by the board for licensure as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.

"Support personnel" means a person who is performing designated routine tasks related to physical therapy under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant within the scope of this chapter.

"TOEFL" means the Test of English as a Foreign Language.

"Trainee" means a person undergoing a traineeship.

1. "Foreign educated trainee" means a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant who was educated outside the United States and did not graduate from an approved program and who is seeking licensure to practice in Virginia.
2. "Inactive practice trainee" means a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant who has previously been licensed and has not practiced for at least 320 hours within the past four years and who is seeking licensure or relicensure in Virginia.
3. "Unlicensed graduate trainee" means a graduate of an approved physical therapist or physical therapist assistant program who has not taken the national examination or who has taken the examination but not yet received a license from the board.

"Traineeship" means a period of active clinical practice during which an unlicensed physical therapist or physical therapist assistant works under the direct supervision of a physical therapist approved by the board.

"TSE" means the Test of Spoken English.

"Type 1" means face-to-face continuing learning activities offered by an approved organization as specified in 18VAC112-20-131.

"Type 2" means continuing learning activities which may or may not be offered by an approved organization but shall be activities considered by the learner to be beneficial to practice or to continuing learning.

**18VAC112-20-20. (Repealed)**

**18VAC112-20-25. Current name and address.**

Each licensee shall furnish the board his current name and address. All notices required by law or by this chapter to be given by the board to any licensee shall be validly given when mailed to the latest address provided or when served to the licensee. Any change of name or address shall be furnished to the board within 30 days of such change.

**18VAC112-20-26. Criteria for delegation of informal fact-finding proceedings to an agency subordinate.**

A. Decision to delegate.

In accordance with § 54.1-2400 (10) of the Code of Virginia, the board may delegate an informal fact-finding proceeding to an agency subordinate upon determination that probable cause exists that a practitioner may be subject to a disciplinary action.

B. Criteria for delegation. Cases that may not be delegated to an agency subordinate include, but are not limited to, those that involve:

1. Intentional or negligent conduct that causes or is likely to cause injury to a patient;
2. Mandatory suspension resulting from action by another jurisdiction or a felony conviction;
3. Impairment with an inability to practice with skill and safety;
4. Sexual misconduct;
5. Unauthorized practice.

C. Criteria for an agency subordinate.

1. An agency subordinate authorized by the board to conduct an informal fact-finding proceeding may include board members and professional staff or other persons deemed knowledgeable by virtue of their training and experience in administrative proceedings involving the regulation and discipline of health professionals.
2. The executive director shall maintain a list of appropriately qualified persons to whom an informal fact-finding proceeding may be delegated.
3. The board may delegate to the executive director the selection of the agency subordinate who is deemed appropriately qualified to conduct a proceeding based on the qualifications of the subordinate and the type of case being heard.

## **Part II. Licensure Requirements.**

### **18VAC112-20-30. General requirements.**

Licensure as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant shall be by examination or by endorsement.

### **18VAC112-20-40. Education requirements: graduates of approved programs.**

A. An applicant for licensure who is a graduate of an approved program shall submit documented evidence of his graduation from such a program with the required application and fee.

B. If an applicant is a graduate of an approved program located outside of the United States or Canada, he shall provide proof of proficiency in the English language by passing TOEFL and TSE by a score determined by the board or an equivalent examination approved by the board. TOEFL and TSE may be waived upon evidence of English proficiency.

### **18VAC112-20-50. Education requirements: graduates of schools not approved by an accrediting agency approved by the board.**

A. An applicant for initial licensure as a physical therapist who is a graduate of a school not approved by an accrediting agency approved by the board shall submit the required application and fee and provide documentation of the physical therapist's certification by a report from the FCCPT or of the physical therapist eligibility for licensure as verified by a report from any other credentialing agency approved by the board that substantiates that the physical therapist has been evaluated in accordance with requirements of subsection B.

B. The board shall only approve a credentialing agency that:

1. Utilizes the Coursework Evaluation Tool for Foreign Educated Physical Therapists of the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy and utilizes original source documents to establish substantial equivalency to an approved physical therapy program;

2. Conducts a review of any license or registration held by the physical therapist in any country or jurisdiction to ensure that the license or registration is current and unrestricted or was unrestricted at the time it expired or was lapsed; and

3. Verifies English language proficiency by passage of the TOEFL and TSE examination or by review of other evidence of English proficiency.

C. An applicant for licensure as a physical therapist assistant who is a graduate of a school not approved by the board shall submit with the required application and fee the following:

1. Proof of proficiency in the English language by passing TOEFL and TSE by a score determined by the board or an equivalent examination approved by the board. TOEFL and TSE may be waived upon evidence of English proficiency.

2. A copy of the original certificate or diploma which has been certified as a true copy of the original by a notary public, verifying his graduation from a physical therapy curriculum.

If the certificate or diploma is not in the English language, submit either:

a. An English translation of such certificate or diploma by a qualified translator other than the applicant; or

b. An official certification in English from the school attesting to the applicant's attendance and graduation date.

3. Verification of the equivalency of the applicant's education to the educational requirements of an approved program for physical therapist assistants from a scholastic credentials service approved by the board:

D. An applicant for initial licensure as a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant who is not a graduate of an approved program shall also submit verification of having successfully completed a full-time 1,000-hour traineeship as a "foreign educated trainee" under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist. The traineeship shall be in a facility that serves as an

education facility for students enrolled in an accredited program educating physical therapists in Virginia and is approved by the board.

1. It shall be the responsibility of the foreign educated trainee to make the necessary arrangements for his training with the director of physical therapy or the director's designee at the facility selected by the trainee.

2. The physical therapist supervising the foreign educated trainee shall submit a completed physical therapy or physical therapist assistant clinical performance instrument approved by the board.

3. If the traineeship is not successfully completed, the president of the board or his designee shall determine if a new traineeship shall commence. If it is determined by the board that a new traineeship shall not commence, then the application for licensure shall be denied.

4. The second traineeship may be served under a different supervising physical therapist and may be served in a different organization than the initial traineeship. If the second traineeship is not successfully completed, as determined by the supervising physical therapist, then the application for licensure shall be denied.

5. The traineeship requirements of this part may be waived if the applicant for a license can verify, in writing, the successful completion of one year of clinical physical therapy practice as a licensed physical therapist or physical therapist assistant in the United States, its territories, the District of Columbia, or Canada, equivalent to the requirements of this chapter.

**18VAC112-20-60. Requirements for licensure by examination.**

A. Every applicant for initial licensure by examination shall submit:

1. Documentation of having met the educational requirements specified in 18VAC112-20-40 or 18VAC112-20-50;

2. The required application, fees and credentials to the board; and

3. Documentation of passage of the national examination as prescribed by the board.

B. If an applicant fails the national examination three times, he shall apply for approval to sit for any subsequent examination by submission of evidence satisfactory to the board of having successfully completed additional clinical training or course work in the deficiency areas of the examination.

**18VAC112-20-65. Requirements for licensure by endorsement.**

A. A physical therapist or physical therapist assistant who holds a current, unrestricted license in the United States, its territories, the District of Columbia, or Canada, may be licensed in Virginia by endorsement.

B. An applicant for licensure by endorsement shall submit:

1. Documentation of having met the educational requirements prescribed in 18VAC112-20-40 or 18VAC112-20-50. In lieu of meeting such requirements, an applicant may provide evidence of clinical practice during the five years immediately preceding application for licensure in Virginia with a current, unrestricted license issued by another U. S. jurisdiction;

2. The required application, fees, and credentials to the board; and

3. Documentation of passage of an examination equivalent to the Virginia examination at the time of initial licensure or documentation of passage of an examination required by another state at the time of initial licensure in that state and active, clinical practice with a current, unrestricted license for at least five years prior to applying for licensure in Virginia.

4. For the purpose of this subsection, active, clinical practice shall mean at least 2,500 hours of patient care over a five-year period.

C. A physical therapist or physical therapist assistant seeking licensure by endorsement who has not actively practiced physical therapy for at least 160 hours within the two years immediately preceding his application for licensure shall first successfully complete a 480-hour traineeship as specified by subsection B of 18VAC112-20-140.

**18VAC112-20-70. Traineeship for unlicensed graduate scheduled to sit for the national examination.**

A. Upon approval of the president of the board or his designee, an unlicensed graduate trainee in Virginia may be employed under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist until the results of the national examination are received.

B. The traineeship shall terminate two working days following receipt by the candidate of the licensure examination results.

C. The unlicensed graduate may reapply for a new traineeship while awaiting to take the next examination.

**18VAC112-20-80. (Repealed)**

**Part III. Practice Requirements.**

**18VAC112-20-90. General responsibilities.**

A. The physical therapist shall be responsible for managing all aspects of the physical therapy care of each patient and shall provide:

1. The initial evaluation for each patient and its documentation in the patient record; and

2. Periodic evaluations prior to patient discharge, including documentation of the patient's response to therapeutic intervention.

B. The physical therapist shall communicate the overall plan of care to the patient or his legally authorized representative and shall also communicate with a referring doctor of medicine, osteopathy, chiropractic, podiatry, or dental surgery, nurse practitioner or physician assistant to the extent required by §54.1-3482 of the Code of Virginia.

C. A physical therapist assistant may assist the physical therapist in performing selected components of physical therapy intervention to include treatment, measurement and data collection, but not to include the performance of an evaluation as defined in 18 VAC 112-20-10.

D. A physical therapist assistant's visits to a patient may be made under general supervision.

**18VAC112-20-100. Supervisory responsibilities.**

A. A physical therapist shall be fully responsible for any action of persons performing physical therapy functions under the physical therapist's supervision or direction.

B. Support personnel shall only perform routine assigned tasks under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist or a licensed physical therapist assistant, who shall only assign those tasks or activities that are nondiscretionary and do not require the exercise of professional judgment.

C. A physical therapist shall provide direct supervision to no more than three individual trainees at any one time.

D. A physical therapist shall provide direct supervision to a student in an approved program who is satisfying clinical educational requirements in physical therapy. A physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant shall provide direct supervision to a student in an approved program for physical therapist assistants.

**18VAC112-20-110. (Repealed).**

**18VAC112-20-120. Responsibilities to patients.**

A. The initial patient visit shall be made by the physical therapist for evaluation of the patient and establishment of a plan of care.

B. The physical therapist assistant's first visit with the patient shall only be made after verbal or written communication with the physical therapist regarding patient status and plan of care. Documentation of such communication shall be made in the patient's record.

C. Documentation of physical therapy interventions shall be recorded on a patient's record by the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant providing the care.

D. The physical therapist shall reevaluate the patient as needed, but not less than according to the following schedules:

1. For inpatients in hospitals as defined in §32.1-123 of the Code of Virginia, it shall be not less than once every seven consecutive days.

2. For patients in other settings, it shall be not less than one of 12 visits made to the patient during a 30-day period, or once every 30 days, whichever occurs first.

Failure to abide by this subsection due to the absence of the physical therapist in case of illness, vacation, or professional meeting, for a period not to exceed five consecutive days, will not constitute a violation of these provisions.

E. The physical therapist shall be responsible for ongoing involvement in the care of the patient to include regular communication with a physical therapist assistant regarding the patient's plan of treatment.

#### **Part IV. Renewal or Relicensure Requirements.**

##### **18VAC112-20-130. Biennial renewal of license.**

A. A physical therapist and physical therapist assistant who intends to continue practice shall renew his license biennially by December 31 in each even-numbered year and pay to the board the renewal fee prescribed in 18VAC112-20-150.

B. A licensee whose licensure has not been renewed by the first day of the month following the month in which renewal is required shall pay a late fee as prescribed in 18VAC112-20-150.

C. In order to renew an active license, a licensee shall be required to:

1. Complete a minimum of 160 hours of active practice in the preceding two years; and
2. Comply with continuing competency requirements set forth in 18VAC112-20-131.

##### **18VAC112-20-131. Continued competency requirements for renewal of an active license.**

A. In order to renew an active license biennially after December 31, 2003, a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant shall complete at least 30 contact hours of continuing learning activities within the two years immediately preceding renewal. In choosing continuing learning activities or courses, the licensee shall consider the following: (i) the need to promote ethical practice, (ii) an appropriate standard of care, (iii) patient safety, (iv) application of new medical technology, (v) appropriate communication with patients, and (vi) knowledge of the changing health care system.

B. To document the required hours, the licensee shall maintain the Continued Competency Activity and Assessment Form that is provided by the board and that shall indicate completion of the following:

1. A minimum of 15 of the contact hours required for physical therapists and 10 of the contact hours required for physical therapist assistants shall be in Type 1 face-to-face courses. For the purpose of this section, "course" means an organized program of study, classroom experience or similar educational experience that is directly related to the clinical practice of physical therapy and approved or provided by one of the following organizations or any of its components:

- a. The Virginia Physical Therapy Association;
- b. The American Physical Therapy Association;
- c. Local, state or federal government agencies;
- d. Regionally accredited colleges and universities;
- e. Health care organizations accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO);
- f. The American Medical Association--Category I Continuing Medical Education course; and
- g. The National Athletic Trainers Association.

2. No more than 15 of the contact hours required for physical therapists and 20 of the contact hours required for physical therapist assistants may be Type 2 activities or courses, which may or may not be offered by an approved organization but which shall be related to the clinical practice of physical therapy. Type 2 activities may include but not be limited to consultation with colleagues, independent study, and research or writing on subjects related to practice.

3. Documentation of specialty certification by the American Physical Therapy Association may be provided as evidence of completion of continuing competency requirements for the biennium in which initial certification or recertification occurs.

C. A licensee shall be exempt from the continuing competency requirements for the first biennial renewal following the date of initial licensure in Virginia.

D. The licensee shall retain his records on the completed form with all supporting documentation for a period of four years following the renewal of an active license.

E. The licensees selected in a random audit conducted by the board shall provide the completed Continued Competency Activity and Assessment Form and all supporting documentation within 30 days of receiving notification of the audit.

F. Failure to comply with these requirements may subject the licensee to disciplinary action by the board.

G. The board may grant an extension of the deadline for continuing competency requirements for up to one year for good cause shown upon a written request from the licensee prior to the renewal date.

H. The board may grant an exemption for all or part of the requirements for circumstances beyond the control of the licensee, such as temporary disability, mandatory military service, or officially declared disasters.

**18VAC112-20-135. Inactive license.**

A. A physical therapist or physical therapist assistant who holds a current, unrestricted license in Virginia shall, upon a request on the renewal application and submission of the required renewal fee of \$70 for a physical therapist and \$35 for a physical therapist assistant, be issued an inactive license. From January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006, the inactive renewal fee shall be \$30 for a physical therapist and \$15 for a physical therapist assistant.

1. The holder of an inactive license shall not be required to meet active practice requirements.

2. An inactive licensee shall not be entitled to perform any act requiring a license to practice physical therapy in Virginia.

B. A physical therapist or physical therapist assistant who holds an inactive license may reactivate his license by:

1. Paying the difference between the renewal fee for an inactive license and that of an active license for the biennium in which the license is being reactivated; and

2. Providing proof of:

a. Active practice hours in another jurisdiction equal to those required for renewal of an active license in Virginia for the period in which the license has been inactive. If the inactive licensee does not meet the requirement for active practice, the license may be reactivated by meeting the traineeship requirements prescribed in 18VAC112-20-140; and

b. Completion of the number of continuing competency hours required for the period in which the license has been inactive, not to exceed four years.

#### **18VAC112-20-136. Reinstatement requirements.**

A physical therapist or physical therapist assistant whose Virginia license is lapsed and who is seeking reinstatement shall:

1. Practice physical therapy in another jurisdiction for at least 320 hours within the four years immediately preceding applying for reinstatement or successfully complete 480 hours as an inactive practice trainee as specified in 18VAC112-20-140; and

2. Complete the number of continuing competency hours required for the period in which the license has been lapsed, not to exceed four years.

#### **18VAC112-20-140. Traineeship required.**

The 480 hours of traineeship shall be in a facility that (i) serves as a clinical education facility for students enrolled in an accredited program educating physical therapists in Virginia, (ii) is approved by the board, and (iii) is under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist.

1. The physical therapist supervising the inactive practice trainee shall submit a report to the board at the end of the 480 hours on forms supplied by the board.

2. If the traineeship is not successfully completed at the end of the 480 hours, as determined by the supervising physical therapist, the president of the board or his designee shall determine if a new traineeship shall commence. If the president of the board determines that a new traineeship shall not commence, then the application for licensure shall be denied.

3. The second traineeship may be served under a different supervising physical therapist and may be served in a different organization than the initial traineeship. If the second traineeship is not successfully completed, as determined by the supervising physical therapist, then the application for licensure shall be denied.

#### **18VAC112-20-150. Fees.**

A. Unless otherwise provided, fees listed in this section shall not be refundable.

B. Licensure by examination.

1. The application fee shall be \$140 for a physical therapist and \$100 for a physical therapist assistant.

2. The fees for taking all required examinations shall be paid directly to the examination services.

C. Licensure by endorsement. The fee for licensure by endorsement shall be \$140 for a physical therapist and \$100 for a physical therapist assistant.

D. Licensure renewal and reinstatement.

1. The fee for active license renewal for a physical therapist shall be \$135 and for a physical therapist assistant shall be \$70 and shall be due by December 31<sup>st</sup> in each even-numbered year. From January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006, the fee for active license renewal fee shall be \$60 for a physical therapist and \$30 for a physical therapist assistant.

2. A fee of \$25 for a physical therapist assistant and \$50 for a physical therapist for processing a late renewal within one renewal cycle shall be paid in addition to the renewal fee.

3. The fee for reinstatement of a license that has expired for two or more years shall be \$180 for a physical therapist and \$120 for a physical therapist assistant and shall be submitted with an application for licensure reinstatement.

E. Other fees.

1. The fee for an application for reinstatement of a license that has been revoked shall be \$1,000.

2. The fee for a duplicate license shall be \$5, and the fee for a duplicate wall certificate shall be \$15.

3. The fee for a returned check shall be \$35.

4. The fee for a letter of good standing/verification to another jurisdiction shall be \$10.

**18VAC112-20-151. (Repealed).**