

## CERTIFIED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

### DEFINITION:

The Occupational Therapy Assistant is a health care paraprofessional requiring certification by the California Board of Occupational Therapy. The Occupational Therapy Assistant works under the direction and protocols given by an Occupational Therapist and implements physical and psychosocial treatments with disabled students and family members.

### QUALIFICATIONS:

Any combination of education and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the essential function of the position. Additional experience, as outlined below, may be substituted for required education on a year-for-year basis. A typical combination includes:

#### **Experience:**

- Two (2) years of COTA experience is preferred.
- Pediatric and school-based experience preferred.

#### **Education:**

- High School diploma or equivalent
- Associate of Science degree or higher from an accredited college or university with an educational program approved by CBOT and accredited by the American Occupational Therapy Association's Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE).

#### **Licenses or Certifications:**

- Valid license as a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant issued by the California Board of Occupational Therapy
- Valid certification issued by the National Board for Certification of Occupational Therapy (NBCOT).
- Valid California Class C driver's license issued by the California Department of Motor Vehicles within 30 days of hire or before driving any vehicle requiring this license.
- Valid First Aid, AED, and CPR Certificate issued by an authorized agency.

### DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

Under general guidance of an Occupational Therapist, provides educationally related occupational therapy services to students with a variety of cognitive, emotional, and/or physical disabilities according to the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Providing skilled occupational therapy services based on identified students' level of functioning relative to their age and educational placement in such areas as postural control, fine motor skill development, visual perception, visual motor integration, graphomotor, and sensory motor integration in the school setting.

### OTHER CHARACTERISTICS:

Typical Physical Characteristics: (with or without use of aids; consideration will be given to reasonable accommodation).

- Move about schools and facilities to conduct work including walking, sitting, standing, kneeling, stooping, crawling, balancing, bending at the waist, or reaching overhead (both above the shoulders and horizontally), for extended periods of time.
- Communicate to exchange information in person, in small groups, and/or on the telephone.
- Operate office equipment and specialized equipment requiring repetitive hand movement and fine coordination.
- Inspect documents and other written materials with fine print.
- Transport, lift, move, and/or position special needs students, therapy equipment, and other objects such as wheelchairs and mobility equipment.

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### ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Under the direction of (supervisor), incumbent will:

- Adapts school and classroom environment, tools, and materials under the supervision of the Occupational Therapist for the purpose of improving student functioning and facilitating student access to curricular and instructional activities.
- Attends meetings and workshops (i.e., training, team meetings, conferences, meetings with outside agencies, etc.).
- Consults with Occupational Therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, teachers, educational specialists, families, outside agencies, etc., for the purpose of providing requested information, reviewing/revising students occupational therapy goals/objectives, developing plans for services, and/or making recommendations to implement goals.
- Implements therapeutic activities and instructs students, teachers, parents, and other involved persons (i.e., positioning, adjusting special equipment, etc.).
- Maintains treatment equipment and supplies in clean and proper working condition.
- Provides training, consultation, and instruction to teachers on the use of adaptive devices and equipment.
- Assists occupational therapists in performing research to address the functional goals of students (i.e., intervention and treatment techniques, assessment tools and methods, community resources, etc.).
- Assists with the development of the occupational therapy intervention plan and provision of direct services as part of the IEP process; assists with data collection and informal assessments with established service competency documented.
- Documents and record progress; organizes materials needed for therapy interventions, maintain student files/records pertaining to Occupational Therapy services, provided under the guidance of the Occupational Therapist (i.e., progress reports, activity logs, etc.)
- Participate in professional growth activities in special education and pediatric occupational therapy.
- Perform related duties as assigned.

### KNOWLEDGE:

- Knowledge of principles, methods, and objectives of occupational therapy treatment, consultation, training, services, techniques of skeletal anatomy, neuromuscular function, and dysfunction; kinesiology occupational therapy modalities, and equipment.
- Knowledge of intellectual, social, emotional growth patterns, educational and physical development of children
- Knowledge of pertinent federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations
- Knowledge of interpersonal skills using tact, patience, and courtesy
- Knowledge and skill in use of computers, assorted software programs and office equipment
- Knowledge of principles of consultation and training.
- Knowledge of sensitivity to the needs of children and parents of different ethnic, cultural, language, educational, and economic backgrounds.
- Knowledge of effective work strategies including flexibility, good organization skills, time management, and ability to work independently and prioritize multiple work tasks.

### ABILITIES AND SKILLS:

- Ability to design and implement appropriate intervention strategies.
- Ability to work confidentially with discretion.
- Ability to participate in continuing education opportunities to maintain licensing and certification requirements and to enhance knowledge of pediatric occupational therapy.
- Ability to interpret, apply, and explain applicable laws, codes, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Ability to implement treatment plans, goals, and objectives to address areas of need.

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- Ability to follow written and verbal instructions and effectively communicate in verbal and written form with administrators, staff, students, and the community.
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with all levels of district staff, parents, health care professionals, and other health care agencies.
- Ability to gather data, establish and maintain records, and maintain a confidentiality of privileged information obtained in the course of work.
- Ability to use a variety of modern methods, techniques, and practices in occupational therapy.
- Ability to lift, move, and position disabled students according to safety regulations with assistance.
- Ability to effectively use and care for the materials, supplies, and equipment.
- Ability to assist special needs students by providing proper examples, emotional support, friendly attitude, and general guidance.
- Ability to understand the unique needs and differences of special needs students and their parents.
- Ability to demonstrate effective work behaviors such as time management, professionalism, punctuality, and attendance.

### PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

#### **Physical abilities:**

- Requires the ability to function effectively in classroom and office environments, engaged in work of a moderately active nature.
- Requires ambulatory ability to move to various class and meeting room settings, to stoop, bend and kneel, and to reach.
- Requires visual ability to recognize words, numbers, and non-verbal actions of people.
- Requires auditory ability to project voice and carry-out conversations with individuals and small groups in person and over the phone.

#### **Significant physical abilities:**

- Obtain the strength and dexterity necessary for physically supporting children and young adults; lift and move up to fifty (50) pounds.

### WORK ENVIRONMENT:

The work environment characteristics described are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions.

- Indoor office, classroom, motor-room, and outdoor environment
- Moderate noise
- Able to successfully navigate through and function in various dynamic and sometimes challenging environments.
- Drive a vehicle to conduct work.
- Able to commute to multiple sites using personal transportation.

#### **Hazards:**

- Work near moving mechanical parts.
- Back strain from lifting, moving, and positioning disabled students, and from swings and equipment.
- Exposure to students who could possibly exhibit aggressive behavior concerns.