

## **Hiring a Qualified Recreation Therapy Professional Position Paper**

Therapeutic Recreation (TR) is a relatively new profession in Ontario. As the only professional association that represents TR professionals in the province, Therapeutic Recreation Ontario (TRO) recognizes that many long-standing practitioners who work in recreation therapy have a variety of educational backgrounds and experiences and have had professional development opportunities throughout their careers to develop their TR professional skills.

To support a growing profession, several post-secondary institutions developed post-graduate certificate, diploma and degree programs in therapeutic recreation over the last 20 years. Several of the post-secondary institutions have voluntarily submitted their TR curriculum to TRO's Practice Review Committee to determine alignment with the Essential Competency Framework, a document which identifies the competencies TR professionals need to be ready to enter practice and throughout their career. Click [here](#) to learn more.

With the evolution of these education programs, it is TRO's position that those who are entering the profession are best qualified to deliver quality recreation therapy programs when they are educated through a recreation therapy post-secondary program.

In lieu of any type of regulation legislation and in order to recognize a high, consistent standard of education and professional competency, TRO developed a credential that demonstrates excellence in the profession. The credential, known as a Registration designation, recognizes that the practitioner has achieved the appropriate education, practical experience and professional contribution credits and is eligible for membership with TRO.

TRO recognizes that the long term care sector has [legislation](#) that allows for broader hiring criteria, including a post-secondary diploma or degree in recreation and leisure studies, therapeutic recreation, kinesiology or other related field from a community college or university. However, **to ensure employers are hiring the best qualified candidates, TRO recommends as a minimum standard that all employers include in their hiring criteria for recreation therapy positions the following: membership with TRO and eligibility for Registration with TRO.**

### **About Membership with TRO:**

The following outlines the membership categories with TRO. Please note that new applicants cannot apply to become a Registered Professional with TRO. They must first apply for Professional membership and then apply for the Registration designation. If successful, they will be awarded one of two designations, depending on their education: R/TRO or R/TRO DIP.

## **Membership Categories**

### **Professional Membership (\$198)**

- Currently practicing, supervising, educating, or on leave from the field of TR for a maximum of three years
- OR a recent graduate from a Therapeutic Recreation/Recreation/Leisure Services program (eligible for one year after official convocation date), and

- Currently not registered through TRO's provincial registration process

**NOTE:** New membership applicants must submit proof of education (photocopy of degree/diploma, photocopy of education transcript)

### **Registered (R/TRO, R/TRO DIP) Professional Membership (\$198)**

- Meets all of the above criteria for a TRO Professional/Student Membership, and
- An individual who holds current Registration designation (R/TRO, R/TRO DIP) through TRO's provincial process.

### **Associate Membership (\$165)**

- Individuals who are interested in furthering the objectives of TRO and the TR profession, but are ineligible for Registered Professional, Professional or Student memberships.

### **Student**

- Individuals who are pursuing a degree or diploma in Therapeutic Recreation/Recreation/Leisure Studies on a full-time basis (must provide proof of this full-time status - i.e. transcript, tuition receipt, acceptance letter etc.)

### **Education Institution Membership EIM (\$300)**

- Recognized post-secondary education institution offering courses in Therapeutic Recreation (TR)
- Includes TRO Student Memberships for all of your TR students as well as one faculty TRO Membership

Prospective members can apply for the following TRO membership categories on TRO's [Become a Member](#) page.

### **About Registration with TRO:**

The [Registration designation](#) demonstrates excellence in the field of Therapeutic Recreation. Registered Professional TRO members have demonstrated a minimum standard in TR experience, formal education, professional affiliation, and professional contributions. For more information about the designation, click [here](#).

The Registration Maintenance process demonstrates accountability to the Therapeutic Recreation profession in the province of Ontario through continuing with professional contributions after receiving the Registration designation. The maintenance program requires that every five years, designation holders must renew their Registration by providing proof of continued learning. This proof is obtained by collecting a minimum 25 professional contribution points within that timeframe.

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