IV. B. 2. ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS

ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS

Programs that are planning an additional location (e.g., satellite location) must follow a separate accreditation procedure for the new location. ACOTE review and acceptance of the Candidacy Application for an Additional Location is required prior to the admission of students into the additional location. The accreditation status of the existing program does not accrue to the additional location until the procedures for accreditation of an additional location are successfully completed.

Programs are limited to 4 additional locations under the accreditation status of a primary location. This policy was implemented to ensure the quality of the education provided at each accredited location under the direction and leadership of one program director. Programs seeking accreditation for more than 4 additional locations must identify a new primary location and apply as a new applicant program through the 3-step initial accreditation process.

DEFINITIONS

Additional Location:

1. A facility that is geographically separated from the primary location that offers a significant portion of the didactic and experiential component of the educational program by faculty at the primary location.
2. The degree is granted by the institution housing the ACOTE-accredited program (the primary location).
3. The additional location must demonstrate the same institutional sponsorship and governance as the accredited program.
4. Students from the additional location must graduate with a degree awarded from the accredited program's sponsoring institution.
5. The additional location has the same programmatic mission, vision, philosophy, curriculum design, strategic plan, and course objectives as the accredited primary location.
6. The program director must be responsible for management and administration of the additional site as required by the ACOTE Standards, including planning, evaluation, budgeting, selection of faculty and staff, maintenance of accreditation, and commitment to strategies for professional development.
7. There is a site coordinator on-site at the additional location who meets the requirements of the ACOTE Standards.
8. Faculty, resources, and operational policies (e.g. admissions, budget, etc.) are shared.
9. The faculty at the additional location must be considered to be faculty of the accredited program.
10. The faculty at the additional location must report to the program director.
11. The additional location is within the limit of four locations per accredited primary location.

Programs that are self-contained with separate faculty, admissions, facilities, etc. that teach an identical curriculum are considered to be separate programs. As such, the institution must apply for independent accreditation for the program per the accreditation process for new programs. (See ACOTE Policy III.A.).

All **proposed new additional** locations must meet the following criteria:

1. Additional locations may only be established at ACOTE-accredited programs holding no areas of noncompliance. Applicant or candidate programs are not eligible to submit a Candidacy Application for an Additional Location.
2. Additional locations may only be established at ACOTE-accredited programs demonstrating successful student learning outcomes (e.g., Level II fieldwork pass rate, NBCOT certification exam pass rate, job placement rate, employer satisfaction, etc.).
3. The program must provide evidence of all necessary approvals to offer the new location from the institution, the educational licensing and/or governing board(s) of the state(s) in which the program is to be offered, and the

institutional accrediting body. In cases where no approval is needed, statements to that effect from the relevant body are required.

4. The site coordinator must be hired and physically located at the additional location prior to the start of coursework by the first class of students who have been accepted into the occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant program.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS FOR NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS

Due to the wide variations possible for additional location models, a multi-step approval and application process will be utilized as outlined below.

STEP 1: INITIAL PROPOSAL FOR AN ADDITIONAL LOCATION

Accredited programs seeking accreditation for an additional location must submit an initial proposal to ACOTE, c/o the AOTA Accreditation Department, at least 12 months prior to the time the first group of students are projected to enter the program. (NOTE: It is imperative that the evaluation process be completed prior to the graduation of the first class of students).

The initial proposal must be signed by the chief executive officer and by the occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant program director and include the following information:

1. A brief description of the proposed additional location, the planned arrangement, and the anticipated effect(s) on each program/institution.

2. Timeline information including the month and year occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant students are projected to enter the program at the new location, the months and year the first class is projected to be on Level II fieldwork, and the month and year the first class is projected to graduate. An Additional Location Data Form must also be completed and attached.

3. Documentation that the program will meet the following requirements:
   a. The primary location that is applying for accreditation of a new location is an ACOTE-accredited program holding no areas of noncompliance. (Applicant or candidate programs are not eligible to submit a Candidacy Application for an Additional Location).
   b. The primary location demonstrates successful student learning outcomes (e.g., Level II fieldwork pass rate, NBCOT certification exam pass rate, job placement rate, employer satisfaction, etc.).
   c. The new location demonstrates the same institutional sponsorship and governance as the accredited program.
   d. Evidence is provided that the primary location has obtained of all necessary approvals to offer the new location.
   e. Students from the additional location will graduate with a degree awarded from the accredited program's sponsoring institution.
   f. The program director of the primary location will be responsible for the administration and operation of all locations offered by the accredited program.
   g. The site coordinator will be hired and physically located at the additional location prior to the start of coursework by the first class of students who have been accepted into the occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant program.
   h. The faculty at the additional location will be considered to be faculty of the primary location.
   i. The faculty at the additional location will report to the program director of the primary location.
   j. The additional location will have the same programmatic mission, vision, philosophy, curriculum design, strategic plan, and course objectives as the primary location.

Upon receipt of the initial proposal, AOTA Accreditation staff will acknowledge receipt of the materials and forward them to the two assigned ACOTE reviewers (usually the same reviewers assigned to the existing program). Those reviewers will complete a paper review of the proposal and decide whether:

1) the initial proposal meets the criteria for establishment of an additional location and approve the program to submit a Candidacy Application for an Additional Location, or
2) the initial proposal does not meet the criteria for establishment of an additional location.

If the initial proposal meets the criteria, the institution will be provided with a due date for the Candidacy Application for an Additional Location. If the initial proposal does not meet the criteria, the institution will be informed of the available options.

STEP 2: CANDIDACY APPLICATION FOR AN ADDITIONAL LOCATION

The Candidacy Application for an Additional Location and the instructions regarding required documentation are provided for reference in the "Accreditation Surveys, Forms, and Templates" section of the ACOTE Web site (www.acoteonline.org).

The application is provided as a guide to indicate areas in which information is required; however, each Standard should be reviewed to determine whether there are any changes from the currently accredited program. An explanation of the changes and the resulting impact on the program should be included in the application.

The program director will be notified by AOTA Accreditation staff of the names and addresses of those to whom the completed application materials are to be mailed. Five copies of the materials are required. The new additional location application fee (per location) should accompany the application. (See ACOTE Accreditation Manual Section V.A.)

Upon receipt of the application, the two assigned ACOTE reviewers (usually the same reviewers assigned to the existing program) complete a paper review of the application and report their findings to ACOTE at its next scheduled meeting. At that meeting, ACOTE may take any one of the following actions:

- Grant Candidacy Status to the additional location and proceed with either a full-scale on-site evaluation or a modified on-site evaluation (e.g., decrease the time involved or the number of on-site team members). The program may proceed with plans to admit students into the program at the additional location according to the approved timeline. Although the designation "Candidacy Status" is not a guarantee of accreditation, it does indicate that the resource allocation and plans for development of the proposed program appear to demonstrate the ability to meet the *ACOTE Accreditation Standards for a Doctoral-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist, a Master's-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist, or an Associate-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant* if fully implemented as planned. Candidacy Status **must** be granted before students may be admitted or notified of admission to the program.

- Defer action on the application and request that additional information be submitted. (The tentative on-site evaluation of the additional location may need to be postponed or cancelled).

- Deny Candidacy Status to the additional location. If Candidacy Program Status is denied, the program will not be able to admit students into the additional location and will not be eligible to proceed with accreditation process. The program may reapply for Candidacy Status for the additional location by submitting a new Letter of Intent and starting the initial accreditation process again. Note: ACOTE will consider an expedited review schedule for a program location that was denied Candidacy Status that submits a new Letter of Intent. AOTA Accreditation staff will develop a schedule based on the application.

STEP 3: REPORT OF SELF-STUDY AND ON-SITE EVALUATION OF AN ADDITIONAL LOCATION

If ACOTE grants Candidacy Status and determines that an on-site evaluation is required, AOTA Accreditation staff will establish the date of the visit to the additional location based on the projected graduation date of the first class. ACOTE may decide to waive the on-site evaluation of the new location if it meets all of the following criteria:

- The application materials provide adequate information upon which to assess the additional location's compliance with the *ACOTE Accreditation Standards for a Doctoral-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist, a Master's-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist,* or *an Associate-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant.*
- The main program/campus has no outstanding areas of noncompliance.
- The date of the next regularly scheduled on-site evaluation is near enough to encompass evaluation of the additional location.

In preparation for the initial on-site evaluation, the program director will be requested to submit a complete Self-Study Report for the primary location that addresses information specific to each additional location. The report must be submitted at least 2 months prior to the on-site. The members of the initial review team are generally assigned to serve as either an on-site evaluator or paper reviewer for the on-site visit.

Two evaluators (members of the ACOTE and/or Roster of Accreditation Evaluators) conduct the on-site evaluation of the additional location(s). A summary report of the visit is made by the evaluators at the final on-site conference and institution officials are given access to a copy of the Evaluators' Report of On-Site Evaluation at that time. To expedite preparation of the report for ACOTE review and action, the program director is requested to submit a copy of the report with any corrections or comments to the AOTA Accreditation Department within one week after the on-site evaluation. (Additional response time is available if needed.) A written response to the on-site visit may also be submitted if there are special considerations or circumstances the program director wishes to be brought to the attention of ACOTE. Additional material or documents will not be considered by ACOTE, however. ACOTE will only consider action on the program based on those materials the on-site team had the opportunity to review and discuss during the on-site visit.

ACCREDITATION ACTION

Following Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) review of the Evaluators' Report of On-Site Evaluation and any comments submitted by the program director, action is taken to grant a status of either Accreditation or Accreditation Withheld. (Descriptions of each accreditation status are provided in ACOTE Accreditation Manual Section IV.C.) Notification of final action by ACOTE and copies of the Report of ACOTE are sent to the chief executive officer, dean, and the program director. The ACOTE Certificate of Accreditation (if awarded) is mailed directly to the program director. Letters containing notification of Accreditation Withheld are sent certified mail, return receipt requested. Procedures for request for appeal of an ACOTE decision to withhold accreditation are found in ACOTE Accreditation Manual Section IV.D.

If ACOTE determines that further information related to the program's compliance with the Standards is required to enable a fair decision to be made regarding the accreditation of the program, it may defer action until the information is received. ACOTE may request materials by mail or schedule a second on-site evaluation or fact-finding visit. The cost of the visit shall be borne by ACOTE.

If areas of noncompliance are identified in the Report of ACOTE, the program will be required to submit a Plan of Correction. Subsequent Progress Reports will be required until all areas of noncompliance are corrected. (See ACOTE Accreditation Manual Sections IV.E.1. and IV.E.2.)

Following action to award initial accreditation, the next on-site evaluation is scheduled to coincide with the next visit of the primary location.

ACCREDITATION FEES FOR AN ADDITIONAL LOCATION

A Candidacy Application for an Additional Location must be accompanied by the new additional location application fee. (See ACOTE Accreditation Manual Section V.A.) If an on-site evaluation is required, an initial on-site fee will also be charged.

An annual additional location fee becomes effective with the first full academic year for which the program has accreditation status. The fee will be included with the annual accreditation fee invoice of the main campus program.