



Internationally Educated / Foreign-Trained - Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant Applicants Licensure Information

North Carolina Board of Physical Therapy Examiners / Updated – May 1, 2020

North Carolina Physical Therapy Practice Act

"§ 90-270.97. Licensure of foreign-trained physical therapists and physical therapist assistants.

Any person who has been trained as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant in a foreign country and desires to be licensed under this Article and who:

- (1) Is of good moral character;
- (2) Holds a diploma from an educational program for physical therapists or physical therapist assistants approved by the Board;
- (3) Submits documentary evidence to the Board of completion of a course of instruction substantially equivalent to that obtained by an applicant for licensure under G.S. 90-270.95; and
- (4) Demonstrates satisfactory proof of proficiency in the English language;

may make application on a form furnished by the Board for examination as a foreign-trained physical therapist or physical therapist assistant. At the time of making such application, the applicant shall pay to the secretary-treasurer of the Board the fee prescribed by the Board, no portion of which shall be returned."

Important: The **Practice Act** requires that a PTA applicant must be a graduate of a PTA educational program; therefore, a PT graduate is **not** eligible for licensure as a PTA in North Carolina unless the PT has also graduated from a PTA educational program.

Board Rules, effective May 1, 2020

21 NCAC 48E .0110 is amended with changes as published in 34:10 NCR 875 as follows:

21 NCAC 48E .0110 FOREIGN-TRAINED PHYSICAL THERAPIST APPLICANT BY EXAMINATION

(a) This Rule shall apply to a physical therapist who has graduated from a program located outside the United States that has not been accredited by the Commission of Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) or its successor, in accordance with G.S. 90-270.95(2), and does not hold an active license in another state or territory of the United States.

(b) All application forms and supporting documents shall be completed in English or accompanied by an English translation.

(c) For the applicant's educational credential background to be determined substantially equivalent to that obtained by an applicant for licensure pursuant to G.S. 90-270.95(2), the applicant shall meet the standards of the Federation's most recent Coursework Tool (CWT) for Physical Therapists at [https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools\(CWT\).aspx](https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools(CWT).aspx) and for Physical Therapist Assistants at [https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools\(CWT\).aspx](https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools(CWT).aspx).

These coursework tools are incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to obtain a copy may call the Federation at 703-299-3100 or download a copy from the Federation's website at no cost. Copies of the coursework tools are on file at the Division located at 8300 Health Park Suite 233, Raleigh, NC 27615 and are available for public inspection during regular business hours.

(d) The applicant shall make arrangements to have the credentials evaluated by the Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy or a service that has a physical therapist consultant on staff and that is authorized to use the Federation's CWTs for physical therapists referred to in Paragraph (c) of this Rule. The Board shall review an applicant's educational program and shall consider the findings of the credentialing service.

(e) The applicant shall provide the following information to the Board:

(1) proof that the applicant has demonstrated English language proficiency by meeting the most recent Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score requirement as defined by the Federation. This test is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to register for the TOEFL shall contact Examination Testing Service (<http://www.ets.org/toefl>). The cost of this examination is posted on the ETS website. The TOEFL is an examination that is owned by ETS and is not available for public review; **or**

~~(2) proof that coursework was taught in the English language; or~~

~~(3) (2)~~ (2) documentation for exemption pursuant to 8 CFR 212.15 (<http://www.uscis.gov/>). 8 CFR 212.15 is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to obtain a copy at no cost may call the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 or 1-800-767-1833 (TDD) toll free. A copy of 8 CFR 212.15 is on file at the Division located at 8300 Health Park Suite 233, Raleigh, NC 27615 and is available for public inspection during regular business [hours.] [hours; or]

~~(3) (f)~~ (f) An applicant for licensure shall ~~[consent to an FBI criminal history record check by furnishing]~~ **provide a complete set of fingerprints at the applicant's [expense.] expense in order to obtain a criminal history record check in accordance with G.S. 90-270.96 and G.S. 143B-964.**

History Note: Authority G.S. 90-270.92; 90-270.95; 90-270.97; 90-270.98; 150B-21.6(2); 143B-964; Eff. December 30, 1985; Amended Eff. November 1, 1991; August 1, 1991; Temporary Amendment Eff. July 21, 1995, for a period of 180 days or until the permanent Rule becomes effective, whichever is sooner; Amended Eff. February 1, 2015; December 1, 2006; November 1, 2004; August 1, 2002; August 1, 1998; February 1, 1996; October 1, 1995; Pursuant to G.S. 150B-21.3A, rule is necessary without substantive public interest Eff. May 1, 2018; Amended Eff. May 1, 2020; September 1, 2019; November 1, 2018.

21 NCAC 48E .0111 is amended with changes as published in 34:10 NCR 875-876 as follows:

21 NCAC 48E .0111 FOREIGN-TRAINED PHYSICAL THERAPIST APPLICANT BY ENDORSEMENT

(a) This Rule shall apply to a physical therapist who has graduated from a program located outside the United States that has not been accredited by the Commission of Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) or its successor, in accordance with G.S. ~~90-270.92(2);~~ 90-270.95(2), and holds an active physical therapist license in another state or territory of the United States.

(b) All application forms and supporting documents shall be completed in English or accompanied by an English translation.

(c) For the applicant's educational credentials background to be determined substantially equivalent to an educational program accredited pursuant to G.S. 90-270.95(2), the applicant shall meet the standards of the Federation's Coursework Tool (CWT) [https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools\(CWT\).aspx](https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools(CWT).aspx) for the applicant's year of graduation. This coursework tool is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to obtain a copy may call the Federation at 703-299-3100 or download a copy from the Federation's website at no cost. A copy of the coursework

tool is on file at the Division located at 8300 Health Park Suite 233, Raleigh, NC 27615 and is available for public inspection during regular business hours.

(d) The applicant shall make arrangements to have the credentials evaluated by the Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy or a service that has a physical therapist consultant on staff and that is authorized to use the Federation's CWTs for physical therapists referred to in Paragraph (c) of this Rule. The Board shall review an applicant's educational program and shall consider the findings of the credentialing service.

(e) The applicant shall provide the following information to the Board:

- (1) ~~for examinations administered prior to August 1, 1998, proof that a score of 210 on the TSE (Test of Spoken English) or the SPEAK (Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit) examination was obtained (www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/);~~
- (2) ~~for examinations administered on or after August 1, 1998, and prior to January 1, 2007, the following proof shall be provided:~~
 - (A) ~~minimum score of 50 on the TSE examination or the SPEAK examination;~~
 - (B) ~~minimum score on the Test of Written English (TWE) of 4.5; and~~
 - (C) ~~minimum score of 560 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL);~~
- (3) ~~for examinations administered on or after January 1, 2007, proof shall be provided that the applicant obtained the following minimum standard scale scores in each of the four scoring domains (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking), and the total score of the iBT/Next Generation TOEFL:~~
 - (A) ~~Writing: 24;~~
 - (B) ~~Speaking: 26;~~
 - (C) ~~Reading Comprehension: 21;~~
 - (D) ~~Listening Comprehension: 18; and~~
 - (E) ~~Total Score: 89;~~
- (4) ~~proof that coursework was taught in the English language; or~~
- (1) proof that the applicant has demonstrated English language proficiency by meeting the most recent Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score requirement as defined by the Federation. This test is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to register for the TOEFL shall contact Examination Testing Service (<http://www.ets.org/toefl/>). The cost of this examination is posted on the ETS website. The TOEFL is an examination that is owned by ETS and is not available for public review; or
- (5) (2) documentation for exemption pursuant to 8 CFR 212.15 (<http://www.uscis.gov/>). 8 CFR 212.15 is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to obtain a copy at no cost may call the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 or 1-800-767-1833 (TDD) toll free. A copy of 8 CFR 212.15 is on file at the Division located at 8300 Health Park Suite 233, Raleigh, NC 27615 and is available for public inspection during regular business [hours.] [hours; or]

~~(3) (f) An applicant for licensure shall consent to an FBI criminal history record check by furnishing~~ provide a complete set of fingerprints at the applicant's expense. ~~expense in order to obtain a criminal history record check in accordance with G.S. 90-270.96 and G.S. 143B-964.~~

*History Note: Authority G.S. 90-270.92; 90-270.95; 90-270.95(2); 90-270-97; 90-270.98; 143B-964; 150B-21.6(2);
Eff. February 1, 2015;
Pursuant to G.S. 150B-21.3A, rule is necessary without substantive public interest Eff. May 1, 2018;
Amended Eff. May 1, 2020; September 1, 2019; November 1, 2018.*

21 NCAC 48E .0112 is amended with changes as published in 34:10 NCR 876-877 as follows:

21 NCAC 48E .0112 FOREIGN-TRAINED PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT APPLICANT

(a) This Rule shall apply to a physical therapist assistant who has graduated from a program located outside the United States that has not been accredited by the Commission of Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education

(CAPTE) or its successor, in accordance with G.S. ~~90-270.95(3)~~, 90-270.95(3), and holds an active physical therapist assistant license in another state or territory of the United States.

(b) All application forms and supporting documents shall be completed in English or accompanied by an English translation.

(c) For the applicant's educational credentials to be determined substantially equivalent to that obtained by an applicant for licensure pursuant to G.S. 90-270.95(3), the applicant shall meet the standards of the Federation's most recent Coursework Tool (CWT) for Physical Therapist Assistants [https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools\(CWT\).aspx](https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools(CWT).aspx) for the applicant's year of graduation. This coursework tool is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to obtain a copy may call the Federation at 703-299-3100 or download a copy from the Federation's website at no cost. A copy of the coursework tool is on file at the Division located at 8300 Health Park Suite 233, Raleigh, NC 27615 and is available for public inspection during regular business hours. If the applicant does not meet the requirements of G.S. 90-270.95(3), the Board shall examine the applicant's educational background to determine if the general and professional education is substantially equivalent to an educational program accredited pursuant to G.S. 90-270.95(2) and meets the requirements of the Federation's most recent Coursework Tool (CWT) for Physical Therapist Assistants at [https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools\(CWT\).aspx](https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools(CWT).aspx). This coursework tool is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to obtain a copy may call the Federation at 703-299-3100 or download a copy from the Federation's website at no cost. A copy of this instrument is on file at the Division located at 8300 Health Park Suite 233, Raleigh, NC 27615 and is available for public inspection during regular business hours.

(d) The applicant shall make arrangements to have the credentials evaluated by the Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy or a service that has a physical therapist consultant on staff and that is authorized to use the Federation's CWTs for physical therapist assistants referred to in Paragraph (c) of this Rule. The Board shall review an applicant's educational program and shall consider the findings of the credentialing service.

(e) The applicant shall provide the following information to the Board:

- (1) proof that the applicant has demonstrated English language proficiency by meeting the most recent Test of English as a Foreign Language TOEFL score requirement as defined by the Federation. This test is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to register for the TOEFL shall contact Examination Testing Service (<http://www.ets.org/toefl/>). The cost of this examination is posted on the ETS website. The TOEFL is an examination that is owned by ETS and is not available for public review; or
- (2) ~~proof that coursework was taught in the English language; or~~
- (3) (2) documentation for exemption pursuant to 8 CFR 212.15 (<http://www.uscis.gov/>). 8 CFR 212.15 is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to obtain a copy at no cost may call the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 or 1-800-767-1833 (TDD) toll free. A copy of 8 CFR 212.15 is on file at the 8300 Health Park Suite 233, Raleigh, NC 27615 and is available for public inspection during regular business [hours.] [hours; or]

~~(3)~~ (f) An applicant for licensure shall ~~[consent to an FBI criminal history record check by furnishing]~~ provide a complete set of fingerprints at the applicant's [expense.] expense in order to obtain a criminal history record check in accordance with G.S. 90-270.96 and G.S. 143B-964.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 90-270.92; ~~90-270.92(2)~~; 90-270.95; 90-270.97; 90-270.98; 90-270.295; 90-270.397; 143B-964; 150B-21.6(2);
Eff. February 1, 2015;
Pursuant to G.S. 150B-21.3A, rule is necessary without substantive public interest Eff. May 1, 2018;
Amended Eff. May 1, 2020; September 1, 2019; November 1, 2018.*

21 NCAC 48E .0510 is adopted with changes as published in 34:10 NCR 877 as follows:

21 NCAC 48E .0510 FOREIGN-TRAINED PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT EXAM

APPLICANT

(a) This Rule shall apply to a physical therapist assistant who has graduated from a program located outside the United States that has not been accredited by the Commission of Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) or its successor, in accordance with G.S. 90-270.95(3).

(b) All application forms and supporting documents shall be completed in English or accompanied by an English translation.

(c) For the applicant's educational credentials to be determined substantially equivalent to that obtained by an applicant for licensure pursuant to G.S. 90-270.95(3), the applicant shall meet the standards of the most recent Federation's Coursework Tool (CWT) for Physical Therapist Assistants [https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools\(CWT\).aspx](https://www.fsbpt.org/FreeResources/RegulatoryResources/CourseworkTools(CWT).aspx). This coursework tool is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to obtain a copy may call the Federation at 703-299-3100 or download a copy from the Federation's website at no cost. A copy of the coursework tool is on file at the Division located at 8300 Health Park Suite 233, Raleigh, NC 27615 and is available for public inspection during regular business hours.

(d) The applicant shall make arrangements to have the credentials evaluated by the Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy or a service that has a physical therapist consultant on staff and that is authorized to use the Federation's CWTs for physical therapist assistants referred to in Paragraph (c) of this Rule. The Board shall review an applicant's educational program and shall consider the findings of the credentialing service.

(e) The applicant shall provide the following information to the Board:

- (1) proof that the applicant has demonstrated English language proficiency by meeting the most recent Test of English as a Foreign Language TOEFL score requirement as defined by the Federation. This test is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to register for the TOEFL shall contact Examination Testing Service (<http://www.ets.org/toefl>). The cost of this examination is posted on the ETS website. The TOEFL is an examination that is owned by ETS and is not available for public review; or
- (2) documentation for exemption pursuant to 8 CFR 212.15 (<http://www.uscis.gov/>). 8 CFR 212.15 is incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments and editions. Individuals wishing to obtain a copy at no cost may call the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 or 1-800-767-1833 (TDD) toll free. A copy of 8 CFR 212.15 is on file at the 8300 Health Park Suite 233, Raleigh, NC 27615 and is available for public inspection during regular business hours.

~~(f)~~ (f) An applicant for licensure shall ~~[consent to an FBI criminal history record check by furnishing]~~ provide a complete set of fingerprints at the applicant's [expense.] expense in order to obtain a criminal history record check in accordance with G.S. 90-270.96 and G.S. 143B-964.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 90-270.92; 90-270.95; 90-270.97; 90-270.98; 143B-964; 150B-21.6(2);
Eff. May 1, 2020.*

An internationally educated / foreign-trained physical therapist or physical therapist assistant who plans to practice in North Carolina **must** have a current North Carolina license prior to beginning employment in the State. North Carolina does not have temporary licensure.

REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE - Each applicant must:

1. Be of good moral character;
2. Be a graduate of an educational program for physical therapists or physical therapist assistant approved by the Board;
3. Furnish documentary evidence of completion of a course of instruction substantially equivalent to that of the United States trained physical therapist or physical therapist assistant;
4. Be proficient in English;
5. Furnish examination scores that meet the North Carolina passing level;
6. **For Endorsement Only:** active license in another state.
7. Furnish the Board with his/her social security number.
(required by G.S. § 93B-14)
8. Complete Jurisprudence Exercise (www.ncptboard.org)

EVALUATION OF EDUCATION

The credentials of an internationally educated / foreign-trained physical therapist who is **not** a graduate of a CAPTE (Commission of Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education) accredited program, whether applying for licensure by examination or by endorsement, must be evaluated by a credentialing service acceptable to the Board to determine if the course of instruction is substantially equivalent to that of the United States trained physical therapist. Credentialing services accepted by the Board are as follows:

1. The Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy (FCCPT)
124 West Street South, 3rd Floor
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone 703/684-8406, Fax 703/684-8715
E-mail address: fcpt@fsbpt.org
2. International Consultants of Delaware, Inc. (ICD)
P.O. Box 8629
Philadelphia, PA 19101-8629
Telephone 215-243-5858
E-mail address: www.icdel.com
3. International Education Research Foundation, Inc. (IERF)
PO Box 3665 Culver City, CA 90231-3655
Telephone 310-258-9451, Fax: 310-342-7086
E-mail: info@ierf.org ; Web site: www.ierf.org (applications available off web page)

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

It is the applicant's responsibility to ascertain that all forms are sent to the Board. Examination applications must be filed AT LEAST 90 days before the examination date.

ALL APPLICANTS must submit:

1. Application form and affidavit with photograph. All sections must be completed.
2. Two character references from individuals other than relatives who have known the applicant for at least one year. (*While not required, the Board prefers to have at least one reference from a physical therapist or a health care professional with whom the applicant has been associated for at least one year.*)
3. Evaluation of educational credentials from an acceptable credentialing service unless the educational program is CAPTE accredited.
4. Evidence of proficiency in English. (Here is a link to the current standards at FSBPT:

<https://www.fsbpt.org/Secondary-Pages/Exam-Candidates/National-Exam-NPTE/Eligibility-Requirements/Current-Eligibility-Requirements>)

EXAMINATION APPLICANTS must also submit the following:

1. A CERTIFIED CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY for the application fee in the amount of \$150.00 to be paid to NCBPTE; No portion of the application fee may be refunded. (Examination cost is paid directly to the FSBPT)

Applicants with disabilities who need special arrangements for the exam must indicate this on the application form. The appropriate documentation must be filed in the Board's office no later than 90 days before the examination date.

ENDORSEMENT APPLICANTS must also submit the following:

1. A CERTIFIED CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY for the application fee of \$150.00. No portion of the application fee may be refunded.
2. Official verification of a current license in another state, indicating license date, license number and manner in which license was obtained. This must come directly from the State Board. Faxed or scanned copies will not be accepted.
3. Examination scores:
If the raw score for examinations taken prior to July, 1993 is not available from the board in another state, the score must be issued through the reporting service. Beginning with the July, 1993 examination, unless the other state has scores based on the 200 - 800 scale, the scores must be issued by the FSBPT Score Transfer Service. If the score does not meet the North Carolina passing level, the applicant must retake the examination and pay the cost of re-examination.

Note: Scores on jurisprudent examinations given in other states are not required.