

Registration Procedure

1. Introduction

The College of Acupuncturists of Alberta (College) is responsible for regulating the Acupuncturist Profession under the *Health Professions Act* (Act). The College, in accordance with the Act, sets registration requirements for an individual to become registered as a regulated member in the province of Alberta.

These registration requirements are integral in ensuring the public receives safe, competent, and ethical services from regulated members.

To practice as an acupuncturist in the province of Alberta and use the protected titles, an individual must be registered with the College and hold a valid practice permit.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the actions required for an individual to become registered as a regulated member, reinstate their practice permit, change their registration status, or to renew their practice permit. It also describes the process for a review of an application decision.

3. Definitions

Applicant: An individual who applies to the College to become a regulated member in the province of Alberta.

Council: The Council of the College.

Educational Credential Assessment: means the process that involves evaluating and verifying foreign academic qualifications, degrees, diplomas, or certificates earned by an applicant from an educational institution.

Equivalent jurisdiction: a jurisdiction recognized in Canada and as set out in the College's Bylaws as having substantially equivalent competence and practice requirements as the College.

Labour Mobility Act (LMA): legislation in Alberta that is designed to facilitate the free movement and recognition of certified workers' credentials in regulated occupations across Canada, reducing barriers and delays.

Practice permit: a practice permit issued to a regulated member under Part 2 of the *Health Professions Act* (Act).

Registration requirements: minimum requirements required for each registration category.

Registration year: April 1 to March 31 of the following year.

Regulated member: an individual registered on the general, provisional, or courtesy register with the College.

Regulations: regulations made under s.131 of the Act.

Substantially equivalent: means the competence and practice requirements are comparable to those established by the College.

4. Procedure

Registration Categories

4.1 Under the *Acupuncturists Profession Regulation*, an applicant may apply under the following three regulated registration categories if they meet the registration requirements:

General Register

4.1.1 The applicant must have completed the registration exam and/or met upgrading requirements or been registered through an equivalent jurisdiction or substantial equivalency routes.

4.1.2 The applicant must meet currency-in-practice requirements.

Provisional Register

4.1.3 An applicant who is registered for the Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examinations but has not yet passed and wishes to work under supervision in the interim.

4.1.4 A regulated member on the provisional register must comply with registration requirements, including meeting continuing competence requirements.

4.1.5 Registration on the provisional register expires after a one-year term. The regulated member may request to have their provisional registration extended for an additional one-year term.

4.1.6 Registration on the provisional register expires immediately upon the regulated members final unsuccessful attempt of the Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examinations.

4.1.7 Upon successful completion of the Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examinations, the regulated member can apply to transfer their registration status to the general register.

Courtesy Register

4.1.8 A regulated acupuncturist in good standing in another jurisdiction with substantially equivalent competencies and practice requirements.

4.1.9 Registration on the courtesy register is granted for a six-month term and for a specified purpose. After exceeding the six-month term, the regulated member may request to have their courtesy registration extended for an additional six-month term.

Applying

- 4.2 An individual applying for registration must first create a member portal account. Once an account has been created and confirmed, applicants will be able to apply online for a practice permit.
- 4.3 Applicants are required to complete an application form, submit corresponding documents and pay any associated fees, as set out in the [College of Acupuncturists of Alberta Fee Schedule](#).
- 4.4 In accordance with the Regulations, applicants must meet the registration requirements as set out in Appendix 1 to be eligible for registration with the College.

Registration Requirements

- 4.5 An applicant must meet the following registration requirements to be eligible for registration with the College:

Education

- 4.5.1 An applicant must provide proof of one of the following:
 - Completion of an approved acupuncture program in Alberta and 500 supervised clinical practice hours.
 - If the applicant received education in Canada but outside of Alberta, they must submit a diploma, official transcripts and program syllabus demonstrating that the education they received is substantially equivalent to an approved acupuncture program in Alberta.
 - If the applicant received education internationally, they must submit an Education Credential Assessment from a [designated organization](#). The Educational Credential Assessment must indicate a minimum of 3 years training in Acupuncture, Traditional Chinese Medicine or Medicine with a focus in Chinese Medicine. Additional documentation may be requested.

Examinations

- 4.5.2 All general registry applicants must successfully complete the Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examinations (AARE), which includes the following components.
 - Pan-Canadian Acupuncturists Examination
 - Safety and, if applicable, Jurisprudence Examination
 - Modalities Examination
 - Acupuncture Points Examination
- 4.5.3 Under the LMA, an applicant who is currently licensed in good standing as a regulated member in another Canadian jurisdiction may apply for registration. If applicable, Equivalent jurisdiction applicants are required to complete the Jurisprudence Examination only.

Currency in Practice

- 4.5.4 An applicant may be eligible for registration if they have obtained a diploma from an approved acupuncture education program within the three-year period preceding the date of application for registration.
- 4.5.5 An applicant who has not completed their acupuncture education program within the last three years can demonstrate currency in practice by submitting:
- Appointment records demonstrating a minimum of 600 direct hours of acupuncture practice in the last three years; or
 - Employment verification letter(s) demonstrating a minimum of 600 direct hours of acupuncture practice in the last three years. This letter must include a job description, employee start and end dates, and weekly hours and number of patients seen.
- 4.5.6 An applicant can demonstrate currency in practice by fulfilling the requirements as set out in Appendix 2.

Good Character and Reputation

- 4.5.7 An applicant must provide evidence of having good character and reputation by submitting the following:
- 4.5.7.1 Two written references with respect to the applicant's acupuncture practice, which may be from an employer, educational institution, or where applicable, colleagues. Applicants under the LMA are not required to submit references.
- 4.5.7.2 A letter of good standing or registration verification from the organization responsible for the regulation of acupuncture in any other jurisdiction in which the applicant is or was registered.
- 4.5.7.3 Results of a recent criminal record and vulnerable sector check obtained from the police service in the area in which the applicant resides. This must be completed within three months of submission to the College. The College does not accept criminal record checks from private third-party providers.
- 4.5.8 An internationally educated applicant who has just immigrated to Canada, may submit a notarized copy of an Immigration Identification Card or a Permanent Resident Card, if the police check used to obtain the card was issued within the last six months.
- 4.5.9 Having a criminal record does not exclude an applicant from registration. If a criminal record and vulnerable sector check presents any occurrences, the application will require further review. The applicant may be required to submit additional information, which may include:
- A copy of any related court decision(s).
 - The relevance of the offence to the practice of acupuncture.
 - The sentence received, if any.
 - Whether or not a pardon was given.
 - The amount of time since the occurrence.
 - The applicant's behavior and character after the offence.

- Any other important evidence about the applicant's character and reputation.

Fitness to Practice

- 4.5.10 An applicant must declare any physical or mental condition(s) or disorder(s) that may impair their ability to provide safe, competent, and ethical care, as well as declare if they are under the care of physician or healthcare team and if they are following medical advice. Conditions may include mental illness, physical illness, substance abuse, and addictions.

Professional Liability Insurance

- 4.5.11 An applicant must provide evidence of professional liability insurance for \$2,000,000 dollars per claim/occurrence and the certificate of insurance must indicate acupuncture services.

First Aid and CPR Certification

- 4.5.12 An applicant must provide evidence of, at minimum, standard first aid and CPR-C. Acceptable standard first aid and CPR levels are set out in Appendix 3. The certificate must include the recipient's name, the level of first aid certification, the expiry date, and the training agency.

English Language Proficiency

- 4.5.13 If English is not the first language of the applicant, the applicant must demonstrate English proficiency by providing one of the following:
- Proof from a current or past registering body that the applicant has met a requirement to demonstrate proficiency in English imposed by that current or past registering body.
 - Proof that the applicant has completed a language proficiency assessment in English that meets the following standards:
 - IELTS: General or Academic, with minimum band score of 6.0 in Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.
 - TOEFL (Internet based test, IBT): minimum score of 15 in Listening, 18 in Speaking, 15 in Reading and 22 in Writing.
 - A letter or other evidence from an employer confirming that the applicant is competent to practice acupuncture in English.
 - Proof that the applicant has completed professional education in English.
 - Proof that the applicant has completed secondary schooling in English.

Citizenship

- 4.5.14 An applicant must provide evidence that they are a Canadian citizen or are lawfully admitted and entitled to work in Canada.

Identification

- 4.5.15 An applicant must provide two pieces of identification.

Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Training

- 4.5.16 An applicant must complete the College-approved prevention training on Sexual Abuse and Misconduct.

5. Application Review Process

- 5.1 The Registrar, within 10 business days after receiving an application for registration, will provide a written acknowledgement of receipt of the application.
- 5.2 The Registrar, within 20 business days of receiving a complete application for registration, will provide a decision in respect to that application. A registration decision means to either:
- 5.2.1 Approve the application.
 - 5.2.2 Impose conditions or limitations on the practice permit.
 - 5.2.3 Defer registration if, in the opinion of the Registrar, it is in the best interest of the public to defer registration until the applicant complies with conditions imposed.
 - 5.2.4 Refuse the application for registration.
- 5.3 In circumstances where the Registrar is unable to reach a decision on a completed registration application within the time frame set out at 5.2 above, the Registrar will take the following steps:
- 5.3.1 Provide the applicant with a reasonable and specific timeline for when a decision will be made and the rationale for the delay; or
 - 5.3.2 If the registration application falls under the purview of the Labour Mobility Act, the Registrar will submit a request for an extension of up to 10 business days through the Minister responsible for the LMA.

6. Review of Decision

- 6.1 Within 30 days of receiving a decision that is subject to conditions, deferred, or refused, the applicant may request a review of the decision by the Council.
- 6.2 A request for a review of the decision must be submitted in writing to the Registrar, set out the reasons why the application should be approved with or without conditions, and include payment for any associated fees.
- 6.3 Within 30 days of a request for review, the Registrar must notify the applicant of the date, time, and place at which the Council will conduct the review, as set out under s.41(2) of the Act. A review must occur within 60 days of a request for a review as set out under s.43(3) of the Act.
- 6.4 In reviewing a decision, the Council may:
- Confirm the Registrar's decision.
 - Reverse the Registrar's decision.
 - Vary the previous decision.
 - Refer the matter back to the Registrar or Registration Committee to reassess the application.

7. Annual Practice Permit Renewal

- 7.1 Practice permits expire annually on March 31. To maintain a valid practice permit, within the renewal timeframe of February 1 to March 31 annually, regulated members must submit a registration renewal application and payment of practice permit fees, penalties, costs, and other fees.
- 7.2 Regulated members must meet the following renewal requirements:
- 1,200 practice hours within the previous five years. Practice hours may include practice of the restricted activity of acupuncture, acupuncture techniques, teaching and research.
 - 600 direct practice hours within the previous three years. Direct practice hours may include practice of the restricted activity of acupuncture, cupping, electro-acupuncture, acupressure and moxibustion.
 - Completion of the Continuing Competence Program requirements if the regulated member is on the general or provisional register.
 - Current professional liability insurance with minimum coverage of \$2,000,000 per claim/occurrence.
 - Hold a valid or current standard first-aid and CPR-C certification.
- 7.3 If a regulated member's application for renewal is not received by March 31, the member's practice permit is immediately suspended and may be subject to late fees.
- 7.4 Within 30 days of receiving a practice permit suspension notice, if the individual does not complete their annual renewal their practice permit will be cancelled, and the applicant will need to apply for reinstatement.
- 7.5 Registration fees are non-refundable; In cases where a regulated member can provide evidence of extenuating circumstances that hindered their ability to work for an extended duration, exceptions may be considered.

8. Cancellation of Practice Permit

- 8.1 As set out under s.43(1) of the Act, 30 days after receiving a notice of suspension, practice permits will be cancelled if a regulated member does not apply for a practice permit, or defaults on payment of the practice permit fees, penalties, costs, or any other fees.
- 8.2 Practice permits will also be cancelled as a result of a decision of unprofessional conduct based in whole or in part to sexual abuse or on a conviction of a sexual nature.
- 8.3 An individual who has their practice permit cancelled will need to apply for reinstatement.

9. Non-Practicing Status

- 9.1 Regulated members who wish to take a leave of absence from the practice of acupuncture can apply for non-practicing status. Regulated members applying for non-practicing status must:
- Be on the general registry.
 - Not be in default of payment of the practice permit fees, penalties, costs, or any other fees.
 - Not be currently under an investigation or awaiting a hearing decision in relation to a complaint or other disciplinary conduct.
 - Not have a practice permit subject to any restrictions or conditions.
- 9.2 A non-practicing member transitioning back to the General register is required to fulfill any outstanding Continuing Competence Program (CCP) requirements for the registration year prior to non-practicing status.
- 9.3 A non-practicing member transitioning back to the General register must complete all mandatory College-directed activities imposed during the non-practicing period.
- 9.4 A non-practicing member can remain on the non-practicing register for a maximum of two consecutive years. If the member does not transfer back to the general registry within two years, their practice permit will be cancelled.
- 9.5 A non-practicing member is restricted from engaging in the direct practice of acupuncture and using the protected titles and abbreviations as set out under s.21 of the Act.
- 9.6 A member with non-practicing status is eligible to participate in all College Regulatory Committees as a non-voting member.

10. Reinstatement

- 10.1 If a regulated member resigns or their practice permit has been cancelled, they must reinstate their registration prior to returning to practice. An applicant applying for reinstatement must:
- Meet the current requirements for registration.
 - Fulfill any conditions that were imposed on their practice permit at the time of cancellation.
 - Be fit to practice as an acupuncturist and not pose a risk to public safety.
 - Remit any outstanding payment of practice permit fees, penalties, costs, or any other fees.
 - Demonstrate currency in practice, as set out in Appendix 2.
- 10.2 As set out in s.45(4) and (5) of the Act, an individual cannot apply for their practice permit to be reissued and their registration be reinstated:
- 10.2.1 Until at least five years have elapsed from the date a decision of unprofessional conduct was made by a hearing tribunal that was based in whole or in part on sexual misconduct.
- 10.2.2 If the individual's practice permit and registration were cancelled in Alberta or a similar profession in North America as a result of a decision of unprofessional conduct based in whole or in part on sexual abuse or on a conviction of a sexual nature.

11. Authority

This procedure is established under the authority of Corporate Governance Policy G.1.2, which delegates the authority for the Executive Director to establish policies and procedures for the management and operation of the College for regulatory program policies and Policy G.1.5, which delegates responsibility for the Executive Director to design, develop, administer and deliver College programs and services in accordance with the established goals and targets set out in the strategic and business plans.

12. Scope

This procedure applies to applicants and regulated members of the College.

13. Related Policies and Procedures

- R.1.0 Registration Policy
- R.1.1 Continuing Competence Program Policy
- R.1.1.1 Continuing Competence Program Procedure
- Examination Policy

14. Version History

Date	Notes
August 10, 2023	New policy
December 19, 2023	Provided clarity on education and experience requirements for out of province applicants

Appendix 1 – Registration Requirements

The chart below outlines the requirements for each registration category based upon application type. All requirements must be submitted for an application to be considered complete.

APPLICATION TYPE	New Graduates	Internationally Educated	Labour Mobility	Reinstatement	Provisional	Courtesy (Educational)	Courtesy (Clinical)
REGISTRATION CATEGORY	General	General	General	General	Provisional	Courtesy	Courtesy
Application	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Application Fee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Identification (2 pieces)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Proof of Citizenship or work permit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Credentials of Acupuncture Education	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Criminal & Vulnerable Sector Check	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
References (2)	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
First Aid & CPR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Sexual Abuse & Misconduct Training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Letter of Standing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Professional Liability Insurance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Examinations	✓	✓		If applicable	✓		
Currency of Practice	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fitness to Practice	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
English Language Requirements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jurisprudence Examination			✓	If applicable			✓
Education Credential Assessment	Graduates outside of Alberta	✓				Graduates outside of Alberta	Graduates outside of Alberta

Appendix 2 – Currency In Practice Requirements

The below chart outlines the currency in practice requirements applicants must meet to be eligible for registration if they have not completed their acupuncture education within three years prior to submitting their completed application for registration or reinstatement.

Unregistered Period	Currency-in-Practice Requirements
< 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete any outstanding CCP requirements for the year they were last registered. • Complete all mandatory College-directed activities during the cancelled period.
2 to < 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete jurisprudence examination. • Complete all mandatory College-directed activities from previous unregistered years. • If proof of currency in practice is provided, obtain 15 Continuing Competence Program (CCP) credits.* • If not current in practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Obtain 20 CCP credits* for each previous unregistered year. ○ Successfully complete the Safety, Modalities, and Acupuncture Points Exam.
5-10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete all mandatory College-directed activities for the past five years. • If proof of currency in practice is provided, obtain 15 CCP credits.* • If not current in practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Obtain 20 self-selected CCP credits* for each previous unregistered year. ○ Successfully complete all components of the Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examinations.
More than 10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 500 supervised practice hours. • Complete all components of the Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examinations.

* Only credits obtained from a formal program (e.g., courses, seminars, workshops, etc.) are accepted.

Appendix 3 – First Aid and CPR Certification

The chart below outlines acceptable first aid and CPR-C training. Regulated members must obtain standard first aid and CPR-C training from an organization approved by Alberta Occupational Health and Safety.

First Aid	CPR
Standard First Aid	CPR-C with AED
Advanced First Aid	CPR-HCP
First Responder	BLS Provider
	First Responder