

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1467**

Introduced by

Representatives Svedjan, Nelson, Keiser, Carlisle

Senators Kilzer, Kinnoin

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact three new sections to chapter 43-40 of the North Dakota  
2 Century Code, relating to complaints and investigations against occupational therapists and  
3 occupational therapy assistants and the board of occupational therapy practice recovering costs  
4 of prosecution; to amend and reenact sections 43-40-01, 43-40-02, 43-40-03, 43-40-04,  
5 43-40-08, 43-40-10, 43-40-11, 43-40-12, 43-40-13, 43-40-15, 43-40-16, and 43-40-18 of the  
6 North Dakota Century Code, relating to licensing and practice of occupational therapists; to  
7 repeal section 43-40-09 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to licensing occupational  
8 therapy assistants; and to provide a penalty.

9 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

10 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-01 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
11 amended and reenacted as follows:

12 **43-40-01. Definitions.** As used in this chapter, unless the context or subject matter  
13 otherwise requires:

- 14 1. ~~"Association" means the North Dakota occupational therapy association.~~  
15 2. "Board" means the board of occupational therapy practice.  
16 3. 2. "Occupational therapist" means a person licensed to practice occupational therapy  
17 under this chapter.  
18 4. 3. "Occupational therapist therapy assistant" means a person licensed to assist in the  
19 practice of occupational therapy, under this chapter, who works under the  
20 supervision of an occupational therapist.  
21 5. 4. "Occupational therapy practice" means the use of occupational and purposeful  
22 activity ~~with individuals who are limited by physical injury or illness, psychosocial~~  
23 ~~dysfunction, developmental or learning disabilities, poverty and cultural differences,~~  
24 ~~or the aging process in order to maximize independence, prevent disability, and~~

1           ~~maintain health~~ or intervention designed to achieve functional outcomes that  
2           promote health, prevent injury or disability and which develop, improve, sustain, or  
3           restore the highest possible level of independence of any individual who has an  
4           injury, illness, cognitive impairment, psychosocial dysfunction, mental illness,  
5           developmental or learning disability, physical disability or other disorder or  
6           condition, and occupational therapy education. ~~The Occupational~~ therapy  
7           encompasses evaluation, treatment, and consultation, research, and education.  
8           ~~Specific occupational~~ Occupational therapy services include teaching practice  
9           includes evaluation by skilled observation, administration, and interpretation of  
10           standardized and nonstandardized tests and measurements. The occupational  
11           therapy practitioner designs and implements interventions directed toward  
12           developing, improving, sustaining, and restoring sensorimotor, neuromuscular,  
13           emotional, cognitive, or psychosocial performance components. Interventions  
14           include activities that contribute to optimal occupational performance including  
15           self-care; daily living skills; ~~developing perceptual-motor skills and sensory~~  
16           integrative functioning; ~~developing~~ skills essential for productivity, functional  
17           communication and mobility; positioning; social integration; cognitive mechanisms;  
18           enhancing play skills and ~~pre~~ vocational and leisure capacities; ~~designing,~~  
19           fabricating, or applying selected orthotic and prosthetic devices or selective  
20           adaptive equipment; using specifically designed crafts and exercises to enhance  
21           functional performance; administering and interpreting tests such as manual  
22           muscle and range of motion; and adapting environments for the handicapped  
23           skills; and the design, provision, and training in the use of assistive technology,  
24           devices, orthotics, or prosthetics or environmental adaptations to accommodate for  
25           loss of occupational performance. ~~The therapy~~ Therapy may be provided  
26           individually; or in groups, or through social systems to prevent secondary  
27           conditions, promote community integration, and support the individual's health and  
28           well-being within the social and cultural contexts of the individual's natural  
29           environment.

30       6- 5. "Occupational therapy aide" means a an unlicensed person who assists in the  
31       practice of occupational therapy under the direct supervision of an occupational

1 therapist or occupational therapy assistant ~~and whose activities require an~~  
2 ~~understanding of occupational therapy but do not require professional or advance~~  
3 ~~training in the basic anatomical, biological, psychological, and social sciences~~  
4 ~~involved in the practice of occupational therapy~~ in accordance with rules adopted  
5 by the board.

6 6. "Occupational therapy student" is a person enrolled in an accredited occupational  
7 therapy education program.

8 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
9 amended and reenacted as follows:

10 **43-40-02. License required - Title - Abbreviation.** A person may not practice  
11 occupational therapy or hold oneself out as an occupational therapist, or as being able to  
12 practice occupational therapy, or to render occupational therapy services in this state unless  
13 that person is licensed under this chapter. Only individuals may be licensed under this chapter.  
14 An individual licensed under this chapter as an occupational therapist may use the title  
15 "occupational therapist" and the abbreviation "~~O.T.R.~~" "OT/L" or other designation approved by  
16 the board. An individual licensed under this chapter as an occupational therapy assistant may  
17 use the title "occupational therapy assistant" and the abbreviation "~~C.O.T.A.~~" "OTA/L" or other  
18 designation approved by the board. No other individual may use these names or abbreviations.  
19 An individual licensed under this chapter may also use the title "occupational therapy  
20 registered" and "certified occupational therapy assistant" or the abbreviation "OTR" and "COTA"  
21 if appropriately certified by the national board for certification in occupational therapy.

22 **SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
23 amended and reenacted as follows:

24 **43-40-03. Persons and practices not affected by chapter.** This chapter does not  
25 prevent or restrict the practice, services, or activities of:

26 1. ~~Any person licensed in this state to engage in the profession or occupation for~~  
27 ~~which licensed.~~ Services by a person licensed by the state and working within the  
28 standards and ethics of that person's profession, if that person does not represent  
29 to the public that the person is an occupational therapist or occupational therapist  
30 assistant.

- 1           2. Any person employed as an occupational therapist or occupational therapy  
2           assistant by the United States or any agency of it, if the person provides  
3           occupational therapy solely under the direction or control of the organization by  
4           which employed.
- 5           3. ~~Any person pursuing a supervised course of study leading to a degree or certificate~~  
6           ~~in occupational therapy at an accredited or approved educational program, if the~~  
7           ~~person is designated by a title which clearly indicates that person's status as a~~  
8           ~~student or trainee.~~
- 9           4. ~~Any person fulfilling the supervised fieldwork experience requirements of~~  
10           ~~subsection 3 of section 43-40-08, if the experience constitutes a part of the~~  
11           ~~experience necessary to meet the requirement of that section.~~
- 12           5. Any person performing occupational therapy ~~services~~ consultation, continuing  
13           education, inservice, or pre-service training in this state, if these services are  
14           performed for no more than ~~ninety~~ thirty days in a calendar year ~~in association with~~  
15           ~~an occupational therapist licensed under this chapter, if:~~
  - 16           a. The person is licensed or registered under the law of another state which has  
17           ~~licensure~~ regulatory requirements at least as stringent as the requirements of  
18           this chapter; or
  - 19           b. The person meets the requirements for certification as an occupational  
20           therapist registered (O.T.R.) or a certified occupational therapy assistant  
21           (C.O.T.A.), established by ~~the American~~ a national occupational therapy  
22           ~~association~~ certifying agency approved by the board.
- 23           6. ~~Any person employed as an occupational therapy aide.~~

24           **SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-04 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
25           amended and reenacted as follows:

26           **43-40-04. Board of occupational therapy practice - Appointment - Meetings.**

- 27           1. There is established a board of occupational therapy practice. The board shall  
28           consist of five members appointed by the governor, ~~four of whom must be~~  
29           ~~appointed from a list of names submitted by the North Dakota occupational therapy~~  
30           ~~association~~, all of whom must be residents of this state ~~at the time of their~~  
31           appointment. The ~~persons~~ occupational therapy practitioners appointed ~~from the~~

- 1 ~~list submitted by the association~~ must have been engaged in rendering  
2 occupational therapy services to the public, teaching, or research in occupational  
3 therapy for at least three years immediately preceding their appointments. Three  
4 board members must be licensed occupational therapists. One member must be  
5 ~~an a licensed~~ occupational therapy assistant. ~~The members of the first board need~~  
6 ~~not be licensed for appointment to the board but they must fulfill the requirements~~  
7 ~~for licensure under this chapter.~~ One member must represent the public with an  
8 interest in the rights of the consumers of health services.
- 9 2. ~~The governor, prior to September 1, 1983, shall appoint two board members for a~~  
10 ~~term of one year, two for a term of two years, and one for a term of three years.~~  
11 Appointments ~~made thereafter~~ must be for three-year terms, but no person may be  
12 appointed to serve more than two consecutive terms. Terms begin on the first day  
13 of the calendar year and end on the last day of the calendar year or until  
14 successors are appointed, ~~except for the first appointed members who shall serve~~  
15 ~~through the last calendar day of the year in which they are appointed, before~~  
16 ~~commencing the terms prescribed by this section.~~
- 17 3. ~~Prior to August 1, 1983, and annually thereafter, the association may submit at~~  
18 ~~least three and not more than five names for each of the five board positions under~~  
19 ~~subsection 2.~~ If a vacancy in one of the positions exists, ~~the association may~~  
20 ~~recommend, as soon as practical, at least two and not more than three persons to~~  
21 ~~fill that vacancy. The governor shall appoint, as soon as practical, one of these~~  
22 ~~persons to fill the unexpired term. If the association does not provide a~~  
23 ~~recommendation,~~ the governor shall appoint, as soon as practicable, a person to  
24 the unexpired term.
- 25 4. The board shall meet during the first month of each calendar year to select a  
26 chairman and for other purposes. At least one additional meeting must be held  
27 before the end of each calendar year. Other meetings may be convened at the call  
28 of the chairman or the written request of any two board members. ~~All meetings of~~  
29 ~~the board are open to the public, except that the board may hold closed sessions~~  
30 ~~to approve examinations, or upon request of an applicant who fails an examination,~~  
31 ~~to prepare a response indicating any reason for the applicant's failure.~~

1           5. Members of the board may receive no compensation for their services, but are  
2           entitled to reasonable travel and other expenses incurred in the execution of their  
3           powers and duties, as set by the board.

4           **SECTION 5. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-08 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
5 amended and reenacted as follows:

6           **43-40-08. Requirements for licensure.** An applicant applying for a license as an  
7 occupational therapist or as an occupational therapy assistant shall file a written application  
8 provided by the board, ~~showing~~ demonstrating to the satisfaction of the board that the  
9 applicant:

- 10           1. ~~Is of good moral character~~ competent.
- 11           2. Will adhere to the code of ethics adopted by the board.
- 12           3. Has successfully completed the academic requirements of an educational program  
13           in occupational therapy recognized by the board.
  - 14           a. The occupational therapy educational program must be accredited by ~~the~~  
15           ~~committee on allied health education and accreditation/American medical~~  
16           ~~association in collaboration with the American occupational therapy~~  
17           ~~association~~ a national occupational therapy accrediting agency approved by  
18           the board.
  - 19           b. The occupational therapy assistant educational program must be ~~approved~~  
20           accredited by ~~the American occupational therapy association~~ a national  
21           occupational therapy accrediting agency approved by the board.
- 22           ~~3.~~ 4. Has successfully completed a period of supervised fieldwork experience ~~arranged~~  
23           required by the ~~recognized~~ accredited educational institution where the applicant  
24           met the academic requirements required by ~~the nationally recognized professional~~  
25           ~~association~~ a national occupational therapy accrediting agency approved by the  
26           board.
  - 27           a. ~~For an occupational therapist, a minimum of six months of supervised~~  
28           ~~fieldwork experience is required.~~
  - 29           b. ~~For an occupational therapy assistant, a minimum of two months of~~  
30           ~~supervised fieldwork experience is required.~~

1       4. ~~5.~~ Has passed an examination ~~as provided for in section 43-40-10~~ approved by the  
2                   board.

3           **SECTION 6. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-10 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
4 amended and reenacted as follows:

5           **43-40-10. ~~Foreign-trained~~ Internationally trained applicants.** ~~Foreign-trained~~  
6 Internationally trained occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants shall satisfy  
7 ~~the examination requirements of subsection 4 of section 43-40-08.~~ ~~Foreign-trained applicants~~  
8 ~~shall furnish to the board proof of good moral character and completion of educational and~~  
9 ~~supervised fieldwork requirements substantially equal to those contained in section 43-40-08~~  
10 ~~before taking the examination.~~

11          **SECTION 7. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-11 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
12 amended and reenacted as follows:

13          **43-40-11. ~~Examination~~ Application for examination or licensure - Denial.**

- 14          1. ~~Only a~~ A person satisfying the requirements of ~~subsections 1 through 3 of section~~  
15                   43-40-08 may apply for examination in the manner the board prescribes. The  
16                   application must be accompanied by the nonrefundable fee prescribed under  
17                   section 43-40-07. ~~A person who fails an examination may apply for reexamination~~  
18                   ~~upon payment of the prescribed fee.~~
- 19          2. ~~Each applicant for licensure must be examined by written examination as~~  
20                   ~~established by the American occupational therapy association to test the~~  
21                   ~~applicant's knowledge of the basic and clinical sciences relating to occupational~~  
22                   ~~therapy, occupational therapy techniques and methods, and such other subjects as~~  
23                   ~~the board may require to determine the applicant's fitness to practice.~~ The board  
24                   shall approve an examination for occupational therapists and an examination for  
25                   occupational therapy assistants and establish standards for acceptable  
26                   performance.
- 27          3. ~~Applicants for licensure must be examined at a time and place and under such~~  
28                   ~~supervision as the board may require.~~ ~~Examinations must be given at least twice~~  
29                   ~~each year at such places as the board may determine.~~ ~~The board shall give~~  
30                   ~~reasonable public notice of the examination times and places.~~

1           4. ~~Applicants may obtain their examination scores and may review their papers in~~  
2           accordance with any rules established by the board. The board shall notify each  
3           applicant that the application and evidence submitted for licensing is satisfactory  
4           and accepted, or unsatisfactory and rejected. If rejected, the notice must state the  
5           reasons for rejection and explain the right to a hearing under chapter 28-32. A  
6           hearing must be requested within thirty days.

7           **SECTION 8. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-12 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
8 amended and reenacted as follows:

9           **43-40-12. Waiver of requirements for licensure.**

- 10          1. ~~The board shall grant a license to any person certified prior to July 1, 1983, as an~~  
11          occupational therapist registered (O.T.R.) or a certified occupational therapy  
12          assistant (C.O.T.A.) by the American occupational therapy association. ~~The board~~  
13          may waive the examination, education, or experience requirements and grant a  
14          license to any person certified by the American occupational therapy association  
15          after July 1, 1983, if the board determines the requirements for such certification  
16          are equivalent to the requirements for licensure in this chapter.
- 17          2. The board may waive the examination, education, or experience requirements and  
18          grant a license to any applicant who presents proof of current licensure or  
19          registration as an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant in  
20          another state which requires standards for licensure or registration considered by  
21          the board to be equivalent to the requirements for licensure of this chapter.

22          **SECTION 9. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-13 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
23 amended and reenacted as follows:

24          **43-40-13. Limited permit - Expiration - Renewal.**

- 25          1. The board may grant a limited permit to a person who has completed the education  
26          and experience requirements of this chapter. ~~This~~ A limited permit allows the  
27          person to practice occupational therapy ~~in association with~~ under supervision of a  
28          North Dakota licensed occupational therapist. ~~This~~ A limited permit is valid until  
29          ~~the person is issued a license under section 43-40-14 or until the results of the~~  
30          examination taken by the person are available to the board and the board decides  
31          to issue or deny a license to the person.

- 1           2.   The holder of a limited permit must take the next available examination. The  
2                   permit expires if the holder fails to take the next available examination. This  
3           3.   A limited permit may be renewed one time if the person has failed the examination  
4                   or, with good cause as determined by the board, failed to take the next  
5                   examination.

6           **SECTION 10. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-15 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
7 amended and reenacted as follows:

8           **43-40-15. Renewal of license.**

- 9           1.   Any license issued under this chapter is subject to annual renewal and expires  
10                   unless renewed in the manner prescribed by the rules of the board, ~~upon the~~  
11                   ~~payment of a renewal fee.~~ The board may provide for the late renewal of a license  
12                   upon the payment of a late fee in accordance with its rules, but no late renewal of a  
13                   license may be granted more than ~~five~~ three years after its expiration.
- 14           2.   ~~Upon request, the board shall grant inactive status to a licensee who:~~
- 15                   a.   ~~Does not practice as an occupational therapist or an occupational therapy~~  
16                           ~~assistant;~~
- 17                   b.   ~~Does not hold oneself out as an occupational therapist or an occupational~~  
18                           ~~therapy assistant; and~~
- 19                   e.   ~~Maintains any continuing competency requirements established by the board.~~
- 20                   The board may establish additional requirements for license renewal which provide  
21                   evidence of continuing competency.

22           **SECTION 11. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-16 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
23 amended and reenacted as follows:

24           **43-40-16. Suspension and revocation of license - Refusal to renew.**

- 25           1.   The board may deny a license, refuse to renew a license, suspend a license, ~~or~~  
26                   revoke a license; or may impose probationary conditions if the licensee or  
27                   applicant for license has been found guilty of unprofessional conduct ~~which has~~  
28                   ~~endangered or is likely to endanger the health, welfare, or safety of the public.~~
- 29                   Unprofessional conduct includes:
- 30                   a.   Obtaining a license by means of fraud, misrepresentation, or concealment of  
31                   material facts.

- 1           b. Being guilty of unprofessional conduct as defined by the rules adopted by the  
2           board, or violating any code of ethics adopted by the ~~American occupational~~  
3           ~~therapy association~~ board.
- 4           c. Being convicted of an offense, as defined by section 12.1-01-04, that the  
5           board determines has a direct bearing upon a person's ability to serve the  
6           public as an occupational therapist or an occupational therapy assistant or,  
7           following conviction of any offense, the board determines that the person is  
8           not sufficiently rehabilitated under section 12.1-33-02.1.
- 9           d. Violating any lawful order or rule rendered or adopted by the board.
- 10          e. Violating this chapter or the rules promulgated by the board.
- 11          f. A pattern of inappropriate practice as an occupational therapist or  
12          occupational therapy assistant.
- 13          g. The use of any false, fraudulent, or deceptive statement in any document  
14          connected with the practice of occupational therapy.
- 15          h. Sexual abuse, misconduct, or exploitation related to the licensee's practice of  
16          occupational therapy.
- 17          i. Gross negligence in the practice of occupational therapy.
- 18          2. A ~~denial~~, refusal to renew, suspension, revocation, or imposition of probationary  
19          conditions upon a license may be ordered by the board after a hearing ~~in the~~  
20          ~~manner provided by rules adopted by the board~~ under chapter 28-32. An  
21          application for reinstatement may be made to the board one year from the date of  
22          the revocation of a license. The board may accept or reject an application for  
23          reinstatement, and may hold a hearing to consider such reinstatement.

24           **SECTION 12. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-40-18 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
25   amended and reenacted as follows:

26           **43-40-18. Penalty - Injunction.** Any person who violates section 43-40-02 and  
27   subsection 1 of section 43-40-16 is guilty of a class B misdemeanor. In addition to the criminal  
28   penalty provided, the civil remedy of an injunction is available to restrain and enjoin violations of  
29   any provisions of this chapter, without proof of actual damages sustained by any person.

30           **SECTION 13.** A new section to chapter 43-40 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
31   created and enacted as follows:

1           **Occupational therapy students - Occupational therapy aides.**

- 2           1.   A person pursuing a supervised course of study leading to a degree or certificate in  
3           occupational therapy at an accredited or approved educational program may  
4           perform occupational therapy services if the services are a part of the student's  
5           supervised course of study, provided that the student is designated by a title that  
6           clearly indicates the student's status as a student or trainee.
- 7           2.   Occupational therapy aides may assist in the practice of occupational therapy only  
8           under the direct supervision of an occupational therapist or occupational therapy  
9           assistant and in accordance with rules adopted by the board.

10          **SECTION 14.** A new section to chapter 43-40 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
11 created and enacted as follows:

12          **Complaints - Investigations.**

- 13          1.   A person may file a written complaint with the board setting forth the specific  
14          charges upon which the complaint is made. Upon receiving a complaint, the board  
15          shall notify the licensee of the complaint and request a written response from the  
16          licensee. A licensee who is the subject of an investigation by the board shall  
17          cooperate fully with the investigation. Cooperation includes responding fully and  
18          promptly to any reasonable question raised by or on behalf of the board relating to  
19          the subject of the investigation and providing copies of records when reasonably  
20          requested by the board.
- 21          2.   After review of the complaint, the licensee's response, and information obtained in  
22          the investigation, the board shall determine if there is a reasonable basis to believe  
23          the allegations are true and that the allegations constitute a violation of this chapter  
24          or the rules of the board. If the board determines there is a reasonable basis to  
25          believe the allegations are true and the allegations constitute a violation of this  
26          chapter or the rules of the board, the board shall take appropriate action. If a  
27          reasonable basis is not found by the board, the board shall notify the complaining  
28          party and the licensee in writing.

29          **SECTION 15.** A new section to chapter 43-40 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
30 created and enacted as follows:

1           **Costs of prosecution - Disciplinary proceedings.** The board may impose a fee  
2 against any person subject to regulation under this chapter to reimburse the board for all or part  
3 of the costs of administrative action resulting in disciplinary action, including the cost of  
4 investigation, the amount paid for services from the office of administrative hearings, attorney's  
5 fees, court costs, witness fees, staff time, and other expenses. When applicable, a license may  
6 be suspended until the costs are paid to the board.

7           **SECTION 16. REPEAL.** Section 43-40-09 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
8 repealed.