

Governor Signs Sunset Bill

Governor Greg Abbott signed Senate Bill 317 (SB 317) on Friday, June 9th. SB 317 relates to the continuation and functions of the **Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners (ECPTOTE)**, the **Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners (TBPTE)**, and the **Texas Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners (TBOTE)**.

The legislation addresses issues differently from current law by:

- Continuing ECPTOTE, TBPTE, and TBOTE for 12 years.
- Discontinuing the registration of physical and occupational therapy facilities and temporarily authorizing the boards to expunge facility-related administrative violations from a licensee's record.
- Adopting the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact.
- Providing clear statutory authority for licensure by endorsement.
- Clarifying that occupational therapy assistants licensed in other states may practice in this state temporarily under the same conditions as occupational therapists.
- Removing provisions prescribing educational requirements beyond completion of an accredited program or substantially equivalent to an accredited program.
- Clarifying statutes to reflect current standards and conditions.
- Requiring the boards to adopt rules relating to the approval of continuing competence or continuing education courses inclusive of a request for proposal and bid process and implement that process within 12 months, and no less than once every four years thereafter.
- Requiring the boards to conduct fingerprint-based criminal background checks of licensure applicants and licensees.
- Requiring the boards to develop a disciplinary matrix.
- Removing outdated, subjective standards as criteria for foreign-trained licensure applicants.
- Applying the standard Sunset across-the-board requirements to ECPTOTE, TBPTE, and TBOTE.
- Makes necessary changes to ensure two Sunset recommendations are fully reflected to remove outdated language relating to coursework, fieldwork, and examination requirements for TBPTE and TBOTE.
- Changes the effective date of facility deregulation to September 1, 2019.
- Corrects two technical errors in the designation of the chair of ECPTOTE and renumbers a subsection to reflect a repealer established elsewhere in the bill. (Original Author's / Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

Each board will address the effect that the changes will have on their respective set of Rules at their next board meeting. The PT Board will meet July 20 – 21, 2017 and the OT Board will meet August 17 – 18, 2017. Rules that are proposed at each meeting will be reviewed at the Executive Council meeting on August 25, 2017 before being posted to the Texas Register for public comment.

To view the enrolled version of the bill, please follow the link below:

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=85R&Bill=SB317>