



Occupational Therapy

What's Required

Occupational Therapy

(i) Means services provided by a qualified occupational therapist; and (ii) Includes—(A) Improving, developing, or restoring functions impaired or lost through illness, injury, or deprivation; (B) Improving ability to perform tasks for independent functioning if functions are impaired or lost; and (C) Preventing, through early intervention, initial or further impairment or loss of function (§ 300.34, Federal Regulations).

The practice of Occupational Therapy is, “The use of purposeful activity or intervention to achieve functional outcomes. Achieving functional outcomes means to develop or facilitate restoration of the highest possible level of independence in interaction with the environment.” ([The American Occupational Therapy Association](#))

What We Do

Referral Process

In considering the need to refer a student for Occupational Therapy (OT) services, the campus team will:

- Review the student's progress in the identified Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals and objectives
- Use measurable data to determine if there are barriers limiting the student's progress in the identified goals and objectives
- Consider campus based supports that may address the identified barrier.

When the school has tried accommodations for the student using available resources and the teacher is still unable to implement the IEP with success, and the barrier to success involves the student's sensory and/or motor abilities, the campus team may consult with the campus OT in order to gain insights for supporting general needs of students who may struggle with fine motor tasks. The OT can provide tools and techniques as general suggestions to campus staff.

Evaluation Process

Requesting/Initiating an Evaluation



The evaluation of a student to determine the student's need for OT services at school may be requested or initiated by one of the following means:

- An Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD)/IEP Committee with the input of the OT practitioner determines an educational concern necessitating the OT evaluation,
- A student moves into the district with documentation identifying the student as having received OT services at school as a part of their previous IEP and no current evaluation report is provided by the previous school district within 30 calendar days, or
- A student currently receiving school OT services and the formal OT evaluation is approaching three years old

Requesting Consent for Evaluation

Once the need for an OT evaluation is determined, campus staff will request consent to proceed with evaluation by convening an ARD or an IEP amendment to provide parent with a notice of evaluation and consent form.

Referral Processing by the Campus

When consent for an OT evaluation is obtained by the ARD committee, the campus team member providing informed consent to the parent/guardian will ensure the date written consent was received and appropriate signatures are noted on the form. The due date for the evaluation will be determined by the ARD committee and reflected in the ARD paperwork.

The campus team member who received the signed consent form notifies the OT practitioner supporting the campus by email that consent has been received. The signed consent form will be uploaded into the electronic record by the campus.

What are direct services?

Direct services usually refer to hands-on, face-to-face interactions between the related services professional and the student. These interactions can take place in a variety of settings, such as the classroom, gym, health office, resource room, counseling office, or playground. Typically, the related service professional analyzes student responses and uses specific techniques to develop or improve particular skills. The professional will also typically: monitor the student's performance within the educational setting so that adjustments can be made to improve student performance, as needed, and consult with teachers, administrators and parents on an ongoing basis, so that relevant strategies can be carried out through indirect means (see below) at other times.

**What are indirect services?**

Indirect services may involve teaching, consulting with, and/or directly supervising other personnel (including paraprofessionals and parents) so that they can carry out therapeutically-appropriate activities. For example, a school psychologist might train teachers and other educators how to implement a program included in a student's IEP to decrease the child's problem behaviors. Similarly, an occupational therapist may serve as a consultant to a teacher and provide expertise to solve problems regarding a student's access to instruction.

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