

**TITLE 16 OCCUPATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING**  
**CHAPTER 20 PHYSICAL THERAPISTS**  
**PART 6 PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS**

**16.20.6.1 ISSUING AGENCY:** New Mexico Physical Therapy Board.  
[05-15-96; Rn, 16 NMAC 20.7, 10-15-97; 16.20.6.1 NMAC - Rn & A, 16 NMAC 20.6.1, 08-31-00]

**16.20.6.2 SCOPE:** All individuals who wish to practice physical therapy in the state of New Mexico.  
[05-15-96; Rn, 16 NMAC 20.7,10-15-97; 16.20.6.2 NMAC - Rn & A, 16 NMAC 20.6.2, 08-31-00]

**16.20.6.3 STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** Section 61-12-12 NMSA 1978.  
[03-29-83 . . . 05-15-96; Rn, 16 NMAC 20.7, 10-15-97; 16.20.6.3 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.6.3, 08-31-00]

**16.20.6.4 DURATION:** Permanent.  
[05-15-96; Rn, 16 NMAC 20.7, 10-15-97; 16.20.6.4 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.6.4, 08-31-00]

**16.20.6.5 EFFECTIVE DATE:** May 1, 1996, unless a later date is cited at the end of a section.  
[03-29-83 . . . 05-15-96; Rn, 16 NMAC 20.7, 10-15-97; A, 10-15-97; 16.20.6.5 NMAC - Rn & A, 16 NMAC 20.6.5, 08-31-00]

**16.20.6.6 OBJECTIVE:** The objective of Part 6 of Chapter 20 is to establish regulations for physical therapist assistants.  
[05-15-96; Rn, 16 NMAC 20.7, 10-15-97; A, 10-15-97; 16.20.6.6 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.6.6, 08-31-00]

**16.20.6.7 DEFINITIONS:** “Referring physical therapist” is the licensed therapist who sets the plan of care for the patient being treated by the physical therapist assistant.  
[10-15-97; 16.20.6.7 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.6.7, 08-31-00; A, 1-12-08]

**16.20.6.8 PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS:**

A. A physical therapist assistant may work only under the direction and supervision of a New Mexico physical therapist who is licensed pursuant to Section 61-12-10, (A) and (B) of the Physical Therapy Act. The referring physical therapist shall assume full responsibility for the professional activities of the assistant, which are undertaken pursuant to his/her direction or supervision.

B. A physical therapist may not be responsible for the direction and supervision of more than three (3) full-time physical therapist assistants of three (3) FTE’s (full-time equivalency, totaling one hundred twenty (120) work hours per week) requiring supervision, including temporary physical therapists, temporary physical therapist assistants, or full-licensed physical therapist assistants.

C. A physical therapist may supervise more than three (3) physical therapist assistants provided combined FTE’s do not exceed one hundred twenty (120) hours per week.

D. The direction and supervision of the physical therapist assistant shall require the following:

- (1) the referring physical therapist is responsible for the patient’s care;
- (2) when physical therapy services are being provided, a licensed physical therapist must be on call and readily available for consultation by phone, electronic mail or cellular phone when the referring physical therapist leaves the area or facility, for any length of time, or the referring physical therapist must appoint a stand in physical therapist as a supervising therapist until such time the referring physical therapist returns to the facility;
- (3) the referring physical therapist will formulate a current written plan of care for each patient; the referring physical therapist will review the plan of care at least every thirty (30) days;
- (4) the physical therapist should only delegate interventions to physical therapist assistant’s that are competent and trained in these interventions; the physical therapist assistant shall not:

- (a) interpret referrals;
- (b) specify or perform definitive (initial, progress/re-evaluation, discharge) evaluative and assessment procedures;
- (c) alter goals or a plan of care; or
- (d) determine when to utilize the physical therapist assistant to perform selected interventions of physical therapy care.

- (5) the physical therapist assistant may sign daily notes without the physical therapist’s co-

signing; each daily treatment note in a patient's permanent record completed by a physical therapist assistant must include the name of the referring physical therapist; and

(6) the physical therapist assistant shall respond to acute changes in the patient's physiological state; the physical therapist assistant shall notify the referring physical therapist of those changes prior to the next treatment session.

[03-29-83; 02-19-88; 08-01-89; 05-08-91; 09-03-92; 05-01-96; 16 NMAC 20.6.8 - Rn & A, 16 NMAC 20.7, 10-15-97; 16.20.6.8 NMAC - Rn, 16 NMAC 20.6.8, 08-31-00; A, 03-02-06; A, 1-12-08; A, 4-15-10; A, 8/16/10; A, 09-30-14; A, 02-27-15]

**HISTORY of 16.20.6 NMAC:**

**Pre-NMAC History:** The material in this part was derived from that previously filed with the commission of public records, state records center and archives:

Rule 83-5, Physical Therapist Assistants, filed 3-29-83;

Rule 88-5, Physical Therapist Assistants, filed 2-19-88;

Rule 89-5, Physical Therapist assistants, filed 8-1-89;

Rule 91-5, Physical Therapist Assistants, filed 5-8-91;

Rule 92-5, Physical Therapist Assistants, filed 9-3-92.

**History of the Repealed Material:** [Reserved]

**Other History:**

Rule 92-5, Physical Therapist Assistants (filed 9-3-92) was renumbered and reformatted to 16 NMAC 20.7, effective 5-15-96.

16 NMAC 20.7, Physical Therapist Assistants (filed 5-1-96) was renumbered to 16 NMAC 20.6, effective 10-15-97.

16 NMAC 20.6, Physical Therapist Assistants (filed 09-30-97) was renumbered, reformatted, amended and replaced by 16.20.6 NMAC effective 8-31-00.