



## 2025-2026 TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM

**To the student:** As you reflect upon the general job description of an Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) and pursue application to the OTA Program, please carefully assess your personal physical, sensory, communication, and cognitive/behavioral and social/behavioral abilities in reference to the Technical Standards identified for program participation. All OTA students must meet these defined Technical Standards.

**General Job Description:** Works under the supervision of Occupational Therapist(s) in the delivery of occupational therapy services within a variety of institutional and community-based settings for persons of all ages whose functional performances (occupational performances) in home, school, workplace or community life are hindered by physical, developmental and/or emotional disability. Assists in the evaluation, planning, and implementation of skilled interventions that are designed to facilitate a client's meaningful participation in life by restoring, reinforcing and enhancing performance in daily life activities, diminishing or correcting pathology, and promoting and maintaining health. Intervention includes therapeutic use of self; therapeutic use of preparatory methods and tasks; occupations and activities; education and training; advocacy and groups.

Throughout the performance of your duties as a healthcare provider, you will be exposed to infectious diseases in all practice settings. Although you will learn practices and procedures to minimize the risk of exposure, you should be aware of the risk and take it into consideration when deciding to enter this program and profession.

**\*Performance Level: O = occasionally 50-74%; F = frequently 75-89%; C = constantly 90-100%**

PHYSICAL STANDARDS		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
LIFT:	medium work strength to carry/maneuver heavy equipment	O
LIFT:	fully/partially support weight of client during transfers to and from various surfaces (bed, chair, wheelchair, ma, toilet, tub, car, etc.) and when engaging client in functional ambulation	F
BEND/ STOOP:	to adjust body parts, clothing and/or equipment when engaging clients in functional daily activities in all areas of occupation (ADL, IADL, Work, education, Play/Leisure, and Social Participation); for developmental activities	F
KNEEL:	to assist clients who may fall or faint; to perform C.P.R.; to assist clients with mat activities, developmental activities and functional daily life activities in all areas of occupation (ADL, IADL, Work, education, Play/Leisure, and Social Participation)	F
PHYSICAL STANDARDS		Expected Level of Performance Freq*

CROUCH:	to manage wheelchair parts and hospital beds, equipment adjustment, storing materials; to assist with lower body ADL training; to assist client in seated activities from bed, chair, wheelchair and/or mat	O
<b>PHYSICAL STANDARDS CONTINUED</b>		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
CRAWL:	for developmental interventions; engage in mat activities	O
REACH:	For retrieval of items in closets, cabinets, etc.; to adjust equipment; to guard clients	F
<b>PHYSICAL STANDARDS</b>		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
HANDLE:	sustained grasp and manipulate body parts during intervention; grasp and manipulate tools/equipment and modalities used in OT service delivery, including but not limited to pens/pencils, craft supplies, educational supplies, personal care items; positioning devices, functional mobility equipment, physical agent modalities, PB cuffs, protective gloves, gowns and masks; computers and assistive technology; adaptive equipment; suspension equipment, etc.	C
DEXTERITY:	use fine motor skills when performing standardized tests (dynamometer, goniometer, etc.); constructing orthotic devices/splints; writing/documenting; adjusting knobs, dials, and BP cuffs; donning and doffing protective gloves, masks and gowns.	F
STAND:	stand extended periods of time and for majority of working shift	C
WALK:	within facility environment (internal) for assigned shift	C
WALK:	within facility environment (external grounds – even and uneven surfaces) for functional mobility training	O
PUSH/ PULL:	wheelchairs, hospital beds, scooters, Hoyer lifts, and other equipment but not limited to IV poles, oxygen tanks, portable devices	F
BALANCE:	To assist clients with functional activities, including mobility (even & uneven surfaces)	F
ENDURANCE:	To manage full-time equivalent Level 2 fieldwork experiences and assigned work shifts	C
<b>SENSORY STANDARDS</b>		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
TACTILE:	<i>Feel</i> to palpate muscle contractions and circulatory pulses; palpate bony landmarks and identify joint articulation; exert the necessary pressure to form splints; to discern skin texture and temperature to discriminate hot and cold modalities	F
AUDITORY:	<i>Hear</i> verbal directions and requests from health care team and clients/families; hear heart sounds through a stethoscope; <i>hear</i> breath sounds; <i>hear</i> client distress sounds and calls for assistance up to 10 feet away; <i>hear</i> environmental safety alarms; <i>hear</i> for effective communication between clients/families/co-workers	C

SENSORY STANDARDS CONTINUED		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
VISUAL:	<i>See</i> in detail to observe and detect client's movements, facial expressions and performance during individual and group interventions; <i>see</i> to observe and attend to the behaviors and needs of up to 10 individuals in a group session; <i>see</i> from a distance to observe client behaviors and performance; <i>see</i> in detail to detect changes in skin integrity, sweating, skin color, swelling, muscle atrophy and gestures of non-verbal communication; <i>see</i> to detect safety hazards in the environment (water on floor, cords, and other small items) that could pose danger to a client's mobility/functional performance; <i>see</i> in detail to detect/assess BP (manometer dial) and ROM (goniometer)	C
VISUAL:	<i>Read</i> numbers, letters, printed, typed and cursive writing in fine print, <i>read</i> paper and computer files/records; <i>read</i> dials on modality equipment; <i>read</i> manuals and forms for administering and scoring standardized tests; <i>read</i> client records; <i>read</i> to collect information and screening data in English, <i>read</i> directions accompanying equipment, <i>read</i> to research subject matter	C
COMMUNICATION STANDARDS		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
SPEAK:	in English language in clear and concise manner; to communicate in person and by phone with clients, families, significant others, the health care team, and community (report factual data orally; interview clients/family; explain role of occupational therapy and purpose of interventions)	C
RESPOND:	to clients with communication disorders (aphasia, hearing loss), or those who use ELL	F
COMPREHEND:	oral and written language, including health care terminology in order to communicate with clients, families, significant others, health care providers, and community	C
WRITE:	in English, clearly and legibly for recording client specific data and general service delivery information in handwritten charts and computerized systems of documentation; in proper English use various electronic communication systems (email, etc.) to communicate with educational and professional community	C
COGNITIVE/BEHAVIORAL and SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS		Expected Level of Performance Freq*
Think critically for sound clinical judgement in the delivery of occupational therapy services (plan and implement appropriate client-centered interventions; problem solve to make adjustments in therapeutic interventions based on appropriate and inappropriate physiological and psychological responses by clients; determine need for consultation with occupational therapist and other health care providers/team members).		C
Function safely, effectively, and calmly under demanding and stress situations.		C

COGNITIVE/BEHAVIORAL and SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS	Expected Level of Performance Freq*
Remain alert to surroundings, potential emergencies; respond to client situations including falls, pain, changes in physical and/or mental status.	C
Prioritize multiple tasks and maintain composure while managing multiple tasks simultaneously.	C
Sustain concentration to attend to demanding and continuous tasks throughout work shift (direct client care and service management tasks).	C
Exhibit skills necessary to interact effectively with clients, families, supervisors, co-workers and community members of the same or different cultures with respect, compassion, politeness, tact, collaboration, teamwork, and discretion.	C
Maintain personal hygiene consistent with close personal contact associated with client care.	C
Display attitudes/actions consistent with the core values and ethical standards of the occupational therapy profession.	C
Display attitudes/actions to effectively engage in the supervisory process including acceptance of feedback, modifying behavior in response to feedback, and providing feedback.	C
Display attitudes/actions to approach workplace problems in a mature and responsible manner; seek and utilize effective strategies to resolve problems.	C
Abide by established policies and procedures of educational and healthcare institutions.	C
<b>IMMUNIZATIONS</b>	
<p>Health science students must meet immunization requirements under state law, MGL Chapter 76, Section 15C and its regulations at 105 CMR 220.000 – 220.700. Students must also meet any additional immunization requirements required by clinical affiliates.</p> <p>According to MGL Chapter 76, Section 15C, a health science student who is in contact with patients may be exempt from the immunization requirements imposed under state law pursuant to a medical or religious exemption. Submission of documentation will be required and, if sufficient to qualify for a medical or religious exemption, it will be granted. <b><u>PLEASE BE ADVISED</u></b> that, while the college will make a reasonable effort to place you in a clinical facility, <b>clinical placement cannot be guaranteed in light of an un-immunized status. If a clinical placement cannot be secured, then you will be unable to complete the program's clinical requirement. Thus, you will be unable to progress and will fail out of the program.</b></p>	

Applicants who are offered admission must document their ability to perform all essential tasks with or without reasonable accommodation in order to begin the professional courses. If you are an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who seeks a reasonable accommodation, you need to contact Accessibility Services for eligibility determination for reasonable accommodation(s). For those applicants offered admission into the program, you will be asked to self-certify that you meet the Technical Standards.

## TECHNICAL STANDARDS – OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT

Applicants must acknowledge and self-certify by initialing and signing the Technical Standards form that they have read and understand the need to perform all essential tasks with or without reasonable accommodation. This form is required to be uploaded to the applicant's online application in order to be considered for admission.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT PROGRAM TECHNICAL STANDARDS	INITIAL
PHYSICAL STANDARDS	
SENSORY STANDARDS	
COMMUNICATION STANDARDS	
COGNITIVE/BEHAVIORAL and SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS	
IMMUNIZATIONS	

I certify that I am able to perform the above Technical Standards and that the above information is true and correct. If, at any time, during my enrollment in the program, I am unable to meet the above performance requirements, please see below.

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Student Signature

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Date

**OR**

I will be seeking a reasonable accommodation for the following technical standard/s

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and will make an appointment with accessibility services at [accessibility@northshore.edu](mailto:accessibility@northshore.edu) if I am admitted to the Occupational Therapy Assistant program.

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Student Signature

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Date