

1 H.247
2 Introduced by Representatives Stone of Burlington, Andriano of Orwell,
3 Arsenault of Williston, Austin of Colchester, Bartholomew of
4 Hartland, Bluemle of Burlington, Bos-Lun of Westminster,
5 Boyden of Cambridge, Brumsted of Shelburne, Burrows of
6 West Windsor, Buss of Woodstock, Casey of Montpelier,
7 Chapin of East Montpelier, Chase of Chester, Cina of
8 Burlington, Cole of Hartford, Conlon of Cornwall, Cordes of
9 Lincoln, Farlice-Rubio of Barnet, Garofano of Essex, Goldman
10 of Rockingham, Graning of Jericho, Hango of Berkshire,
11 Headrick of Burlington, Holcombe of Norwich, Hooper of
12 Randolph, Hooper of Burlington, Hyman of South Burlington,
13 Krasnow of South Burlington, Lalley of Shelburne, LaMont of
14 Morristown, Leavitt of Grand Isle, McCann of Montpelier,
15 McCarthy of St. Albans City, Minier of South Burlington,
16 Mulvaney-Stanak of Burlington, Nugent of South Burlington,
17 Ode of Burlington, Priestley of Bradford, Rachelson of
18 Burlington, Rice of Dorset, Small of Winooski, Stebbins of
19 Burlington, Taylor of Milton, Templeman of Brownington,
20 Toof of St. Albans Town, Torre of Moretown, Waters Evans of
21 Charlotte, and Williams of Granby

1 Referred to Committee on

2 Date:

3 Subject: Professions and occupations; Office of Professional Regulation;

4 occupational therapists; Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact

5 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to adopt the

6 Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact.

7 An act relating to Vermont's adoption of the Occupational Therapy
8 Licensure Compact

9 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

10 Sec. 1. 26 V.S.A. chapter 71 is amended to read:

11 CHAPTER 71. OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AND OCCUPATIONAL
12 THERAPY ASSISTANTS

13 Subchapter 1. Vermont Single-State License

14 * * *

15 Sec. 2. 26 V.S.A. chapter 71, subchapter 2 is added to read:

16 Subchapter 2. Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact

17 § 3365. OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY LICENSURE COMPACT;

18 ADOPTION

19 This subchapter is the Vermont adoption of the Occupational Therapy

20 Licensure Compact. The form, format, and text of the Compact have been

1 conformed to the conventions of the Vermont Statutes Annotated. It is the
2 intent of the General Assembly that this subchapter be interpreted as
3 substantively the same as the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact that is
4 enacted by other Compact party states.

5 § 3366. PURPOSE

6 The purpose of this Compact is to facilitate interstate practice of
7 Occupational Therapy with the goal of improving public access to
8 Occupational Therapy services. The practice of occupational therapy occurs in
9 the state where the patient/client is located at the time of the patient/client
10 encounter. The Compact preserves the regulatory authority of states to protect
11 public health and safety through the current system of state licensure.

12 This Compact is designed to achieve the following objectives:

13 (1) increase public access to Occupational Therapy services by
14 providing for the mutual recognition of other member state licenses;

15 (2) enhance the states' ability to protect the public's health and safety;

16 (3) encourage the cooperation of member states in regulating multistate
17 Occupational Therapy Practice;

18 (4) support spouses of relocating military members;

19 (5) enhance the exchange of licensure, investigative, and disciplinary
20 information between member states;

1 (6) allow a remote state to hold a provider of services with a compact
2 privilege in that state accountable to that state’s practice standards; and

3 (7) facilitate the use of telehealth technology in order to increase access
4 to Occupational Therapy services.

5 § 3367. DEFINITIONS

6 As used in this Compact, and except as otherwise provided, the following
7 definitions shall apply:

8 (1) “Active duty military” means full-time duty status in the active
9 uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National
10 Guard and Reserve on active duty orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. Chapter 1209
11 and 10 U.S.C. Chapter 1211.

12 (2) “Adverse action” means any administrative, civil, equitable, or
13 criminal action permitted by a state’s laws that is imposed by a licensing board
14 or other authority against an occupational therapist or occupational therapy
15 assistant, including actions against an individual’s license or compact
16 privilege, such as censure, revocation, suspension, probation, monitoring of
17 the licensee, or restriction on the licensee’s practice.

18 (3) “Alternative program” means a non-disciplinary monitoring process
19 approved by an occupational therapy licensing board.

20 (4) “Compact privilege” means the authorization, which is equivalent to
21 a license, granted by a remote state to allow a licensee from another member

1 state to practice as an occupational therapist or practice as an occupational
2 therapy assistant in the remote state under its laws and rules. The practice of
3 occupational therapy occurs in the member state where the patient/client is
4 located at the time of the patient/client encounter.

5 (5) “Continuing competence/education” means a requirement, as a
6 condition of license renewal, to provide evidence of participation in, and/or
7 completion of, educational and professional activities relevant to practice or
8 area of work.

9 (6) “Current significant investigative information” means investigative
10 information that a licensing board, after an inquiry or investigation that
11 includes notification and an opportunity for the occupational therapist or
12 occupational therapy assistant to respond, if required by state law, has reason
13 to believe is not groundless and, if proved true, would indicate more than a
14 minor infraction.

15 (7) “Data system” means a repository of information about licensees,
16 including but not limited to license status, investigative information, compact
17 privileges, and adverse actions.

18 (8) “Encumbered license” means a license in which an adverse action
19 restricts the Practice of Occupational Therapy by the licensee or said adverse
20 action has been reported to the National Practitioners Data Bank (NPDB).

1 (9) “Executive Committee” means a group of directors elected or
2 appointed to act on behalf of, and within the powers granted to them by, the
3 Commission.

4 (10) “Home state” means the member state that is the licensee’s primary
5 state of residence.

6 (11) “Impaired practitioner” means individuals whose professional
7 practice is adversely affected by substance abuse, addiction, or other health-
8 related conditions.

9 (12) “Investigative information” means information, records, and/or
10 documents received or generated by an occupational therapy licensing board
11 pursuant to an investigation.

12 (13) “Jurisprudence requirement” means the assessment of an
13 individual’s knowledge of the laws and rules governing the practice of
14 occupational therapy in a state.

15 (14) “Licensee” means an individual who currently holds an
16 authorization from the state to practice as an occupational therapist or as an
17 occupational therapy assistant.

18 (15) “Member state” means a state that has enacted the Compact.

19 (16) “Occupational therapist” means an individual who is licensed by a
20 state to practice occupational therapy.

1 (17) “Occupational therapy,” “occupational therapy practice,” and the
2 “practice of occupational therapy” mean the care and services provided by an
3 occupational therapist or an occupational therapy assistant as set forth in the
4 member state’s statutes and regulations.

5 (18) “Occupational therapy assistant” means an individual who is
6 licensed by a state to assist in the practice of occupational therapy.

7 (19) “Occupational Therapy Compact Commission” or “Commission”
8 means the national administrative body whose membership consists of all
9 states that have enacted the Compact.

10 (20) “Occupational therapy licensing board” or “licensing board” means
11 the agency of a state that is authorized to license and regulate occupational
12 therapists and occupational therapy assistants.

13 (21) “Primary state of residence” means the state (also known as the
14 home state) in which an occupational therapist or occupational therapy
15 assistant who is not active duty military declares a primary residence for legal
16 purposes as verified by: driver’s license, federal income tax return, lease,
17 deed, mortgage, or voter registration or other verifying documentation as
18 further defined by Commission rules.

19 (22) “Remote state” means a member state other than the home state,
20 where a licensee is exercising or seeking to exercise the compact privilege.

1 (23) “Rule” means a regulation promulgated by the Commission that
2 has the force of law.

3 (24) “Single-state license” means an occupational therapist or
4 occupational therapy assistant license issued by a member state that authorizes
5 practice only within the issuing state and does not include a compact privilege
6 in any other member state.

7 (25) “State” means any state, commonwealth, district, or territory of the
8 United States of America that regulates the practice of occupational therapy.

9 (26) “Telehealth” means the application of telecommunication
10 technology to deliver Occupational Therapy services for assessment,
11 intervention, and/or consultation.

12 § 3368. STATE PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPACT

13 (a) To participate in the Compact, a member state shall:

14 (1) License occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants.

15 (2) Participate fully in the Commission’s data system, including but not
16 limited to using the Commission’s unique identifier as defined in rules of the
17 Commission.

18 (3) Have a mechanism in place for receiving and investigating
19 complaints about licensees.

1 (4) Notify the Commission, in compliance with the terms of the
2 Compact and rules, of any adverse action or the availability of investigative
3 information regarding a licensee.

4 (5) Implement or utilize procedures for considering the criminal history
5 records of applicants for an initial compact privilege. These procedures shall
6 include the submission of fingerprints or other biometric-based information by
7 applicants for the purpose of obtaining an applicant's criminal history record
8 information from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the agency
9 responsible for retaining that state's criminal records.

10 (A) A member state shall, within a time frame established by the
11 Commission, require a criminal background check for a licensee
12 seeking/applying for a compact privilege whose primary state of residence is
13 that member state, by receiving the results of the Federal Bureau of
14 Investigation criminal record search, and shall use the results in making
15 licensure decisions.

16 (B) Communication between a member state, the Commission, and
17 among member states regarding the verification of eligibility for licensure
18 through the Compact shall not include any information received from the
19 Federal Bureau of Investigation relating to a federal criminal records check
20 performed by a member state under Public Law 92-544.

21 (6) Comply with the rules of the Commission.

1 (7) Utilize only a recognized national examination as a requirement for
2 licensure pursuant to the rules of the Commission.

3 (8) Have continuing competence/education requirements as a condition
4 for license renewal.

5 (b) A member state shall grant the compact privilege to a licensee holding
6 a valid unencumbered license in another member state in accordance with the
7 terms of the Compact and rules.

8 (c) Member states may charge a fee for granting a compact privilege.

9 (d) A member state shall provide for the state's delegate to attend all
10 Occupational Therapy Compact Commission meetings.

11 (e) Individuals not residing in a member state shall continue to be able to
12 apply for a member state's single-state license as provided under the laws of
13 each member state. However, the single-state license granted to these
14 individuals shall not be recognized as granting the compact privilege in any
15 other member state.

16 (f) Nothing in this Compact shall affect the requirements established by a
17 member state for the issuance of a single-state license.

18 § 3369. COMPACT PRIVILEGE

19 (a) To exercise the compact privilege under the terms and provisions of the
20 Compact, the licensee shall:

21 (1) Hold a license in the home state.

1 (2) Have a valid United States Social Security Number or National
2 Practitioner Identification number.

3 (3) Have no encumbrance on any state license.

4 (4) Be eligible for a compact privilege in any member state in
5 accordance with subsections (d), (f), (g), and (h) of this section.

6 (5) Have paid all fines and completed all requirements resulting from
7 any adverse action against any license or compact privilege, and two years
8 have elapsed from the date of such completion.

9 (6) Notify the Commission that the licensee is seeking the compact
10 privilege within a remote state(s).

11 (7) Pay any applicable fees, including any state fee, for the compact
12 privilege.

13 (8) Complete a criminal background check in accordance with
14 subdivision 3368(a)(5) of this title. The licensee shall be responsible for the
15 payment of any fee associated with the completion of a criminal background
16 check.

17 (9) Meet any jurisprudence requirements established by the remote
18 state(s) in which the licensee is seeking a compact privilege.

19 (10) Report to the Commission adverse action taken by any nonmember
20 state within 30 days from the date the adverse action is taken.

1 (b) The compact privilege is valid until the expiration date of the home
2 state license. The licensee must comply with the requirements of subsection
3 (a) of this section to maintain the compact privilege in the remote state.

4 (c) A licensee providing Occupational Therapy in a remote state under the
5 compact privilege shall function within the laws and regulations of the remote
6 state.

7 (d) Occupational therapy assistants practicing in a remote state shall be
8 supervised by an occupational therapist licensed or holding a compact
9 privilege in that remote state.

10 (e) A licensee providing Occupational Therapy in a remote state is subject
11 to that state's regulatory authority. A remote state may, in accordance with
12 due process and that state's laws, remove a licensee's compact privilege in the
13 remote state for a specific period of time, impose fines, and/or take any other
14 necessary actions to protect the health and safety of its citizens. The licensee
15 may be ineligible for a compact privilege in any state until the specific time for
16 removal has passed and all fines are paid.

17 (f) If a home state license is encumbered, the licensee shall lose the
18 compact privilege in any remote state until the following occur:

19 (1) the home state license is no longer encumbered; and

1 (2) two years have elapsed from the date on which the home state
2 license is no longer encumbered in accordance with subdivision (1) of this
3 subsection.

4 (g) Once an encumbered license in the home state is restored to good
5 standing, the licensee must meet the requirements of subsection (a) of this
6 section to obtain a compact privilege in any remote state.

7 (h) If a licensee's compact privilege in any remote state is removed, the
8 individual may lose the compact privilege in any other remote state until the
9 following occur:

10 (1) the specific period of time for which the compact privilege was
11 removed has ended;

12 (2) all fines have been paid and all conditions have been met;

13 (3) two years have elapsed from the date of completing requirements for
14 subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection; and

15 (4) the compact privileges are reinstated by the Commission, and the
16 compact data system is updated to reflect reinstatement.

17 (i) If a licensee's compact privilege in any remote state is removed due to
18 an erroneous charge, privileges shall be restored through the compact data
19 system.

1 (j) Once the requirements of subsection (h) of this section have been met,
2 the licensee must meet the requirements in subsection (a) of this section to
3 obtain a compact privilege in a remote state.

4 § 3370. OBTAINING A NEW HOME STATE LICENSE BY VIRTUE OF
5 COMPACT PRIVILEGE

6 (a) An occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant may hold a
7 home state license, which allows for compact privileges in member states, in
8 only one member state at a time.

9 (b) If an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant changes
10 primary state of residence by moving between two member states:

11 (1) The occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant shall file
12 an application for obtaining a new home state license by virtue of a compact
13 privilege, pay all applicable fees, and notify the current and new home state in
14 accordance with applicable rules adopted by the Commission.

15 (2) Upon receipt of an application for obtaining a new home state
16 license by virtue of compact privilege, the new home state shall verify that the
17 occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant meets the pertinent
18 criteria outlined in section 3369 of this title via the data system, without need
19 for primary source verification except for:

1 (A) an FBI fingerprint based criminal background check if not
2 previously performed or updated pursuant to applicable rules adopted by the
3 Commission in accordance with Public Law 92-544;

4 (B) other criminal background check as required by the new home
5 state; and

6 (C) submission of any requisite jurisprudence requirements of the
7 new home state.

8 (3) The former home state shall convert the former home state license
9 into a compact privilege once the new home state has activated the new home
10 state license in accordance with applicable rules adopted by the Commission.

11 (4) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Compact, if the
12 occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant cannot meet the
13 criteria in section 3369 of this title, the new home state shall apply its
14 requirements for issuing a new single-state license.

15 (5) The occupational therapist or the occupational therapy assistant shall
16 pay all applicable fees to the new home state in order to be issued a new home
17 state license.

18 (c) If an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant changes
19 primary state of residence by moving from a member state to a nonmember
20 state, or from a nonmember state to a member state, the state criteria shall
21 apply for issuance of a single-state license in the new state.

1 (d) Nothing in this compact shall interfere with a licensee’s ability to hold
2 a single-state license in multiple states; however, for the purposes of this
3 Compact, a licensee shall have only one home state license.

4 (e) Nothing in this Compact shall affect the requirements established by a
5 member state for the issuance of a single-state license.

6 § 3371. ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL OR THEIR SPOUSES

7 Active duty military personnel, or their spouses, shall designate a home
8 state where the individual has a current license in good standing. The
9 individual may retain the home state designation during the period the service
10 member is on active duty. Subsequent to designating a home state, the
11 individual shall only change the individual’s home state through application
12 for licensure in the new state or through the process described in section 3370
13 of this title.

14 § 3372. ADVERSE ACTIONS

15 (a) A home state shall have exclusive power to impose adverse action
16 against an occupational therapist’s or occupational therapy assistant’s license
17 issued by the home state.

18 (b) In addition to the other powers conferred by state law, a remote state
19 shall have the authority, in accordance with existing state due process law, to:

20 (1) Take adverse action against an occupational therapist’s or
21 occupational therapy assistant’s compact privilege within that member state.

1 (2) Issue subpoenas for both hearings and investigations that require the
2 attendance and testimony of witnesses as well as the production of evidence.
3 Subpoenas issued by a licensing board in a member state for the attendance
4 and testimony of witnesses or the production of evidence from another
5 member state shall be enforced in the latter state by any court of competent
6 jurisdiction, according to the practice and procedure of that court applicable to
7 subpoenas issued in proceedings pending before it. The issuing authority shall
8 pay any witness fees, travel expenses, mileage, and other fees required by the
9 service statutes of the state in which the witnesses or evidence are located.

10 (c) For purposes of taking adverse action, the home state shall give the
11 same priority and effect to reported conduct received from a member state as it
12 would if the conduct had occurred within the home state. In so doing, the
13 home state shall apply its own state laws to determine appropriate action.

14 (d) The home state shall complete any pending investigations of an
15 occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant who changes primary
16 state of residence during the course of the investigations. The home state,
17 where the investigations were initiated, shall also have the authority to take
18 appropriate action(s) and shall promptly report the conclusions of the
19 investigations to the Occupational Therapy Compact Commission Data
20 System. The Occupational Therapy Compact Commission Data System
21 administrator shall promptly notify the new home state of any adverse actions.

1 (e) A member state, if otherwise permitted by state law, may recover from
2 the affected occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant the costs
3 of investigations and disposition of cases resulting from any adverse action
4 taken against that occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant.

5 (f) A member state may take adverse action based on the factual findings
6 of the remote state, provided that the member state follows its own procedures
7 for taking the adverse action.

8 (g) Joint investigations.

9 (1) In addition to the authority granted to a member state by its
10 respective state Occupational Therapy laws and regulations or other applicable
11 state law, any member state may participate with other member states in joint
12 investigations of licensees.

13 (2) Member states shall share any investigative, litigation, or
14 compliance materials in furtherance of any joint or individual investigation
15 initiated under the Compact.

16 (h) If an adverse action is taken by the home state against an occupational
17 therapist's or occupational therapy assistant's license, the occupational
18 therapist's or occupational therapy assistant's compact privilege in all other
19 member states shall be deactivated until all encumbrances have been removed
20 from the state license. All home state disciplinary orders that impose adverse
21 action against an occupational therapist's or occupational therapy assistant's

1 license shall include a statement that the occupational therapist's or
2 occupational therapy assistant's compact privilege is deactivated in all member
3 states during the pendency of the order.

4 (i) If a member state takes adverse action, it shall promptly notify the
5 administrator of the data system. The administrator of the data system shall
6 promptly notify the home state of any adverse actions by remote states.

7 (j) Nothing in this Compact shall override a member state's decision that
8 participation in an alternative program may be used in lieu of adverse action.

9 § 3373. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

10 COMPACT COMMISSION

11 (a) The Compact member states hereby create and establish a joint public
12 agency known as the Occupational Therapy Compact Commission:

13 (1) The Commission is an instrumentality of the Compact states.

14 (2) Venue is proper and judicial proceedings by or against the
15 Commission shall be brought solely and exclusively in a court of competent
16 jurisdiction where the principal office of the Commission is located. The
17 Commission may waive venue and jurisdictional defenses to the extent it
18 adopts or consents to participate in alternative dispute resolution proceedings.

19 (3) Nothing in this Compact shall be construed to be a waiver of
20 sovereign immunity.

21 (b) Membership, voting, and meetings.

1 (1) Each member state shall have and be limited to one delegate selected
2 by that member state's licensing board.

3 (2) The delegate shall be either:

4 (A) a current member of the licensing board, who is an occupational
5 therapist, occupational therapy assistant, or public member; or

6 (B) an administrator of the licensing board.

7 (3) Any delegate may be removed or suspended from office as provided
8 by the law of the state from which the delegate is appointed.

9 (4) The member state board shall fill any vacancy occurring in the
10 Commission within 90 days.

11 (5) Each delegate shall be entitled to one vote with regard to the
12 promulgation of rules and creation of bylaws and shall otherwise have an
13 opportunity to participate in the business and affairs of the Commission. A
14 delegate shall vote in person or by such other means as provided in the bylaws.
15 The bylaws may provide for delegates' participation in meetings by telephone
16 or other means of communication.

17 (6) The Commission shall meet at least once during each calendar year.
18 Additional meetings shall be held as set forth in the bylaws.

19 (7) The Commission shall establish by rule a term of office for
20 delegates.

21 (c) The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

- 1 (1) Establish a Code of Ethics for the Commission.
- 2 (2) Establish the fiscal year of the Commission.
- 3 (3) Establish bylaws.
- 4 (4) Maintain its financial records in accordance with the bylaws.
- 5 (5) Meet and take such actions as are consistent with the provisions of
6 this Compact and the bylaws.
- 7 (6) Promulgate uniform rules to facilitate and coordinate
8 implementation and administration of this Compact. The rules shall have the
9 force and effect of law and shall be binding in all member states.
- 10 (7) Bring and prosecute legal proceedings or actions in the name of the
11 Commission, provided that the standing of any state occupational therapy
12 licensing board to sue or be sued under applicable law shall not be affected.
- 13 (8) Purchase and maintain insurance and bonds.
- 14 (9) Borrow, accept, or contract for services of personnel, including, but
15 not limited to, employees of a member state.
- 16 (10) Hire employees, elect or appoint officers, fix compensation, define
17 duties, grant such individuals appropriate authority to carry out the purposes of
18 the Compact, and establish the Commission's personnel policies and programs
19 relating to conflicts of interest, qualifications of personnel, and other related
20 personnel matters.

1 (11) Accept any and all appropriate donations and grants of money,
2 equipment, supplies, materials, and services and receive, utilize, and dispose of
3 the same, provided that at all times the Commission shall avoid any
4 appearance of impropriety and/or conflict of interest.

5 (12) Lease, purchase, accept appropriate gifts or donations of, or
6 otherwise own, hold, improve, or use, any property, real, personal or mixed,
7 provided that at all times the Commission shall avoid any appearance of
8 impropriety.

9 (13) Sell, convey, mortgage, pledge, lease, exchange, abandon, or
10 otherwise dispose of any property real, personal, or mixed.

11 (14) Establish a budget and make expenditures.

12 (15) Borrow money.

13 (16) Appoint committees, including standing committees composed of
14 members, state regulators, state legislators or their representatives, and
15 consumer representatives, and such other interested persons as may be
16 designated in this Compact and the bylaws.

17 (17) Provide and receive information from, and cooperate with, law
18 enforcement agencies.

19 (18) Establish and elect the Executive Committee.

1 (19) Perform such other functions as may be necessary or appropriate to
2 achieve the purposes of this Compact consistent with the state regulation of
3 Occupational Therapy licensure and practice.

4 (d) The Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall have the
5 power to act on behalf of the Commission according to the terms of this
6 Compact.

7 (1) The Executive Committee shall be composed of nine members:

8 (A) seven voting members who are elected by the Commission from
9 the current membership of the Commission;

10 (B) one ex-officio, nonvoting member from a recognized national
11 Occupational Therapy professional association; and

12 (C) one ex-officio, nonvoting member from a recognized national
13 Occupational Therapy certification organization.

14 (2) The ex-officio members will be selected by their respective
15 organizations.

16 (3) The Commission may remove any member of the Executive
17 Committee as provided in bylaws.

18 (4) The Executive Committee shall meet at least annually.

19 (5) The Executive Committee shall have the following duties and
20 responsibilities:

1 (A) recommend to the entire Commission changes to the rules or
2 bylaws, changes to this Compact legislation, fees paid by Compact member
3 states such as annual dues, and any Commission Compact fee charged to
4 licensees for the compact privilege;

5 (B) ensure Compact administration services are appropriately
6 provided, contractual or otherwise;

7 (C) prepare and recommend the budget;

8 (D) maintain financial records on behalf of the Commission;

9 (E) monitor Compact compliance of member states and provide
10 compliance reports to the Commission;

11 (F) establish additional committees as necessary; and

12 (G) perform other duties as provided in rules or bylaws.

13 (e) Meetings of the Commission.

14 (1) All meetings shall be open to the public, and public notice of
15 meetings shall be given in the same manner as required under the rulemaking
16 provisions in section 3375 of this title.

17 (2) The Commission or the Executive Committee or other committees
18 of the Commission may convene in a closed, nonpublic meeting if the
19 Commission or Executive Committee or other committees of the Commission
20 must discuss:

- 1 (A) noncompliance of a member state with its obligations under the
2 Compact;
- 3 (B) the employment, compensation, discipline, or other matters,
4 practices, or procedures related to specific employees or other matters related
5 to the Commission’s internal personnel practices and procedures;
- 6 (C) current, threatened, or reasonably anticipated litigation;
- 7 (D) negotiation of contracts for the purchase, lease, or sale of goods,
8 services, or real estate;
- 9 (E) accusing any person of a crime or formally censuring any person;
- 10 (F) disclosure of trade secrets or commercial or financial information
11 that is privileged or confidential;
- 12 (G) disclosure of information of a personal nature where disclosure
13 would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
- 14 (H) disclosure of investigative records compiled for law enforcement
15 purposes;
- 16 (I) disclosure of information related to any investigative reports
17 prepared by or on behalf of or for use of the Commission or other committee
18 charged with responsibility of investigation or determination of compliance
19 issues pursuant to the Compact; or
- 20 (J) matters specifically exempted from disclosure by federal or
21 member state statute.

1 (3) If a meeting, or portion of a meeting, is closed pursuant to this
2 provision, the Commission's legal counsel or designee shall certify that the
3 meeting may be closed and shall reference each relevant exempting provision.

4 (4) The Commission shall keep minutes that fully and clearly describe
5 all matters discussed in a meeting and shall provide a full and accurate
6 summary of actions taken, and the reasons therefore, including a description of
7 the views expressed. All documents considered in connection with an action
8 shall be identified in such minutes. All minutes and documents of a closed
9 meeting shall remain under seal, subject to release by a majority vote of the
10 Commission or order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

11 (f) Financing of the Commission.

12 (1) The Commission shall pay, or provide for the payment of, the
13 reasonable expenses of its establishment, organization, and ongoing activities.

14 (2) The Commission may accept any and all appropriate revenue
15 sources, donations, and grants of money, equipment, supplies, materials, and
16 services.

17 (3) The Commission may levy on and collect an annual assessment from
18 each member state or impose fees on other parties to cover the cost of the
19 operations and activities of the Commission and its staff, which must be in a
20 total amount sufficient to cover its annual budget as approved by the
21 Commission each year for which revenue is not provided by other sources.

1 The aggregate annual assessment amount shall be allocated based upon a
2 formula to be determined by the Commission, which shall promulgate a rule
3 binding upon all member states.

4 (4) The Commission shall not incur obligations of any kind prior to
5 securing the funds adequate to meet the same, nor shall the Commission
6 pledge the credit of any of the member states, except by and with the authority
7 of the member state.

8 (5) The Commission shall keep accurate accounts of all receipts and
9 disbursements. The receipts and disbursements of the Commission shall be
10 subject to the audit and accounting procedures established under its bylaws.
11 However, all receipts and disbursements of funds handled by the Commission
12 shall be audited yearly by a certified or licensed public accountant, and the
13 report of the audit shall be included in and become part of the annual report of
14 the Commission.

15 (g) Qualified immunity, defense, and indemnification.

16 (1) The members, officers, executive director, employees, and
17 representatives of the Commission shall be immune from suit and liability,
18 either personally or in their official capacity, for any claim for damage to or
19 loss of property or personal injury or other civil liability caused by or arising
20 out of any actual or alleged act, error, or omission that occurred, or that the
21 person against whom the claim is made had a reasonable basis for believing

1 occurred within the scope of Commission employment, duties, or
2 responsibilities, provided that nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to
3 protect any such person from suit and/or liability for any damage, loss, injury,
4 or liability caused by the intentional or willful or wanton misconduct of that
5 person.

6 (2) The Commission shall defend any member, officer, executive
7 director, employee, or representative of the Commission in any civil action
8 seeking to impose liability arising out of any actual or alleged act, error, or
9 omission that occurred within the scope of Commission employment, duties,
10 or responsibilities, or that the person against whom the claim is made had a
11 reasonable basis for believing occurred within the scope of Commission
12 employment, duties, or responsibilities, provided that nothing herein shall be
13 construed to prohibit that person from retaining the person's own counsel, and
14 provided further that the actual or alleged act, error, or omission did not result
15 from that person's intentional or willful or wanton misconduct.

16 (3) The Commission shall indemnify and hold harmless any member,
17 officer, executive director, employee, or representative of the Commission for
18 the amount of any settlement or judgment obtained against that person arising
19 out of any actual or alleged act, error, or omission that occurred within the
20 scope of Commission employment, duties, or responsibilities, or that such
21 person had a reasonable basis for believing occurred within the scope of

1 Commission employment, duties, or responsibilities, provided that the actual
2 or alleged act, error, or omission did not result from the intentional or willful
3 or wanton misconduct of that person.

4 § 3374. DATA SYSTEM

5 (a) The Commission shall provide for the development, maintenance, and
6 utilization of a coordinated database and reporting system containing licensure,
7 adverse action, and investigative information on all licensed individuals in
8 member states.

9 (b) A member state shall submit a uniform data set to the data system on
10 all individuals to whom this Compact is applicable (utilizing a unique
11 identifier) as required by the rules of the Commission, including:

12 (1) identifying information;

13 (2) licensure data;

14 (3) adverse actions against a license or compact privilege;

15 (4) nonconfidential information related to alternative program
16 participation;

17 (5) any denial of application for licensure, and the reason(s) for such
18 denial;

19 (6) other information that may facilitate the administration of this
20 Compact, as determined by the rules of the Commission; and

21 (7) current significant investigative information.

1 (c) Current significant investigative information and other investigative
2 information pertaining to a licensee in any member state will only be available
3 to other member states.

4 (d) The Commission shall promptly notify all member states of any
5 adverse action taken against a licensee or an individual applying for a license.
6 Adverse action information pertaining to a licensee in any member state will
7 be available to any other member state.

8 (e) Member states contributing information to the data system may
9 designate information that may not be shared with the public without the
10 express permission of the contributing state.

11 (f) Any information submitted to the data system that is subsequently
12 required to be expunged by the laws of the member state contributing the
13 information shall be removed from the data system.

14 § 3375. RULEMAKING

15 (a) The Commission shall exercise its rulemaking powers pursuant to the
16 criteria set forth in this section and the rules adopted thereunder. Rules and
17 amendments shall become binding as of the date specified in each rule or
18 amendment.

19 (b) The Commission shall promulgate reasonable rules in order to
20 effectively and efficiently achieve the purposes of the Compact.
21 Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event the Commission exercises its

1 rulemaking authority in a manner that is beyond the scope of the purposes of
2 the Compact, or the powers granted hereunder, then such an action by the
3 Commission shall be invalid and have no force and effect.

4 (c) If a majority of the legislatures of the member states rejects a rule, by
5 enactment of a statute or resolution in the same manner used to adopt the
6 Compact within four years of the date of adoption of the rule, then such rule
7 shall have no further force and effect in any member state.

8 (d) Rules or amendments to the rules shall be adopted at a regular or
9 special meeting of the Commission.

10 (e) Prior to promulgation and adoption of a final rule or rules by the
11 Commission, and at least 30 days in advance of the meeting at which the rule
12 will be considered and voted upon, the Commission shall file a Notice of
13 Proposed Rulemaking:

14 (1) on the website of the Commission or other publicly accessible
15 platform; and

16 (2) on the website of each member state occupational therapy licensing
17 board or other publicly accessible platform or the publication in which each
18 state would otherwise publish proposed rules.

19 (f) The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking shall include:

20 (1) the proposed time, date, and location of the meeting in which the
21 rule will be considered and voted upon;

1 (2) the text of the proposed rule or amendment and the reason for the
2 proposed rule;

3 (3) a request for comments on the proposed rule from any interested
4 person; and

5 (4) the manner in which interested persons may submit notice to the
6 Commission of their intention to attend the public hearing and any written
7 comments.

8 (g) Prior to adoption of a proposed rule, the Commission shall allow
9 persons to submit written data, facts, opinions, and arguments, which shall be
10 made available to the public.

11 (h) The Commission shall grant an opportunity for a public hearing before
12 it adopts a rule or amendment if a hearing is requested by:

13 (1) at least 25 persons;

14 (2) a state or federal governmental subdivision or agency; or

15 (3) an association or organization having at least 25 members.

16 (i) If a hearing is held on the proposed rule or amendment, the Commission
17 shall publish the place, time, and date of the scheduled public hearing. If the
18 hearing is held via electronic means, the Commission shall publish the
19 mechanism for access to the electronic hearing.

20 (1) All persons wishing to be heard at the hearing shall notify the
21 executive director of the Commission or other designated member in writing

1 of their desire to appear and testify at the hearing not less than five business
2 days before the scheduled date of the hearing.

3 (2) Hearings shall be conducted in a manner providing each person who
4 wishes to comment a fair and reasonable opportunity to comment orally or in
5 writing.

6 (3) All hearings will be recorded. A copy of the recording will be made
7 available on request.

8 (4) Nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring a separate
9 hearing on each rule. Rules may be grouped for the convenience of the
10 Commission at hearings required by this section.

11 (j) Following the scheduled hearing date, or by the close of business on the
12 scheduled hearing date if the hearing was not held, the Commission shall
13 consider all written and oral comments received.

14 (k) If no written notice of intent to attend the public hearing by interested
15 parties is received, the Commission may proceed with promulgation of the
16 proposed rule without a public hearing.

17 (l) The Commission shall, by majority vote of all members, take final
18 action on the proposed rule and shall determine the effective date of the rule, if
19 any, based on the rulemaking record and the full text of the rule.

20 (m) Upon determination that an emergency exists, the Commission may
21 consider and adopt an emergency rule without prior notice, opportunity for

1 comment, or hearing, provided that the usual rulemaking procedures provided
2 in the Compact and in this section shall be retroactively applied to the rule as
3 soon as reasonably possible, in no event later than 90 days after the effective
4 date of the rule. For the purposes of this provision, an emergency rule is one
5 that must be adopted immediately in order to:

6 (1) meet an imminent threat to public health, safety, or welfare;

7 (2) prevent a loss of Commission or member state funds;

8 (3) meet a deadline for the promulgation of an administrative rule that is
9 established by federal law or rule; or

10 (4) protect public health and safety.

11 (n) The Commission or an authorized committee of the Commission may
12 direct revisions to a previously adopted rule or amendment for purposes of
13 correcting typographical errors, errors in format, errors in consistency, or
14 grammatical errors. Public notice of any revisions shall be posted on the
15 website of the Commission. The revision shall be subject to challenge by any
16 person for a period of 30 days after posting. The revision may be challenged
17 only on grounds that the revision results in a material change to a rule. A
18 challenge shall be made in writing and delivered to the chair of the
19 Commission prior to the end of the notice period. If no challenge is made, the
20 revision will take effect without further action. If the revision is challenged,
21 the revision may not take effect without the approval of the Commission.

1 § 3376. OVERSIGHT, DISPUTE RESOLUTION, AND ENFORCEMENT

2 (a) Oversight.

3 (1) The executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government
4 in each member state shall enforce this Compact and take all actions necessary
5 and appropriate to effectuate the Compact's purposes and intent. The
6 provisions of this Compact and the rules promulgated hereunder shall have
7 standing as statutory law.

8 (2) All courts shall take judicial notice of the Compact and the rules in
9 any judicial or administrative proceeding in a member state pertaining to the
10 subject matter of this Compact that may affect the powers, responsibilities, or
11 actions of the Commission.

12 (3) The Commission shall be entitled to receive service of process in
13 any such proceeding and shall have standing to intervene in such a proceeding
14 for all purposes. Failure to provide service of process to the Commission shall
15 render a judgment or order void as to the Commission, this Compact, or
16 promulgated rules.

17 (b) Default, technical assistance, and termination.

18 (1) If the Commission determines that a member state has defaulted in
19 the performance of its obligations or responsibilities under this Compact or the
20 promulgated rules, the Commission shall:

1 (A) provide written notice to the defaulting state and other member
2 states of the nature of the default, the proposed means of curing the default,
3 and/or any other action to be taken by the Commission; and

4 (B) provide remedial training and specific technical assistance
5 regarding the default.

6 (2) If a state in default fails to cure the default, the defaulting state may
7 be terminated from the Compact upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the
8 member states, and all rights, privileges, and benefits conferred by this
9 Compact may be terminated on the effective date of termination. A cure of the
10 default does not relieve the offending state of obligations or liabilities incurred
11 during the period of default.

12 (3) Termination of membership in the Compact shall be imposed only
13 after all other means of securing compliance have been exhausted. Notice of
14 intent to suspend or terminate shall be given by the Commission to the
15 governor, the majority and minority leaders of the defaulting state's
16 legislature, and each of the member states.

17 (4) A state that has been terminated is responsible for all assessments,
18 obligations, and liabilities incurred through the effective date of termination,
19 including obligations that extend beyond the effective date of termination.

1 (5) The Commission shall not bear any costs related to a state that is
2 found to be in default or that has been terminated from the Compact, unless
3 agreed upon in writing between the Commission and the defaulting state.

4 (6) The defaulting state may appeal the action of the Commission by
5 petitioning the United States District Court for the District of Columbia or the
6 federal district where the Commission has its principal offices. The prevailing
7 member shall be awarded all costs of such litigation, including reasonable
8 attorney's fees.

9 (c) Dispute resolution.

10 (1) Upon request by a member state, the Commission shall attempt to
11 resolve disputes related to the Compact that arise among member states and
12 between member and nonmember states.

13 (2) The Commission shall promulgate a rule providing for both
14 mediation and binding dispute resolution for disputes as appropriate.

15 (d) Enforcement.

16 (1) The Commission, in the reasonable exercise of its discretion, shall
17 enforce the provisions and rules of this Compact.

18 (2) By majority vote, the Commission may initiate legal action in the
19 United States District Court for the District of Columbia or the federal district
20 where the Commission has its principal offices against a member state in
21 default to enforce compliance with the provisions of the Compact and its

1 promulgated rules and bylaws. The relief sought may include both injunctive
2 relief and damages. In the event judicial enforcement is necessary, the
3 prevailing member shall be awarded all costs of such litigation, including
4 reasonable attorney's fees.

5 (3) The remedies herein shall not be the exclusive remedies of the
6 Commission. The Commission may pursue any other remedies available
7 under federal or state law.

8 § 3377. DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERSTATE

9 COMMISSION FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE

10 AND ASSOCIATED RULES, WITHDRAWAL, AND

11 AMENDMENT

12 (a) The Compact shall come into effect on the date on which the Compact
13 statute is enacted into law in the tenth member state. The provisions, which
14 become effective at that time, shall be limited to the powers granted to the
15 Commission relating to assembly and the promulgation of rules. Thereafter,
16 the Commission shall meet and exercise rulemaking powers necessary to the
17 implementation and administration of the Compact.

18 (b) Any state that joins the Compact subsequent to the Commission's
19 initial adoption of the rules shall be subject to the rules as they exist on the
20 date on which the Compact becomes law in that state. Any rule that has been

1 previously adopted by the Commission shall have the full force and effect of
2 law on the day the Compact becomes law in that state.

3 (c) Any member state may withdraw from this Compact by enacting a
4 statute repealing the same.

5 (1) A member state's withdrawal shall not take effect until six months
6 after enactment of the repealing statute.

7 (2) Withdrawal shall not affect the continuing requirement of the
8 withdrawing state's occupational therapy licensing board to comply with the
9 investigative and adverse action reporting requirements of this Compact prior
10 to the effective date of withdrawal.

11 (d) Nothing contained in this Compact shall be construed to invalidate or
12 prevent any Occupational Therapy licensure agreement or other cooperative
13 arrangement between a member state and a nonmember state that does not
14 conflict with the provisions of this Compact.

15 (e) This Compact may be amended by the member states. No amendment
16 to this Compact shall become effective and binding upon any member state
17 until it is enacted into the laws of all member states.

18 § 3378. CONSTRUCTION AND SEVERABILITY

19 This Compact shall be liberally construed so as to effectuate the purposes
20 thereof. The provisions of this Compact shall be severable and if any phrase,
21 clause, sentence, or provision of this Compact is declared to be contrary to the

1 constitution of any member state or of the United States or the applicability
2 thereof to any government, agency, person, or circumstance is held invalid, the
3 validity of the remainder of this Compact and the applicability thereof to any
4 government, agency, person, or circumstance shall not be affected thereby. If
5 this Compact shall be held contrary to the constitution of any member state,
6 the Compact shall remain in full force and effect as to the remaining member
7 states and in full force and effect as to the member state affected as to all
8 severable matters.

9 § 3379. BINDING EFFECT OF COMPACT AND OTHER LAWS

10 (a) A licensee providing Occupational Therapy in a remote state under the
11 compact privilege shall function within the laws and regulations of the remote
12 state.

13 (b) Nothing herein prevents the enforcement of any other law of a member
14 state that is not inconsistent with the Compact.

15 (c) Any laws in a member state in conflict with the Compact are
16 superseded to the extent of the conflict.

17 (d) Any lawful actions of the Commission, including all rules and bylaws
18 promulgated by the Commission, are binding upon the member states.

19 (e) All agreements between the Commission and the member states are
20 binding in accordance with their terms.

1 (f) In the event any provision of the Compact exceeds the constitutional
2 limits imposed on the legislature of any member state, the provision shall be
3 ineffective to the extent of the conflict with the constitutional provision in
4 question in that member state.

Sec. 3. 3 V.S.A. § 123(j)(1) is amended to read:

(j)(1) The Office may inquire into the criminal background histories of applicants for initial licensure and for license renewal of any Office-issued credential, including a license, certification, registration, or specialty designation for the following professions:

** * **

(I) speech-language pathologists licensed under 26 V.S.A. chapter 87; and

(J) occupational therapists licensed under 26 V.S.A. chapter 71; and

(K) individuals registered on the roster of psychotherapists who are nonlicensed and noncertified.

Sec. 4. 3 V.S.A. § 125(b) is amended to read:

(b) Unless otherwise provided by law, the following fees shall apply to all professions regulated by the Director in consultation with advisor appointees under Title 26:

** * **

(4) Biennial renewal, \$275.00, except biennial renewal for:

* * *

(B) Occupational therapists and assistants, \$180.00, except that a licensee of a remote state under the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact established in 26 V.S.A. chapter 71, subchapter 2 shall pay a biennial \$50.00 privilege to practice fee.

* * *

1

~~Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE~~

2

~~This act shall take effect on January 1, 2024.~~

Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.