



State Licensure

The American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists (the Academy) is the premier organization representing professionals in the field of orthotics and prosthetics. The Academy is dedicated to promoting professionalism and advancing the standards of patient care through education, literature, research, advocacy, and collaboration.

In keeping with its mission, the Academy supports the highest standards for clinicians to ensure quality comprehensive orthotic and/or prosthetic services for the public. Therefore, the Academy believes:

1. **Licensure benefits the patient** by requiring orthotic or prosthetic services are provided only by professionals who meet specific education and experience criteria. The education standards endorsed by the Academy are embodied within the “Standards and Guidelines for an Accredited Educational Program for the Orthotic and Prosthetic Practitioner,” developed by the National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education (NCOPE). These standards were recognized by the American Medical Association's Council on Medical Education in 1993, and by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). For experiential requirements, the Academy endorses the completion of an NCOPE-accredited residency program prior to certification.
2. **Licensure requirements are in the best interests of the profession** in that they give official status to the practice of the profession, establish a recognized scope of practice for orthotists and prosthetists, and will be recognized by other healthcare practitioners.

The Academy endorses state licensure of orthotists and prosthetists, as exemplified in the American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics & Pedorthics, Inc. (ABC) model licensure act, as the preferred method of establishing patient protection mechanisms through legislated state standards, provided those standards are equivalent to those developed by NCOPE and recognized by CAAHEP.