

## COVID-19 Practice Guidance for Licensees and Facilities

Alaska State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board , 11/12/20

The State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board recognizes physical therapy and occupational therapy professionals have faced many challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID information changes rapidly and it is the responsibility of every licensed professional to stay informed and practice safely.

The governor and Alaska health care authorities have lifted Health Mandate 15, so the board is reaching out to provide guidance for licensees.

Based on State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board standards as well as State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board Principles of Practice, the board recommends all licensees consider following the guidance below.

### **Recommendations for mitigating COVID-19 exposure risk include, but are not limited to:**

Conduct screening procedures for all patients to determine risks of COVID-19 exposure and identify high risk individuals with impaired health status. Follow State of Alaska COVID-19 testing guidance when applicable: <http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/testing.aspx>

Recommend delay in treatment or telehealth options if screening identifies potential exposure or impaired health status. See CDC Guidelines on COVID-19 <https://www.cdc.gov/>

1. Complete thorough cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces, equipment and tools with potential patient/provider contact.
2. Maintain social distancing in all common areas (IE: lobby and waiting room). Other examples may include advising patients to be unaccompanied, unless a minor.
3. Maintain the highest sanitary levels via frequent handwashing/sanitizer use. For example, any provider-patient contact will require immediate sanitization and handwashing before and after contact. The board recommends following CDC guidelines as well as WHO guidelines regarding cleaning and disinfecting. Recommended EPA Disinfectants can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>  
The board recommends you read all labels/instructions as some disinfectants require longer kill times.
4. Use of PPEs (masks and gloves): Follow current CDC Guidelines to provide safe patient care intervention.
5. The board recommends telehealth services if:
  - a. Treatment cannot be safely provided through direct contact.
  - b. The client has co-morbidities with increased risk of illness and possibility of death should they contract COVID-19.
  - c. The board reminds providers that they must complete an application with the Telemedicine Business Registry prior to provision of such care.

<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl/ProfessionalLicensing/TelemedicineBusinessRegistry.aspx>.

The State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board reminds licensees that the conditions under which they provide care should be provided in accordance and compliance with state licensing statutes and regulations, as well as CDC and OSHA Guidelines. Should a provider be unable or unwilling to comply with the conditions of licensure or the CDC/OSHA guidelines, the board recommends they postpone such care until such time that they are able and willing to comply or until the CDC/OSHA guidelines are amended or rescinded.

Navigating CDC Website for reference <https://www.cdc.gov/>

You can either use the search bar to type in what you are looking for or:

- Click on Coronavirus Disease, then
- Click on Healthcare Workers and Labs, then
- Click on Guidance for US Healthcare facilities