

Utah Physical Therapy

Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice

As Adopted Month 2026

Taken from APTA Code of Ethics for the Physical Therapy Profession and modified for use in Utah

Standard I: Professionalism

The Licensed Individual must provide optimal levels of professional physical therapy services and demonstrate excellence in practice by promoting healing and well-being through responsible, compassionate and respectful touch. In their professional role, the Licensed Individual shall:

- a. adhere to the Utah Law, Rules, Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, policies and
- b. procedures
- c. comply with the review process conducted by the Utah State Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Licensing Board regarding any alleged violations against the Utah Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice
- d. conduct themselves in a manner in all settings meriting the respect of the public and other professionals
- e. treat each client with respect, dignity and worth
- f. use professional verbal, nonverbal and written communications
- g. provide an environment that is safe and comfortable for the client and which, at a
- h. minimum, meets all legal requirements for health and safety
- i. use standard precautions to ensure professional hygienic practices and maintain a
- j. level of personal hygiene appropriate for practitioners in the therapeutic setting
- k. obtain voluntary and informed consent from the client prior to initiating the session
- l. conduct an accurate needs assessment, develop a plan of care with the client, and update the plan as needed
- m. be knowledgeable of their scope of practice and practice only within these limitations
- n. refer to other professionals when in the best interest of the client and/or practitioner
- o. seek other professional advice when needed
- p. respect the practices of other professionals and foster collegial relationships
- q. not falsely impugn the reputation of any colleague

Standard II: Legal and Ethical Requirements

The Licensed Individual must comply with all the legal requirements in applicable jurisdictions regulating the profession of physical therapy. In their professional role, the Licensed Individual shall:

- a. obey all applicable local, state, and federal laws
- b. refrain from any behavior that results in illegal or unethical actions
- c. accept responsibility for their own actions
- d. report to the proper authorities for any alleged violations of the law by other Licensed Individual
- e. report to DOPL any knowledge indicating unethical, incompetent, or illegal acts committee by another Licensed Individual
- f. maintain accurate and truthful records
- g. report to DOPL any criminal convictions or acts that create a risk of serious harm to the physical or mental well-being of a recipient of physical therapy regarding themselves and other Licensed Individuals
- h. report to DOPL any pending litigation and resulting resolution related to their professional practice and the professional practice of other Licensed Individuals

Standard III: Confidentiality

The Licensed Individual shall respect the confidentiality of client information and safeguard all records. In their professional role, the Licensed Individual shall:

- a. protect the client's identity in social conversations, all advertisements, and any and all other manners unless requested by the client in writing, medically necessary, or required by law
- b. solicit only information that is relevant to the professional client/ Licensed Individual relationship
- c. store and dispose of client files in a secure manner.

Standard IV: Business Practices

The Licensed Individual shall practice with honesty, integrity, and lawfulness in the business of massage and bodywork. In their professional role the Licensed Individual shall:

- a. provide a physical setting that is safe and meets all applicable legal requirements for health and safety
- b. maintain adequate progress notes for each client session
- c. accurately and truthfully inform the public of services provided
- d. honestly represent all professional qualifications and affiliations
- e. promote their business with integrity and avoid potential and actual conflicts of interest
- f. comply with all laws regarding sexual harassment
- g. not exploit the trust and dependency of others, including clients and employees/coworkers

Standard V: Roles and Boundaries

The Licensed Individual shall adhere to ethical boundaries and perform the professional roles designed to protect the client, the practitioner, and safeguard the therapeutic value of the relationship. In their professional role, the Licensed Individual shall:

- a. recognize their personal limitations and practice only within these limitations
- b. recognize their influential position with the client and shall not exploit the relationship for personal or other gain
- c. recognize and limit the impact of transference and counter-transference between the
- d. client and Licensed Individual
- e. avoid dual or multidimensional relationships that could impair professional judgment
- f. or result in exploitation of the client or employees and/or co-workers
- g. shall not, at any time, accept gifts or other considerations that influence or give an appearance of influencing their professional judgment and decision-making.
- h. not engage in any sexual activity with a client
- i. acknowledge and respect the client's freedom of choice in the therapeutic session
- j. respect the client's right to refuse the therapeutic session
- k. refrain from practicing under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any illegal substances
- l. (with the exception of prescribed dosage of prescription medication that does not
- m. impair the Licensed Individual)
- n. have the right to refuse and/or terminate the service to a client who is abusive or
- o. under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any illegal substance
- p. Do not offer/provide/sale alcohol, drugs, or any illegal substance to clients

Standard VI: Prevention of Sexual Misconduct

The Licensed Individual shall refrain from any behavior that sexualizes, or appears to sexualize, the client/ Licensed Individual relationship. The Licensed Individual recognizes that the intimacy of the therapeutic relationship may activate practitioner and/or client needs and/or desires that weaken objectivity and may lead to sexualizing the therapeutic relationship. In their professional role the Licensed Individual shall:

- a. refrain from participating in a sexual relationship or sexual conduct with the client, whether consensual or otherwise, from the beginning of the client/ Licensed Individual relationship and for a minimum of six months after the termination of the client/ Licensed Individual relationship
- b. in the event that the client initiates sexual behavior, interrupt therapy to clarify the purpose of the therapeutic session, and, if such conduct does not cease, terminate or refuse the session
- c. recognize that sexual activity with clients, students, employees, supervisors, or trainees is prohibited even if consensual

d. not touch the genitalia

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