



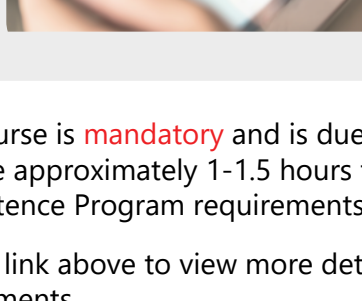
Update for Members

April 2024

COLLEGE-DIRECTED ACTIVITIES FOR 2024-25

Each year, the College may require learning activities that are related to a specific topic based on the College's mandate to serve the public interest.

For 2024-25, acupuncturists are required to complete the Patient Record Basics Course below:



Patient Record Basics

This free, virtual course is **mandatory** and is due by March 31, 2025 (when you submit your next renewal). It will take approximately 1-1.5 hours to complete and is worth 2 credits towards your Continuing Competence Program requirements.

Click on the course link above to view more detailed information, including learning outcomes and course requirements.

For more information on the Continuing Competence Program, visit our [website](https://www.collegeofacupuncturists.ca/website) or reach out to the College at info@acupuncturealberta.ca

MUST-KNOW INFORMATION FOR ACUPUNCTURISTS

Are you performing a personal service?

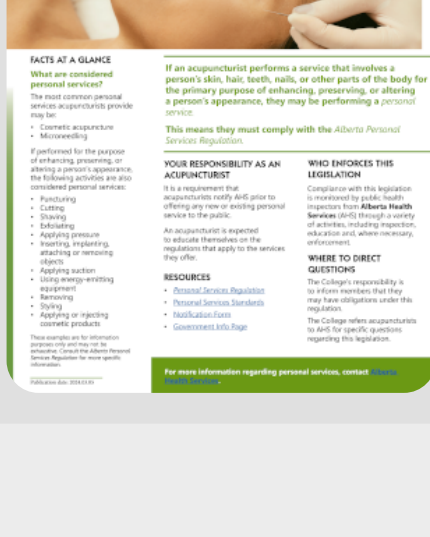
If so, you must be aware of your regulatory obligations.

Our colleagues at Alberta Health Services have asked us to remind acupuncturists that those performing a personal service must adhere to the *Personal Services Regulation*.

A personal service is any service that involves a person's skin, hair, teeth, nails, or other parts of the body for the primary purpose of enhancing, preserving, or altering a person's appearance.

The most common personal services acupuncturists provide may be cosmetic acupuncture or microneedling.

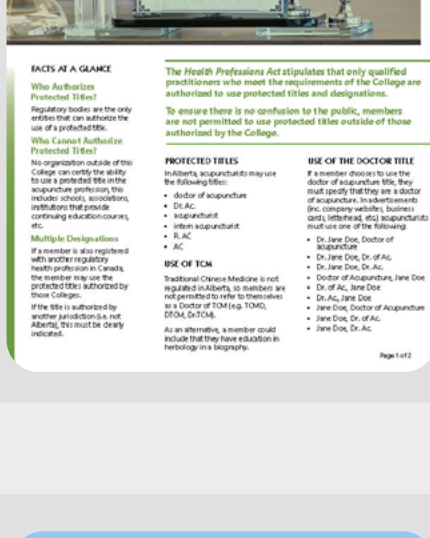
More information can be found in the **Acupuncturists Performing Personal Services** fact sheet on the [Practice Tips](https://www.collegeofacupuncturists.ca/website) page on our website.



Did you know you cannot refer to yourself as a Dr.TCM in Alberta?

Those who do so are actually breaking regulation as set out by the Government of Alberta. This and other specific rules regarding titles are explained in the **Title Designation** document on the [Practice Tips](https://www.collegeofacupuncturists.ca/website) page on our website.

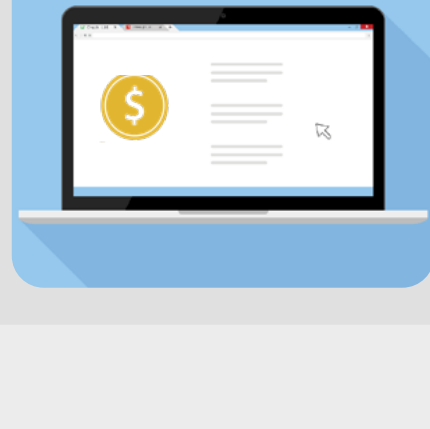
We strongly recommend all acupuncturists review this fact sheet. Regulations regarding use of titles in Alberta are nuanced and acupuncturists are expected to educate themselves on the regulations that apply to their profession.



Do you ever find yourself wondering how the College sets its renewal fees?

Pursuant to the *Health Professions Act*, Colleges are funded through membership fees.

Learn about the factors that influence your fees, how acupuncturists can help keep their fees low, and where to see how the College spends its money on the [Renewal Fees](https://www.collegeofacupuncturists.ca/website) page on our website.

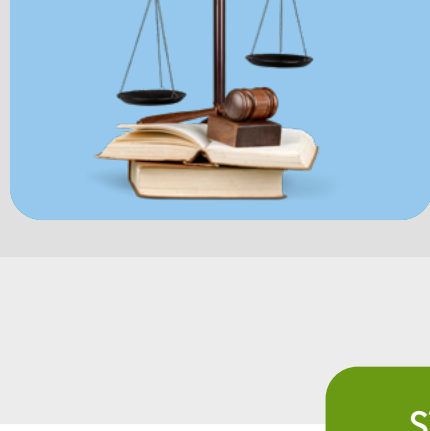


What happens if a complaint is ever made against you?

The College manages complaints in accordance with the regulations as set out in the *Health Professions Act*.

The College's Complaint's Management Policy and Procedure are available under the Regulatory Policies and Procedures heading on the [Governance Documents](https://www.collegeofacupuncturists.ca/website) page on our website.

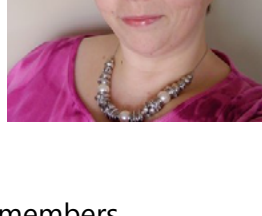
These documents provide a detailed explanation of how the College handles professional conduct complaints made against acupuncturists.



STAFF ANNOUNCEMENT

Carrie Mittelstadt Regulatory Policy Coordinator

The College is happy to announce that Carrie Mittelstadt has joined our team as the new Regulatory Policy Coordinator. Carrie possesses over 6 years of experience in the regulatory environment, including time in professional conduct departments, where she gained experience working in accordance with the *Health Professions Act*. She has worked in support roles for both public and private organizations, and she is the current Edmonton Branch president of the Association of Administrative Professionals.



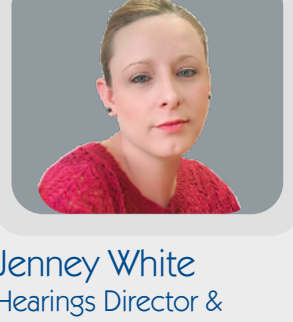
This new position will allow the College to more quickly and efficiently implement policies and procedures to codify our programs and services. Carrie will also be the go-to individual for Council and Regulatory Committee members.

When she is off work, she enjoys spending time with her family, game night with friends, road trips, and spending time at the family cabin.

We are excited to have Carrie join our team and know that her extensive knowledge and experience will be of great value to the College.

A WORD FROM COLLEGE STAFF

Registration Renewal ...By the Numbers



Jenney White
Hearings Director & Corporate Services Coordinator

As we did in the last 2023 April newsletter, I would like to provide members with an update on this year's registration renewal numbers. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members who completed registration renewal and (re)welcome you as members for the upcoming year.

Renewal statistics for the 2024-25 cycle:

- 960 - Number of registrants who completed registration renewal between February 1 - March 31, 2024.
- 888 - Number or registrants who completed registration renewal between February 1 - March 31, 2023. This represents an 8% increase in registrants year-over-year.
- 88 - Number of new registrants that passed their Alberta Acupuncture Registration Examinations (AARE) in the last year.
- 41% - Percentage of renewals that were completed in the final 10 days. This represents an increase of 24% over 2023 (33%). The greater the group of individuals completing their renewal in these final days, the higher the risk that those members may not get the support they need to complete renewal.

Due to the high volume of inquiries the College receives during renewal, the College highly recommends that members renew early in the event they need support.

I would also like to remind members that a survey is currently in progress to gather your feedback on registration renewal and our Continuing Competence Program. Our inaugural survey last year provided us with benchmarks to measure this year's survey results against. This is a valuable metric for us to learn if we are improving on these programs.

Conduct Corner



Andrea Snow
Complaints Director

Hello acupuncturists. For this installment of Conduct Corner, I'd like to share some information about a recent case that highlights the importance of boundaries and establishing an appropriate "therapeutic distance" between yourself and your patients.

Situation: An acupuncturist failed to recognize the inherent power differential between a practitioner and their patient. Their conduct resulted in blurred practitioner boundaries and made the patient feel unsafe.

Consequence: A complaint was made against the acupuncturist and they were found guilty of unprofessional behaviour. This resulted in various sanctions, including a mandatory suspension period.

Identified Issues in this Case:

The patient in this case was suffering with a chronic condition that negatively affected their quality of life. Initially, the acupuncturist provided solace and a sympathetic ear during appointments. However, the acupuncturist started to blur professional boundaries when they:

- Began hugging the patient after treatments.
- Offered to book treatments outside of clinic hours.
- Initiated personal texting conversations.
- Started pursuing a personal relationship.
- Ignored the patient's discomfort with such advances.

What acupuncturists can learn from this case:

Acupuncturists must be diligent in establishing and maintaining clear boundaries with patients.

In this specific case, that includes:

- Honouring the patient's boundaries.
- Ensuring that all communication (including texts) remains professional and relevant to the patient's health.
- Refraining from pursuing personal relationships.
- Abstaining from actions that could be construed as harassment or sexual misconduct.

It is important to note that although intentions may be well meaning (i.e. attempting to provide comfort), choosing not to cross professional boundaries protects the acupuncturist and the safety of the patient.

For more information on what constitutes sexual abuse/misconduct or sexual abuse, review the [Protecting Patients from Sexual Abuse/Misconduct Standards of Practice](https://www.collegeofacupuncturists.ca/website) published on the College of Acupuncturists of Alberta (College) website.

Hearing decisions are available on the College's website [here](https://www.collegeofacupuncturists.ca/website).

Other Conduct Corner Case Studies are available on the [Practice Tips](https://www.collegeofacupuncturists.ca/website) page on our website.

OTHER UPDATES

Bylaw Updates

As part of our ongoing governance improvements, the College has recently updated its Bylaws as well as the Appointment of the Council and Regulatory Committees Procedure and the Delegation to the Executive Director/Registrar Policy. These updates were editorial in nature and did not include any substantive changes.

Fee Schedule Restructure

The posting of our Fee Schedule has changed slightly. Instead of the current single document listing all fees, it has now been split into two documents: one for Administrative Fees and another for Membership Fees. **There is no change in fee costs**, only how they are presented.

You can find the College's Bylaws and the Fee schedules on the [Governance Documents Page](https://www.collegeofacupuncturists.ca/website) of our website.

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