

## DIRECT ACCESS LAW

Now that Governor Ivey has signed Act 2024-385 into law, the Alabama Board of Physical Therapy is excited to announce the new Direct Access Law in Alabama! Effective June 1, 2024, this law expands the ability of licensed physical therapists to provide care without the need for a referral under certain conditions. Here are a few of the key requirements you need to know:

**Educational Requirements:** Physical therapists must possess a Doctorate in Physical Therapy OR a Master's in Physical Therapy degree with 10 years of clinical practice to treat patients without a referral.

**Patient Visits:** Without a referral, a physical therapist can treat a patient for up to 30 days or 11 visits. If the patient does not show a beneficial response, a referral to another healthcare provider is required.

**Continuing Education:** Physical therapists seeing patients without a referral **must** complete an **additional** two hours of continuing education annually, focusing on the professional standard of care. **NOTE:** If you plan to see patients without a referral between June 1, 2024, and September 30, 2024, you **MUST** have the additional 2 hours completed and reported during this year's renewal cycle (total of 12 hours of CEU Credit)

**Cash-Paying Patients:** Individuals seeking treatment who are paying cash have direct access to physical therapy services without any restrictions.

There are several other key provisions of this new law that all licensees must be aware of to remain compliant. This new law will enhance access to physical therapy services and empower therapists to provide care efficiently and effectively throughout the state. As always, it is incumbent upon each licensee to educate themselves on the practice act and scope of practice in the State of Alabama, including this new law. The full text of the law can be found here: [Legislative Acts | Alabama Secretary of State](#) and clicking the "View Image" button at the bottom of the page.

At this time, the Board does not need to alter the administrative rules of practice. Act 2024-385 is very specific in its language and will eventually replace the relevant sections in the current practice act. Licensees who meet the requirements as specified in Act 2024-385 can begin seeing patients without a referral within the constraints of the new law effective June 1, 2024. As always, if you have any questions, please contact the Alabama Board of Physical Therapy office.