



Member Application Instruction Manual

Professional Membership, 2023

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Disclaimer	1
ATRA's Protection of Personal Information Statement	1
Contact ATRA	1
Pathways for Professional Member Applicants	2
Pathway 1: Academic Track	2
Pathway 2: Certification Track	3
Pathway 3: Renewing Lapsed Membership	4
Pathway 4: Return to Practice Track	4
General Steps	5
Applicant's Declaration.....	5
Membership Category.....	5
CTRA Membership (optional)	5
Chapter Affiliation	6
Communities of Practice (CoP).....	6
Personal Information	7
Employment Information	7
Employment Status in the Field of Recreation Therapy	7
Primary Employer Information	8
Employer/Facility	8
Employment Position	8
Employment Agency	9
Employment Practice Area.....	10
Employment Related Affiliations	11
Membership Fees	11
Prorated Fee Schedule	11
What to Expect After You Become a Member	12
Letter of Welcome	12
Professional Membership Verification	12
Membership Renewal	12
Continuing Competence Program	13
Appendix A: Application Checklist, Professional Membership	14
Appendix B: Return to Practice Re-Application Form	15
References	16

Introduction

This Application Instruction Manual pertains to the professional membership category. If you intend to apply for a different membership category, please close this document and select the application manual specific to your category. For membership category definitions, please visit the ATRA website page on Membership & Renewals: <https://www.alberta-tr.ca/membership-applications-and-renewals/select-your-membership-category/>.

Disclaimer

Membership applications in any membership category may be deferred, refused, or conditions imposed if the renewal applicant does not meet membership criteria.

ATRA's Protection of Personal Information Statement

Protection of Personal Information

ATRA collects information from members to perform the business of ATRA. This includes determining eligibility for membership registration and maintaining the membership register. The information is also used to support activities that further the mission of the association and workforce planning.

Contact: executivedirector@alberta-tr.ca

Contact ATRA

If after reading this Application Instruction Manual you have additional questions or concerns, send an email to executivedirector@alberta-tr.ca.

Pathways for Professional Member Applicants

Select one of four entry pathways to become an ATRA professional member. Please review each of the options to determine your best option. Click the following link to view our website information: [Pathways to ATRA Professional Membership](#).

Pathway 1: Academic Track

Initiate application online.

A. **Graduate** from a nationally or internationally accredited post-secondary institution meeting these criteria:

1. Degree or post degree title recreation therapy or therapeutic recreation. A title of recreation and leisure studies is accepted with a specialization/minor in therapeutic recreation.
2. Examples of degree titles **not** accepted: recreation and sport, management, or tourism (without a specialization or minor in therapeutic recreation), kinesiology, physical education, adapted physical education, community rehabilitation or rehabilitation assistant.

B. Academic Coursework

1. Three (3) courses in therapeutic recreation (minimum) [3.0 credits each].
2. Three (3) courses in general recreation, leisure, leadership, or play [3.0 credits each].
3. Six (6) supporting courses across three clinically related areas [3.0 credits each]:
 - a. Psychology (general, abnormal, educational, counseling)
 - b. Sociology (group dynamics, leadership, volunteerism)
 - c. Education (special, physical, early childhood)
 - d. Therapies (music, art, dance, drama)
 - e. Health (health promotion, wellness, health trends, community health, rehabilitation)
 - f. Aging (gerontology, aging, aging disorders)
 - g. Medical (anatomy, biology, physiology, medical terminology, pharmacology)
 - h. Research (statistics, evaluation, research methods)

C. **Clinical Practicum** You are required to submit the Practicum Reporting Form. You will find this form on the [Application Process Documents](#) page located in the [Application & Renewals](#) section of the ATRA website.

Academic Track Additional Steps

Step One: Initiate the application process by completing the online sections and submitting required fees

Step Two: To complete your official application you must send in:

1. **Application Checklist:** The applicant emails a copy of the Application Checklist. You will find this form in the Application Process Documents page in the Application & Renewal Section of the ATRA website (see also Appendix A).
2. **Therapeutic Recreation Practicum Placement Confirmation Form.** The applicant emails the practicum placement confirmation form. Both the applicant and the professional preceptor must sign the form.
3. **Official transcripts**
 - a. Each transcript must include the registrar signature and seal to be considered official.
 - b. The registrar of the educational institution emails (official/original) sealed transcripts directly to ATRA (preferred method). Or,
 - c. The applicant mails official sealed transcripts directly to ATRA.
 - d. Faxes, scans or copies of official transcripts will not be accepted.
4. **Timely manner:** Arrange to submit your official transcript and clinical placement verification within ten days of completing the online section.

The Membership Review Committee reviews all applications for professional membership. The committee meets once per month to review all completed applications. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed until all required information, documents, and fees are received. Once membership is approved, it will generally be processed within 7 to 10 business days of the committee meeting. If there are any issues with the membership application, the Membership Review Committee will contact the applicant for further information.

Pathway 2: Certification Track

Initiate application online.

Applicants that have already met criteria and are certified as a CTRS by NCTRC will select this pathway. Provide your certification number online and complete all required data fields. ATRA will verify your current certification with NCTRC. You will be notified if verification was not successful.

Note: ATRA does not require professional members to be certified by NCTRC.

Pathway 3: Renewing Lapsed Membership

If it has been less than three years since you last renewed your ATRA professional membership, please do not reapply. You are able to access the Member Section of ATRA's website and [renew your membership](#). [Late Penalty Fees](#) will apply. Forgot your member login information? Contact our friendly support staff at: support@alberta-tr.ca. See also the ATRA Professional Member Renewal Manual.

Pathway 4: Return to Practice Track

If you were previously a professional member of ATRA and let your membership lapse longer than three years, your return pathway has an alternate route. Please submit the [Return to Practice Form](#) and do not apply online.

The applicant will provide evidence of therapeutic recreation experience:

1. Previous ATRA professional membership (academic credentials previously assessed by ATRA).
2. Leave of absence from ATRA of over three consecutive years or more.
3. Proof of ATRA professional membership is a requirement for present employment.
4. Current job description that outlines roles and responsibilities that aligns with the Competency Profile of Recreation Therapists in Alberta.
5. Resume outlining professional experience and roles related to therapeutic recreation, health, and professional practice.
6. Continued Competence Evaluation: submission of Continued Competence Form listing forty-five (45) Competence Education Units obtained within the past three years.

General Steps

Applicant's Declaration

Read and complete the online declaration carefully before checking the box.

- I declare that I clearly understand that providing false or misleading information on this application is considered unprofessional conduct and will result in my membership application being declined. I also understand that I will receive all correspondence from ATRA electronically.

Membership Category

The first choice you will make in the online membership application process is to select the membership category. Please select the **Professional Member** option. You will be automatically directed to the appropriate online application section following your selection.

Member Category Options:

- Professional**
- Supporting
- Student
- Alumni

CTRA Membership (optional)

Membership with the national professional association provides a national perspective on the therapeutic recreation profession. Member benefits include low cost to no cost professional development events, communities of practice, and the opportunity to influence development of the profession with voting rights and the opportunity to run for a director position

ATRA professional members are entitled to a 50% discount off CTRA membership fees. ATRA accepts online payment options with your Visa, Mastercard or PayPal account.

ATRA will remit fees on your behalf, and you will receive a separate membership package directly from CTRA.

Reduced CTRA Rates with ATRA Membership:

- CTRA Professional Member Annual Fee: \$100.00

Chapter Affiliation

ATRA maintains three chapters that govern and address local needs. Your provincial membership allows you to select a chapter affiliation to belong to.

To obtain notices of meetings, network in person, and participate in educational opportunities, select the ATRA chapter closest to your geographical location.

- North Chapter
- Central Chapter
- South Chapter

Meetings and professional development opportunities may be hosted in a variety of venues located within each chapter. Attendance at chapter meetings include the option of virtual attendance from the convenience of your own community. Watch for meeting notices and announcements from your designated chapter.

Communities of Practice (CoP)

CoPs are groups of individuals who share a concern or passion for a subject and interact with one another on an ongoing basis to expand their knowledge and develop their expertise. Select one or several communities of practice that you have an interest in. ATRA uses this information to connect therapists, assistants, educators, and researchers into communities of practice. ATRA recommends members join in CTRA's efforts at establishing Communities of Practice across Canada.

Indirect Client Service

Administration/Manager: primary focus of activities is on management of services, or the development of policy and/or programs.

Client Caseload Management: primary focus of activities is the management of client services across the health care continuum, specifically the coordination of multiple services as required for client care.

Professional Practice Lead: a leadership role that provides professional practice expertise and promotes practice excellence.

Education: the focus of activities is directed at providing post-secondary teaching to individuals registered in formal education programs.

Research: the focus of activities is on knowledge development and dissemination of research.

Direct Client Service

Children and Youth: services provided to clients from birth to age seventeen.

Developmental Disabilities: services to individuals with mental or physical impairments originating prior to the age of 18 and lasting throughout their lifespan.

General Physical Health: services provided to clients with a variety of general physical health issues.

Geriatric: services provided to elderly clients.

Mental Health & Addictions: services provided to clients with a variety of mental health and addiction challenges.

Rehabilitation - Cardiovascular and Respiratory: services provided to clients with a variety of cardiovascular and/or respiratory health issues.

Rehabilitation - Digestive/Metabolic/Endocrine: service provided to clients with e.g., diabetes, obesity, etc.

Rehabilitation - Musculoskeletal: services provided to clients with a variety of musculoskeletal health issues.

Rehabilitation - Neurological: services provided to clients with a variety of neurological health issues, e.g., brain injury, spinal cord injury, stroke.

Palliative Care: services provided to clients with the aim of relieving suffering and improving the quality of life for persons who are living with or dying from advanced illness or who are bereaved.

Other: area of practice not identified. Please specify.

Personal Information

Name: Your membership record must contain your full legal name. Enter your full legal name exactly as it appears on your government-issued identification.

Gender: Indicate your self-identified gender by selecting your choice of those provided in the dropdown list. ATRA uses this information to provide statistics to Alberta Labour without disclosing personal information.

Date of Birth: Enter your date of birth using the format of month/day/year. ATRA uses this information to provide statistics to Alberta Labour without disclosing personal information.

Contact Information: Provide your current telephone number(s), primary email secondary email, and residential address so we may contact you regarding your application and membership services. If this information changes after your application is processed, you must make these changes in your *My ATRA Account*.

Employment Information

Information on employment status, employer, facility, and area of practice are collected by ATRA to assist with workforce planning purposes and to facilitate professional networking. Please do not submit information on positions for which you are not provided with compensation, such as volunteer positions.

Employment Status in the Field of Recreation Therapy

Indicate only one employment category for each employment.

Permanent Full Time is one who works more than thirty-six (36) hours per week with regularly scheduled shifts of a continuing nature.

Permanent Part Time is one who works less than thirty-six hours per week with scheduled shifts of a continuing nature.

Temporary is one who is hired on a temporary basis for a full-time or part-time position: (a) For a specific job of more than three (3) months and less than twelve (12) months; or (b) To replace a

full-time or part-time employee who is on a leave due to illness or injury where the employee on leave has indicated to the employer that the duration of such leave will be in excess of three (3) months.

Casual is one who works to provide service in the absence of another employee or to provide additional support.

Self Employed is one who works more than thirty-six (36) hours per week independently without anyone overseeing his or her activities and provides their own workspace.

Unemployed employment in the field of recreation therapy is currently not a requirement for professional membership.

Note: If at any time throughout the year your employment status changes after your membership has been processed, change this information on your *My ATRA Account*

Primary Employer Information

ATRA recognizes that members may have more than one position in the field of recreation therapy and accommodates up to three employment situations.

Primary employment refers to the job with the greatest number of hours worked either with an employer or in a self-employment arrangement. If applicable, complete the required information in the same manner on your secondary and third employment.

Employer/Facility

Employer: e.g., Alberta Health Services, Lifestyle Options, etc.

Employment Facility: List the name of the facility where you primarily work, e.g., Cypress View LTC. If your employment requires you to provide service in a number of facilities, record the facility that is considered your *home base*.

Employment Position

Select the job title that best describes your position.

Administration/Manager: major role is management.

Client Caseload Management: the primary focus of activities is the management of client services across the health care continuum, specifically the coordination of multiple services as required for client care.

Professional Practice Lead: a leadership role that provides professional practice expertise and promotes practice excellence.

Educator: major role is as an educator for students enrolled in a therapeutic recreation program or course.

Recreation Therapist: primary role is the direct service provision of recreation therapy services as defined by ATRA's Standards of Practice and [Competency Profile](#).

Recreation Therapy Assistant: primary role is the direct service provision of recreation therapy services under the direct supervision of a recreation therapist (Helgeson, Suintjens & Cyr, 2021).

Researcher: major role is in knowledge development and dissemination of research.

Employment Agency

Select the agency that best describes the organization where you work a majority of the time.

Acute Care Hospital: a health care facility that offers a range of inpatient and outpatient health care services (e.g., medical, surgical, psychiatry, etc.) available to the target population.

Association/Government: an organization or government that deals with regulation, advocacy, policy development, program development, research and/or the protection of the public at a national, provincial/territorial regional or municipal level.

Community Recreation/Leisure Service Provider: a municipality that offers recreation therapy services as defined by ATRA's Standards of Practice and [Competency Profile](#).

Day Program: a therapeutic recreation program of activities offered in a community setting designed to promote well-being through social and health-related services for adults and respite services for caregivers (CCADS, 2017).

Home Care: publicly funded personal and health care services including recreation therapy for clients of all ages living in a private residence or other residential settings (AHS, 2017).

Mental Health Hospital/Facility: health care facility that has as its primary focus the post-acute, inpatient and/or outpatient care of individuals with mental health issues and illness.

Owner/Operator Professional Practice: a community-based professional practice/business organized around the delivery of recreation therapy services by a single professional. Support staff may be involved; however, the health professional is the focus of service provision.

Post Secondary Education Institution: a post-secondary institution either a university or a college with a primary focus on the delivery of formal education.

Public Health Centre: a community-based organization that may be the first point of contact for clients, offering a range of primary health, social and/or other non-institutional based services, including recreation therapy, i.e., Primary Care Network.

Rehabilitation Hospital/Clinic: health care facility that has as its primary focus the acute or post-acute, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation of individuals.

Residential Care Facility: refers to a licensed or regulated health facility that provides 24-hour skilled or immediate nursing care (that is, qualified nurses are on-site and available to respond immediately, if required). Includes long-term care facilities, nursing homes, special care homes, homes for the aged.

Supportive Living Residence: a non-institutional or institutional community setting that integrates a shared living environment with varying degrees of supportive services of the following types: supervision, housekeeping, personal care, meal service, transportation social and recreation opportunities.

Other: employment type not otherwise described. Please specify.

Employment Practice Area

Indirect Client Service

Administration/Manager: the primary focus of activities is on management of services, or the development of policy and/or programs.

Client Caseload Management: the primary focus of activities is the management of client services across the health care continuum, specifically the coordination of multiple services as required for client care.

Professional Practice Lead: a leadership role that provides professional practice expertise and promotes practice excellence.

Education: the focus of activities is directed at providing post-secondary teaching to individuals registered in formal education programs.

Research: the focus of activities is on knowledge development and dissemination of research.

Direct Client Service

Children and Youth: services provided to clients from birth to age seventeen.

Developmental Disabilities: services to clients with mental or physical impairments originating prior to the age of 18 and lasting throughout their lifespan.

General Physical Health: services provided to clients with a variety of general physical health issues.

Geriatric: services provided to elderly clients.

Mental Health & Addictions: services provided to clients with a variety of mental health and addiction challenges.

Rehabilitation - Cardiovascular and Respiratory: services provided to clients with a variety of cardiovascular and/or respiratory health issues.

Rehabilitation - Digestive/Metabolic/Endocrine: services provided to clients with e.g., diabetes, obesity, etc.

Rehabilitation - Musculoskeletal: services provided to clients with a variety of musculoskeletal health issues.

Rehabilitation - Neurological: services provided to clients with a variety of neurological health issues, e.g., brain injury, spinal cord injury, stroke.

Palliative Care: services provided to clients with the aim of relieving suffering and improving the quality of life for persons who are living with or dying from advanced illness or who are bereaved.

Other: area of practice not identified. Specify.

Employment Related Affiliations

ATRA collects this information to identify which affiliations or additional credentials add value to client service delivery. This information will inform post secondary educational institutions providing therapeutic recreation programs and our Continuing Competence Program of membership competence needs.

Select the associations, societies, or organizations that you are currently affiliated with that support your recreation therapy practice.

- Alberta Association on Gerontology
- Alberta Fitness Leadership Certification Association
- Canadian Centre on Activity and Aging
- Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology
- List other affiliations not identified. If more than one is to be listed, separate with a comma.

Membership Fees

You must pay the application fee to begin the application process. ATRA accepts online payment options with your Visa, Mastercard or PayPal account. If you cancel your application or your application is not accepted, your application fee will be refunded.

Prorated Fee Schedule

ATRA's professional membership year begins April 1 of each year and extends to March 31 of the following year. Applicants are encouraged to apply for membership at any time of the year. Your first membership fee is prorated based on when you apply:

Apply between January 1 and March 31 [Membership will expire March 31 of the following year]	\$300.00 + GST
Apply on or after April 1 [Membership will expire March 31 of the following year]	\$300.00 + GST
Apply on or after July 1 [Membership will expire March 31 of the following year]	\$225.00 + GST
Apply between October 1 and December 31 [Membership will expire March 31 of the following year]	\$150.00 + GST

PLEASE NOTE: ATRA student members transitioning to ATRA professional membership are eligible for a significant member benefit.

If you are an ATRA student member in good standing within the membership year you graduate, the professional membership fee is waived for the remainder of the same membership year.

- The first step is to send an email to: support@alberta-tr.ca and ask for a Discount Code. Please include in the Subject Line of your email: Request for Student Member to Professional Member Discount Code. After you receive your code, you may begin the online application form for professional membership. You must meet all the professional membership criteria and submit all required documentation before your application is approved. *If you are not an ATRA student member, this benefit does not apply to you.*

What to Expect After You Become a Member

Letter of Welcome

This letter contains information on how to sign into the Member Section of the ATRA website and access your membership certificate and payment receipt. Links to pertinent guiding documents are provided for your convenience.

Professional Membership Verification

Verifying your professional membership with ATRA may be required for employment, income tax, or other purposes.

ATRA offers several options to assist you with these requests.

1. Sign into your *My ATRA Account* in the Member Section of the website and download your membership certificate and receipt as needed.
2. Direct those requesting verification to search for your name on ATRA's Professional Member Verification webpage. You will find this located in the [Member Verification](#) section of the ATRA website.
3. Send a request for assistance to: support@alberta-tr.ca.

Membership Renewal

ATRA requires all members to renew their membership once a year every year. ATRA's membership year is April 1 of each year and extends to March 31 of the following year. In February of each year, you will receive notice to renew your *annual membership fees* at a cost of \$300.00 + GST.

Continuing Competence Program

Ongoing *professional membership* status requires mandatory participation in ATRA's Continuing Competence Program to ensure Albertans receive therapeutic recreation services from capable, knowledgeable, and skilled practitioners who are able to apply advances in the profession. ATRA professional members are required to acquire 45 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) in a 3-year period aligning with ATRA's membership year beginning April 1 of each year and extends to March 31 of the following year.

1. Professional members who are on a leave of absence (LOA) from work or are not working in the TR field for any reason during this 3-year period are required to achieve a minimum of 45 CEUs to ensure competency is maintained. With the change from a 1-year to 3-year Continuing Competence Program, this will allow flexibility for attaining CEUs and maintaining competency despite breaks in practice.
2. Professional members can identify their personal reporting CEU Cycle [three-year time period] within their personal *My ATRA Account*. A link will connect you to your CEU Reporting Form. You will have access to this when approved for membership.
3. **Record:** ATRA recommends recording all professional activities identified as qualifying for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) on a regular basis and to attain a minimum of 15 CEUs per year with the goal of achieving 45 CEUs by the end of the 3-year Continuing Competence Program period.
4. **Evidence:** Professional members are required to retain proof or some evidence of their learning activities that support CEU attainment. It may include conference brochures, CEU statements from education sessions, conference/education receipts, certificates of participation, copies of presentations, etc.
5. **Audit:** Every three years, your personal Continuing Competence Program is subject to a random audit to verify your professional commitment to maintaining and enhancing your practice to protect and serve the public. You must retain records from your portfolio for a minimum of four years.
6. **Accountability:** In the event you do not meet the CEU requirements of 45 units in a three-year period, your membership status will be recorded as *Professional Member with Conditional CEU Status*.
 - a. You will develop and submit a *Continuing Competence Learning Plan* to the competencedirector@alberta-tr.ca indicating how the CEU shortfall will be made up. ATRA's Continuing Competence Director or designate will review your plan and provide guidance as needed.
 - b. In addition to meeting your CEU shortfall, you will need to continue to attain 45 CEUs for the concurrent 3-year period. *Conditional CEU Status* will remain in effect until the CEU shortfall has been met and authorized by the Continuing Competence Director.
 - c. Information related to participation in an individual's Continuing Competence Plan is maintained in accordance with the Alberta Government's *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) and kept confidential between the ATRA, Board of Directors, staff, and the individual.

Appendix A: Application Checklist, Professional Membership

Name: _____ Date: _____

Application Process:

Applying for professional membership requires you to complete the online application, pay fees and submit the required documents. Complete this Checklist electronically OR download, complete it by hand and scan. You will find this Checklist in Appendix A of this Manual and the Application Section of ATRA's website.

Email is the only acceptable ways to send the required supporting documents to complete your application. Submissions sent by mail, fax or courier will not be accepted.

Include with your checklist:

1. Completed Checklist

- Include this completed checklist, so the *Membership Review Committee* know which documents will be sent separately.

2. Identification

- If your name on any document submitted with your application is different from the name under which you are applying, you must also include a photocopy of documentation to support the name change. An example of documentation is a government-issued marriage certificate or a Legal Change of Name Document.

3. Pathway 1. Academic Pathway

- Practicum Placement Form(s)
- Official transcripts from the university(s) to confirm your educational course content.

4. Pathway 2. Certification Pathway

- Entry B** applicants only: ATRA will directly verify your current certification with NCTRC. You will be notified if additional supporting documentation is necessary.

Send email to: application@alberta-tr.ca

ATRA's Membership Review Committee approves all applications for professional membership. The Committee meets **once per month** to review all completed applications. Incomplete applications **will not** be reviewed until **all** of the required information, documents and fees are received. Once membership is approved, it will generally be processed within 7 to 10 business days of the committee meeting. If there are any issues with the membership, the Membership Review Committee will contact the applicant for further information.

Appendix B: Return to Practice Re-Application Form

Applicants who were once previous ATRA professional members (academic credentials previously assessed by ATRA) AND have been on a leave of absence from ATRA of over three consecutive years or more.	
Date:	Applicant Name:
Previous ATRA Membership Number: (If you do not have this information, you can request support@alberta-tr.ca to locate the data.)	
Primary Email:	Secondary Email:
Phone #:	Address:
Complete all areas, print, attach required documents and email to support@alberta-tr.ca .	
<input type="checkbox"/> ATRA Membership a requirement for present employment Provide evidence in the form of a letter from your employer or other means that ATRA professional membership commitments and benefits are required for your present employment.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Description Attach a copy of your current job description that outlines roles and responsibilities that aligns with the Competency Profile of Recreation Therapists in Alberta. You will find this profile in the <i>About</i> section of the ATRA website.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Resume Attach a copy of your resume that outlines professional experience and roles related to therapeutic recreation, health, and professional practice.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continuing Competence Evaluation Submit the ATRA Continuing Competence Form listing forty-five (45) Continuing Education Units. Find this document in the <i>Application Process Documents</i> page of the Applications section of the ATRA website.	

Send email to support@alberta-tr.ca.

References

- Alberta Health Services. (2017). *What is Home Care?* Retrieved from AHS website: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/cc/page15488.aspx>
- Canadian Coalition of Adult Day Services. (2017). *What is a Day Program.* Retrieved from the CCADS website <http://ccadsonline.ca/>
- Helgason, E., Suntjens, B. and Cyr, C. (2016). *Guidelines for the assignment of therapeutic recreation services to assistants and aids.* Third edition. Calgary Alberta: Alberta Therapeutic Recreation Association.