

**Guideline for Directors of Student Services  
For Special Education  
On School-Based Occupational Therapy**

- The revised Idaho Occupational Therapy Practice Act went into effect on July 1, 2009 ([Title 54 Chapter 37](#))
- The Temporary and Proposed Rules and Regulations for Occupational Therapy Practitioners went into effect in August 24, 2009 ([IDAPA 24.06.01](#))

The Practice Act and Rules guide how Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants can practice in the state of Idaho. Each Occupational Therapy practitioner must follow these guidelines in order to continue to provide “best practice” to their students and to remain in good standing with their licensure. Failure to do this can result in loss or suspension of licensure and the inability to practice Occupational Therapy in the state of Idaho.

**Practice Act Clarification and Changes:**

**1. A license is required to practice occupational therapy. (54-3703)**

Occupational Therapists and Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants have degrees from an accredited program and are certified and licensed to practice in the state of Idaho. Occupational Therapy “aides” or “techs” do not.

**2. An aide in the delivery of occupational therapy services must be appropriately supervised by the Occupational Therapist or Occupational Therapy Assistant. ([IDAPA 24-0601-0901.11 Supervision](#))**

Occupational Therapy aides must be within “direct line-of-site” of an Occupational Therapist in order to aide in the delivery of services (supportive services only) to the student. This means no more aides providing services in different schools or in different rooms where the Licensed Occupational Therapist or Occupational Therapy Assistant is not. The licensed therapist must be able to see what the aide is doing at all times.

The aide is not licensed so cannot provide Occupational Therapy services. This means they are not eligible to bill for Occupational Therapy services.

## More about the New Section in the Rules Relating to Supervision ([IDAPA 24-0601-0901.11 Supervision](#))

1. The rules and regulations support the Practice Act changes.
2. Supervisory ratio of an Occupational Therapist to an Occupational Therapy assistant is 1:3 but never more than 2 entry-level OT assistants. Please see rules for supervisory ratios for entry-level OT practitioners.
3. Supervision of an Occupational Therapy assistant must happen at either a close, routine, or general level depending on the skill level of an Occupational Therapy assistant. This is outlined in detail in the rules.
  - a. Direct Line of Site Supervision-for aides, not assistants.
  - b. Direct Supervision-daily, direct contact at the site of work with supervisor physically present at all times within facility when supervisee renders care. Only for deep thermal/electrotherapeutic modalities, this is not provided in schools.
  - c. Close supervision-daily, direct contact at site of work. Minimum level required for entry level OT assistant (0-1 years experience).
  - d. Routine supervision-direct contact every 2 weeks at site of work. Minimum level required for intermediate level OT assistant (1-5 years experience).
  - e. General Supervision- monthly direct contact must be provided. Minimum level required for advanced OT assistant (greater than 5 years experience).

*IOTA has been advised that the Idaho State Billing Services (ISBS) are reviewing reimbursement issues related to School-based Occupational Therapy with Medicaid. Currently, Occupational Therapy and Occupational Therapy Assistants should be filling out the “**professional**” form through ISBS. Aides should NOT be billing for Occupational Therapy services.*

### **Disclaimer**

The Idaho Occupational Therapy Association (IOTA) was an advocate for revising the Occupational Therapy Practice Act and the Rules Governing Occupational Therapy in Idaho. While these guidelines represent our interpretation of the changes in regulation that affect occupational therapy in school-based settings, please be advised the authority for regulating occupational therapy in Idaho rests with the Occupational Therapy Licensure Board of Idaho.