



Updated September 5, 2015

Guidance Regarding the Requirements for Physical Therapists to Qualify for the Spinal Manipulation Endorsement in Washington State

Disclaimer: This is an advisory document only and doesn't imply or guarantee approval for the spinal manipulation endorsement granted by the Washington State Secretary of Health. Individual physical therapists are solely responsible for ensuring the accuracy and evidence of adequate training to gain this endorsement and/or to be a clinical supervisor.

How to apply for the endorsement

To apply for the endorsement, fill out the Spinal Manipulation Endorsement Form linked to the PTWA State Issues web page (www.ptwa.org/payment-and-advocacy/state-issues). You may also find this form on the Washington State Department of Health's (DOH) Physical Therapist Applications and Forms web page.

Section 1:

- Qualified applicants fill in this section, including checking all of the boxes.
- Do not send certificates or other materials to prove your eligibility. You will only need to provide proof of eligibility if someone challenges your endorsement.
- We recommend that you keep a file of your support materials, including a chart that specifies which courses and experience satisfies the hour requirements for each area. Members may request an Excel spreadsheet to track their experience by emailing legislative@ptwa.org.

Sections 2 and 3:

- Your clinical supervisor(s) will need to fill in and sign these sections – even if they were your clinical supervisors many years ago and you have extensive experience that qualifies YOU as a clinical supervisor.
- You only need to get your clinical supervisors to sign for 300 hours of the “supervised clinical experience in spinal manipulative procedures.” If you have more hours of experience being clinically supervised, it is not necessary to have a clinical supervisor attest to this.
- You may not be your own clinical supervisor.

Also:

- There is no cost to apply for the endorsement.
- You do not need to reapply for the endorsement when you renew your license, you just need to keep up with the 10 hours of continuing education required for each two-year continuing education reporting period.

Mail your completed form to the DOH address on the form.

(See next page for details about the requirements you need to attest to in section 1 of the form.)

Details about the requirements:

One-year orthopedic post-graduate practice

(New grads will not be able to get the endorsement as a result of this requirement)

- This experience must include direct patient care
- You must have worked an average of 36 hours per week

Didactic Education

(Hours obtained in entry-level PT school may be counted toward these hours, see Calculation of Hours below)

- 100 hours of training in differential diagnosis
- 250 hours of didactic and practical training related to the delivery of spinal manipulative procedures
- 150 hours of specific training in spinal diagnostic imaging

Clinical Supervision

- 300 hours of supervised clinical experience in spinal manipulative procedures
 - Close supervision for the first 150 hours
 - Supervisor is continuously on site and physically present in the room, has personally diagnosed the condition to be treated and has personally authorized the spinal manipulative procedure(s) to be performed
 - Additional 150 hours
 - Direct supervision where supervisor is continuously on-site and present and is immediately available to assist the person being supervised
- The 300 hours of supervised clinical experience may be from the past
 - Send the form to whoever supervised you to fill out and sign
 - The clinical supervisor does not need to be from Washington state at this time (starting on July 1, 2020, all clinical supervisors will need to be from Washington)
- Suggestions for acquiring the 300 hours:
 - Clinical supervisor may supervise more than one mentee
 - Voluntary or paid mentorships or internships
 - Estimates of completion time:
 - Two months of fulltime mentored experience OR
 - Eight months of one day per week mentored experience

Computing Your Educational Hours

- In your computations, you may also include hours observing, such as in radiology and spinal surgeries.
- CAPTE required spinal manipulation specific entry-level education to be taught beginning in 2006.
- Coursework hours may overlap between the three didactic education categories of differential diagnosis, spinal manipulative procedures and spinal diagnostic imaging.

If you are not sure how many hours from your education that will apply to the endorsement requirements, scour the details of your own past curriculum and post-grad continuing education. Some examples of college coursework that would count include:

- Kinesiology
- Anatomy
- Physiology
- Orthopedics
- Clinical sciences
- Differential diagnosis
- Pathophysiology
- Pharmacology

- Clinical reasoning
- Pathology
- Advanced imaging
- Evidence-based practice
- Behavioral science
- Rehabilitation
- PT practice and interventions
- Cardiopulmonary systems
- Neuromuscular systems
- Multiple systems

Calculation of Hours*

- One quarter credit = **45 clock hours** (based on a minimum of 25 clock hours of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for a minimum of 10 weeks)
- One semester credit = **67.5 clock hours** (based on a minimum of 37.5 clock hours of direct faculty instruction and at minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for a minimum of 15 weeks)
- One CEU = 10 clock hours
- One contact hour = one clock hour
- One supervised clinical hour = one clock hour

*Source - US Dept of Education

We recommend you contact your PT school if you need help computing and applying the hours of your curriculum.

Additional Requirements of the New Law

- To keep your endorsement you must take 10 hours of continuing education that directly relates to spinal manipulation during every two-year continuing education reporting period. Five of the hours must be related to spinal manipulative procedural techniques.
- If you know your patient is also being treated by a chiropractor for the same diagnosis, you must make a reasonable effort to coordinate patient care to prevent conflict and duplication of treatment services.
- You may not perform spinal manipulation as more than 50 percent of your practice.
- You must consult with another non-physical therapist practitioner who may perform spinal manipulation if more than six spinal manipulation treatments are needed for the same segment. This includes the following practitioners: a chiropractor, osteopathic physician, a naturopath or a medical doctor.
- PTs may not advertise that they provide spinal manipulation, manipulative mobilization of the spine, chiropractic adjustment, spinal adjustment, maintenance or wellness manipulation, or chiropractic care of any kind. In other words, you may not print that you provide spinal manipulation on signage, business cards and other advertising. Those with an endorsement may verbally say that they perform spinal manipulation or that they are going to include and document it in a particular treatment session.
- PTs may not bill for spinal manipulation using coding specific to spinal manipulation. They may bill the spinal manipulation portion of their treatments as manual therapy.
- Only Washington licensees may obtain an endorsement.
- PTs may not delegate spinal manipulation to PTAs or other supportive personnel.

Timeline Factors

- **Spinal Manipulation practice is legal with endorsement beginning on July 1, 2015**
- Those who have completed all didactic education requirements (500 hours) must complete their supervision requirements (300 hours) by **January 1, 2017**; all others have **18 months** after they've completed coursework.
 - Didactic and supervision training may be done at the same time.
 - There is no specified time period for completing the didactic requirement.
- The Washington State Board of PT will report to the Legislature by **November 15, 2019 regarding disciplinary actions related to spinal manipulation.**
- **July 1, 2020:** Grandfather clause for clinical supervisors expires.