

1 AN ACT concerning regulation.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Illinois Physical Therapy Act is amended by  
5 changing Sections 1 and 17 and by adding Section 1.2 as  
6 follows:

7 (225 ILCS 90/1) (from Ch. 111, par. 4251)

8 (Section scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2026)

9 Sec. 1. Definitions. As used in this Act:

10 (1) "Physical therapy" means all of the following:

11 (A) Examining, evaluating, and testing individuals who  
12 may have mechanical, physiological, or developmental  
13 impairments, functional limitations, disabilities, or  
14 other health and movement-related conditions, classifying  
15 these disorders, determining a rehabilitation prognosis  
16 and plan of therapeutic intervention, and assessing the  
17 ongoing ~~on-going~~ effects of the interventions.

18 (B) Alleviating impairments, functional limitations,  
19 or disabilities by designing, implementing, and modifying  
20 therapeutic interventions that may include, but are not  
21 limited to, the evaluation or treatment of a person through  
22 the use of the effective properties of physical measures  
23 and heat, cold, light, water, radiant energy, electricity,

1 sound, and air and use of therapeutic massage, therapeutic  
2 exercise, mobilization, and rehabilitative procedures,  
3 with or without assistive devices, for the purposes of  
4 preventing, correcting, or alleviating a physical or  
5 mental impairment, functional limitation, or disability.

6 (C) Reducing the risk of injury, impairment,  
7 functional limitation, or disability, including the  
8 promotion and maintenance of fitness, health, and  
9 wellness.

10 (D) Engaging in administration, consultation,  
11 education, and research.

12 "Physical therapy" includes, but is not limited to: (a)  
13 performance of specialized tests and measurements, (b)  
14 administration of specialized treatment procedures, (c)  
15 interpretation of referrals from physicians, dentists,  
16 advanced practice registered nurses, physician assistants, and  
17 podiatric physicians, (d) establishment, and modification of  
18 physical therapy treatment programs, (e) administration of  
19 topical medication used in generally accepted physical therapy  
20 procedures when such medication is either prescribed by the  
21 patient's physician, licensed to practice medicine in all its  
22 branches, the patient's physician licensed to practice  
23 podiatric medicine, the patient's advanced practice registered  
24 nurse, the patient's physician assistant, or the patient's  
25 dentist or used following the physician's orders or written  
26 instructions, (f) supervision or teaching of physical therapy,

1 and (g) dry needling in accordance with Section 1.5. "Physical  
2 therapy" does not include radiology, electrosurgery,  
3 chiropractic technique or determination of a differential  
4 diagnosis; provided, however, the limitation on determining a  
5 differential diagnosis shall not in any manner limit a physical  
6 therapist licensed under this Act from performing an evaluation  
7 and establishing a physical therapy treatment plan pursuant to  
8 such license. Nothing in this Section shall limit a physical  
9 therapist from employing appropriate physical therapy  
10 techniques that he or she is educated and licensed to perform.  
11 ~~A physical therapist shall refer to a licensed physician,~~  
12 ~~advanced practice registered nurse, physician assistant,~~  
13 ~~dentist, podiatric physician, other physical therapist, or~~  
14 ~~other health care provider any patient whose medical condition~~  
15 ~~should, at the time of evaluation or treatment, be determined~~  
16 ~~to be beyond the scope of practice of the physical therapist.~~

17 (2) "Physical therapist" means a person who practices  
18 physical therapy and who has met all requirements as provided  
19 in this Act.

20 (3) "Department" means the Department of Professional  
21 Regulation.

22 (4) "Director" means the Director of Professional  
23 Regulation.

24 (5) "Board" means the Physical Therapy Licensing and  
25 Disciplinary Board approved by the Director.

26 (6) "Referral" means a written or oral authorization for

1 physical therapy services for a patient by a physician,  
2 dentist, advanced practice registered nurse, physician  
3 assistant, or podiatric physician who maintains medical  
4 supervision of the patient and makes a diagnosis or verifies  
5 that the patient's condition is such that it may be treated by  
6 a physical therapist.

7 (7) (Blank). ~~"Documented current and relevant diagnosis"~~  
8 ~~for the purpose of this Act means a diagnosis, substantiated by~~  
9 ~~signature or oral verification of a physician, dentist,~~  
10 ~~advanced practice registered nurse, physician assistant, or~~  
11 ~~podiatric physician, that a patient's condition is such that it~~  
12 ~~may be treated by physical therapy as defined in this Act,~~  
13 ~~which diagnosis shall remain in effect until changed by the~~  
14 ~~physician, dentist, advanced practice registered nurse,~~  
15 ~~physician assistant, or podiatric physician.~~

16 (8) "State" includes:

- 17 (a) the states of the United States of America;  
18 (b) the District of Columbia; and  
19 (c) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

20 (9) "Physical therapist assistant" means a person licensed  
21 to assist a physical therapist and who has met all requirements  
22 as provided in this Act and who works under the supervision of  
23 a licensed physical therapist to assist in implementing the  
24 physical therapy treatment program as established by the  
25 licensed physical therapist. The patient care activities  
26 provided by the physical therapist assistant shall not include

1 the interpretation of referrals, evaluation procedures, or the  
2 planning or major modification of patient programs.

3 (10) "Physical therapy aide" means a person who has  
4 received on the job training, specific to the facility in which  
5 he is employed.

6 (11) "Advanced practice registered nurse" means a person  
7 licensed as an advanced practice registered nurse under the  
8 Nurse Practice Act.

9 (12) "Physician assistant" means a person licensed under  
10 the Physician Assistant Practice Act of 1987.

11 (13) "Health care professional" means a physician,  
12 dentist, podiatric physician, advanced practice registered  
13 nurse, or physician assistant.

14 (Source: P.A. 99-173, eff. 7-29-15; 99-229, eff. 8-3-15;  
15 99-642, eff. 7-28-16; 100-201, eff. 8-18-17; 100-418, eff.  
16 8-25-17; 100-513, eff. 1-1-18; revised 9-29-17.)

17 (225 ILCS 90/1.2 new)

18 Sec. 1.2. Physical therapy services.

19 (a) A physical therapist may provide physical therapy  
20 services to a patient with or without a referral from a health  
21 care professional.

22 (b) A physical therapist providing services without a  
23 referral from a health care professional must notify the  
24 patient's treating health care professional within 5 business  
25 days after the patient's first visit that the patient is

1 receiving physical therapy. This does not apply to physical  
2 therapy services related to fitness or wellness, unless the  
3 patient presents with an ailment or injury.

4 (c) A physical therapist shall refer a patient to the  
5 patient's treating health care professional of record or, in  
6 the case where there is no health care professional of record,  
7 to a health care professional of the patient's choice, if:

8 (1) the patient does not demonstrate measurable or  
9 functional improvement after 10 visits or 15 business days,  
10 whichever occurs first, and continued improvement  
11 thereafter;

12 (2) the patient returns for services for the same or  
13 similar condition after 30 calendar days of being  
14 discharged by the physical therapist; or

15 (3) the patient's condition, at the time of evaluation  
16 or services, is determined to be beyond the scope of  
17 practice of the physical therapist.

18 (d) Wound debridement services may only be provided by a  
19 physical therapist with written authorization from a health  
20 care professional.

21 (e) A physical therapist shall promptly consult and  
22 collaborate with the appropriate health care professional  
23 anytime a patient's condition indicates that it may be related  
24 to temporomandibular disorder so that a diagnosis can be made  
25 by that health care professional for an appropriate treatment  
26 plan.

1 (225 ILCS 90/17) (from Ch. 111, par. 4267)

2 (Section scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2026)

3 Sec. 17. (1) The Department may refuse to issue or to  
4 renew, or may revoke, suspend, place on probation, reprimand,  
5 or take other disciplinary action as the Department deems  
6 appropriate, including the issuance of fines not to exceed  
7 \$5000, with regard to a license for any one or a combination of  
8 the following:

9 A. Material misstatement in furnishing information to  
10 the Department or otherwise making misleading, deceptive,  
11 untrue, or fraudulent representations in violation of this  
12 Act or otherwise in the practice of the profession;

13 B. Violations of this Act, or of the rules or  
14 regulations promulgated hereunder;

15 C. Conviction of any crime under the laws of the United  
16 States or any state or territory thereof which is a felony  
17 or which is a misdemeanor, an essential element of which is  
18 dishonesty, or of any crime which is directly related to  
19 the practice of the profession; conviction, as used in this  
20 paragraph, shall include a finding or verdict of guilty, an  
21 admission of guilt or a plea of nolo contendere;

22 D. Making any misrepresentation for the purpose of  
23 obtaining licenses, or violating any provision of this Act  
24 or the rules promulgated thereunder pertaining to  
25 advertising;

1           E. A pattern of practice or other behavior which  
2 demonstrates incapacity or incompetency to practice under  
3 this Act;

4           F. Aiding or assisting another person in violating any  
5 provision of this Act or Rules;

6           G. Failing, within 60 days, to provide information in  
7 response to a written request made by the Department;

8           H. Engaging in dishonorable, unethical or  
9 unprofessional conduct of a character likely to deceive,  
10 defraud or harm the public. Unprofessional conduct shall  
11 include any departure from or the failure to conform to the  
12 minimal standards of acceptable and prevailing physical  
13 therapy practice, in which proceeding actual injury to a  
14 patient need not be established;

15           I. Unlawful distribution of any drug or narcotic, or  
16 unlawful conversion of any drug or narcotic not belonging  
17 to the person for such person's own use or benefit or for  
18 other than medically accepted therapeutic purposes;

19           J. Habitual or excessive use or addiction to alcohol,  
20 narcotics, stimulants, or any other chemical agent or drug  
21 which results in a physical therapist's or physical  
22 therapist assistant's inability to practice with  
23 reasonable judgment, skill or safety;

24           K. Revocation or suspension of a license to practice  
25 physical therapy as a physical therapist or physical  
26 therapist assistant or the taking of other disciplinary



1 action by the proper licensing authority of another state,  
2 territory or country;

3 L. Directly or indirectly giving to or receiving from  
4 any person, firm, corporation, partnership, or association  
5 any fee, commission, rebate or other form of compensation  
6 for any professional services not actually or personally  
7 rendered. Nothing contained in this paragraph prohibits  
8 persons holding valid and current licenses under this Act  
9 from practicing physical therapy in partnership under a  
10 partnership agreement, including a limited liability  
11 partnership, a limited liability company, or a corporation  
12 under the Professional Service Corporation Act or from  
13 pooling, sharing, dividing, or apportioning the fees and  
14 monies received by them or by the partnership, company, or  
15 corporation in accordance with the partnership agreement  
16 or the policies of the company or professional corporation.  
17 Nothing in this paragraph (L) affects any bona fide  
18 independent contractor or employment arrangements among  
19 health care professionals, health facilities, health care  
20 providers, or other entities, except as otherwise  
21 prohibited by law. Any employment arrangements may include  
22 provisions for compensation, health insurance, pension, or  
23 other employment benefits for the provision of services  
24 within the scope of the licensee's practice under this Act.  
25 Nothing in this paragraph (L) shall be construed to require  
26 an employment arrangement to receive professional fees for

1 services rendered;

2 M. A finding by the Board that the licensee after  
3 having his or her license placed on probationary status has  
4 violated the terms of probation;

5 N. Abandonment of a patient;

6 O. Willfully failing to report an instance of suspected  
7 child abuse or neglect as required by the Abused and  
8 Neglected Child Reporting Act;

9 P. Willfully failing to report an instance of suspected  
10 elder abuse or neglect as required by the Elder Abuse  
11 Reporting Act;

12 Q. Physical illness, including but not limited to,  
13 deterioration through the aging process, or loss of motor  
14 skill which results in the inability to practice the  
15 profession with reasonable judgement, skill or safety;

16 R. The use of any words (such as physical therapy,  
17 physical therapist physiotherapy or physiotherapist),  
18 abbreviations, figures or letters with the intention of  
19 indicating practice as a licensed physical therapist  
20 without a valid license as a physical therapist issued  
21 under this Act;

22 S. The use of the term physical therapist assistant, or  
23 abbreviations, figures, or letters with the intention of  
24 indicating practice as a physical therapist assistant  
25 without a valid license as a physical therapist assistant  
26 issued under this Act;

1 T. Willfully violating or knowingly assisting in the  
2 violation of any law of this State relating to the practice  
3 of abortion;

4 U. Continued practice by a person knowingly having an  
5 infectious, communicable or contagious disease;

6 V. Having treated ailments of human beings otherwise  
7 than by the practice of physical therapy as defined in this  
8 Act, or having treated ailments of human beings as a  
9 licensed physical therapist in violation of Section 1.2  
10 ~~independent of a documented referral or a documented~~  
11 ~~current and relevant diagnosis from a physician, dentist,~~  
12 ~~advanced practice registered nurse, physician assistant,~~  
13 ~~or podiatric physician, or having failed to notify the~~  
14 ~~physician, dentist, advanced practice registered nurse,~~  
15 ~~physician assistant, or podiatric physician who~~  
16 ~~established a documented current and relevant diagnosis~~  
17 ~~that the patient is receiving physical therapy pursuant to~~  
18 ~~that diagnosis;~~

19 W. Being named as a perpetrator in an indicated report  
20 by the Department of Children and Family Services pursuant  
21 to the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, and upon  
22 proof by clear and convincing evidence that the licensee  
23 has caused a child to be an abused child or neglected child  
24 as defined in the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act;

25 X. Interpretation of referrals, performance of  
26 evaluation procedures, planning or making major

1 modifications of patient programs by a physical therapist  
2 assistant;

3 Y. Failure by a physical therapist assistant and  
4 supervising physical therapist to maintain continued  
5 contact, including periodic personal supervision and  
6 instruction, to insure safety and welfare of patients;

7 Z. Violation of the Health Care Worker Self-Referral  
8 Act.

9 (2) The determination by a circuit court that a licensee is  
10 subject to involuntary admission or judicial admission as  
11 provided in the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities  
12 Code operates as an automatic suspension. Such suspension will  
13 end only upon a finding by a court that the patient is no  
14 longer subject to involuntary admission or judicial admission  
15 and the issuance of an order so finding and discharging the  
16 patient; and upon the recommendation of the Board to the  
17 Director that the licensee be allowed to resume his practice.

18 (3) The Department may refuse to issue or may suspend the  
19 license of any person who fails to file a return, or to pay the  
20 tax, penalty or interest shown in a filed return, or to pay any  
21 final assessment of tax, penalty or interest, as required by  
22 any tax Act administered by the Illinois Department of Revenue,  
23 until such time as the requirements of any such tax Act are  
24 satisfied.

25 (Source: P.A. 100-513, eff. 1-1-18.)

26 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon

1 becoming law.