

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE
GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY
BOARD RULE CHAPTER 490-9 CODE OF ETHICS,
BOARD RULE 490-9-.02 PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT FOR PHYSICAL
THERAPISTS, BOARD RULE 490-9-.03 PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT FOR
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS, BOARD RULE 490-9-.04
DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS AND BOARD RULE 490-9-.06 TELEHEALTH
AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

RULE 490-9-.02. Principles of Conduct for Physical Therapists
RULE 490-9-.03. Principles of Conduct for Physical Therapist Assistants
RULE 490-9-.04. Disciplinary Sanctions
RULE 490-9-.06. Telehealth

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the authority set forth below, the Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy (hereinafter “Board”) proposes amendments to Board Rule Chapter 490-9 Code of Ethics, Board Rules 490-9-.02 Principles of Conduct for Physical Therapists, 490-9-.03 Principles of Conduct for Physical Therapist Assistants, 490-9-.04 Disciplinary Sanctions and 490-9-.06 Telehealth (hereinafter “proposed rule(s)”).

This notice, an exact copy of the proposed rule(s), and a synopsis of the proposed rule(s) are being sent to all persons who have requested, in writing, to be included on a notification list. This notice, an exact copy of the proposed rule(s), and a synopsis of the proposed rule(s) may also be reviewed during normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except official State holidays, at the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 3920 Arkwright Rd., Suite 195, Macon, Georgia 31210. The documents will also be available for review on the Board’s website at <https://sos.ga.gov/page/georgia-state-board-physical-therapy-rules-and-laws>. Copies may also be requested by contacting the Board office at (404) 424-9966.

The public will have an opportunity to comment upon and provide input into the proposed rule(s) at a public hearing to be held at **9:30 a.m., September 29, 2026**, via WebEx. Please see Board’s website for information on how to join the hearing via WebEx.

Interested parties affected by the proposed rule(s) may submit written comments to the Board no later than close of business on **September 22, 2026**. Written comments must be legible, signed, contain contact information from the maker (address, telephone number, email address), and addressed to Todd Zandrowicz, Division Director, Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy, 3920 Arkwright Rd., Suite 195, Macon, Georgia 31210. Written comments may be sent via email to PLB-Healthcare2@sos.ga.gov.

During the public hearing, anyone may present data, make a statement, comment, or offer a viewpoint or argument, whether orally or in writing. Lengthy statements or statements of a considerable technical or economic nature, as well as previously recorded messages, must be submitted for the official record. Oral statements will be limited to five (5) minutes per person.

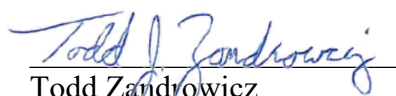
The Board voted to post this Notice of Intent at its meetings on July 22, 2025, and July 21, 2026. The Board also voted that the formulation and adoption of the proposed rule(s) does not impose an excessive regulatory cost on any licensee, and any cost to comply with the proposed rule(s) cannot be reduced by a less expensive alternative that fully accomplishes the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19, 43-1-20.1, 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-1-33, 43-33-2, 43-33-3, 43-33-10, 43-33-11, 43-33-13.1, 43-33-18, 43-33-19. Additionally, the Board voted that it was neither legal nor feasible in meeting the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19, 43-1-20.1, 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-1-33, 43-33-2, 43-33-3, 43-33-10, 43-33-11, 43-33-13.1, 43-33-18, 43-33-19 to adopt or implement differing actions for businesses as listed in O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4(a)(3)(A), (B), (C) and (D). The formulation and adoption of the proposed rule(s) will impact every licensee in the same manner and each licensee is independently licensed in the physical therapy profession.

According to the Department of Law of the State of Georgia, the Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy has the authority to adopt the proposed rule(s) pursuant to authority contained in O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19, 43-1-20.1, 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-1-33, 43-33-2, 43-33-3, 43-33-10, 43-33-11, 43-33-13.1, 43-33-18, 43-33-19.

For further information, contact the Board office at (404) 424-9966.

This notice is given in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4.

This the 26 day of August, 2026.



Todd Zandrowicz
Division Director
Professional Licensing Boards Division

Posted: 08.26.26

**SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES OF TO THE
GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY
BOARD RULE CHAPTER 490-9 CODE OF ETHICS,
BOARD RULE 490-9-.02 PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT FOR PHYSICAL
THERAPISTS**

Purposes: The purpose of the rule amendment is to amend the name of the rule to “Code of Ethics” rather than “Principles of Conduct” as required by statute. The Board removed all disciplinary matters from Rules 490-9-.02 and 490-9-.03 and moved them to Rule 490-9-.04 Disciplinary Sanctions. The Board referenced national standards and guidelines for ethical and practical considerations in the practice of physical therapy.

Rule 490-9-.02 ~~Principles of Conduct~~Code of Ethics for Physical Therapists

Any individual who is licensed as a physical therapist shall abide by the following ethical standard:

- (1) Act with consideration, within the scope of physical therapy, for the rights and dignity of all individuals.
 - (a) The physical therapist shall hold as confidential information obtained while acting in a professional capacity.
 - (b) The physical therapist shall provide optimal physical therapy care for all patients regardless of patient race, gender, age, religion, disability or sexual preference.
 - (c) The physical therapist should balance considerations of the patient's physical, psychological and socioeconomic welfare in professional decisions and actions and document these considerations in the patient's record of care.
 - (d) The physical therapist shall communicate and interact with patients and all persons encountered in a professional capacity with courteous regard and timeliness.
 - ~~(e) The physical therapist shall not engage in any behavior that constitutes harassment or abuse of a patient, professional colleague or associate.~~
- (2) Comply with the laws and regulations governing the practice of physical therapy in the State of Georgia.
 - ~~(a) Physical therapists are to practice (consultation, evaluations, treatment, research, education, administration and preventive care) in accordance with the state practice act.~~
- (3) Accept responsibility for the exercise of sound judgment.

- (a) When implementing treatment, physical therapists shall assume the responsibility for evaluating that individual; planning, implementing, and supervising the therapeutic program; reevaluating and changing the program; and maintaining adequate records of the case, including progress reports.
- (b) When performing wellness and preventative services, physical therapists shall assume responsibility for providing optimal patient care.
- (c) When the individual's needs are beyond the scope of the physical therapist's expertise, the physical therapist shall so inform and assist the individual in identifying a qualified person to provide the necessary services.
- (d) When the physical therapists judge that benefit can no longer be obtained from their services, they shall so inform the individual receiving the services. It is unethical to initiate or continue services that, in the therapist's judgment, either cannot result in beneficial outcome or are contraindicated.
- (e) The physical therapist's ability to make independent judgment must not be limited or compromised by professional affiliations, including employment relationships.
- (f) Physical therapists are not to delegate to a less qualified person any activity which requires the unique skills, knowledge, and judgment of a physical therapist.
- (g) The primary responsibility for physical therapy care assisted by supportive personnel rests with the supervising physical therapist. Adequate supervision requires, at a minimum, that a supervising physical therapist perform the following activities:
 - 1. Establish effective channels of written and oral communication;
 - 2. Interpret and communicate critical information about the patient to the supportive personnel;
 - 3. Perform an initial evaluation of the patient;
 - 4. Develop a plan of care, including short and long-term goals;
 - 5. Delegate appropriate tasks to supportive personnel;
 - 6. Assess the supportive personnel's competence to perform assigned tasks;
 - 7. Provide supervision in accordance with the law, the patient's condition, and the specific situation;
 - 8. Identify and document precautions, special programs, contraindications, goals, anticipated progress, and plans for re-evaluation;

9. Re-evaluate the patient, modify the plan of care when necessary, perform the final evaluation, and establish a follow-up plan.
- (h) Physical therapists are obligated to advise their employer(s) of any practice which causes a physical therapist to be in conflict with the ethical principles of this section. Physical therapists are to attempt to rectify any aspect(s) of their employment which is in conflict with the principles of this section.
- ~~(4) Seek remuneration for their services that is deserved and reasonable.~~
- ~~(a) Fees for physical therapy services should be reasonable for the service performed, considering the setting in which it is provided, practice costs in the geographic area, judgment of other organizations, and other relevant factors.~~
- ~~(b) Physical therapists shall not:~~
- ~~1. directly or indirectly request, receive, or participate in the dividing, transferring, assigning, or rebating of an unearned fee;~~
 - ~~2. profit by means of a credit or other valuable consideration, such as an unearned commission, discount, or gratuity in connection with furnishing of physical therapy services;~~
 - ~~3. use influence upon individuals, or families of individuals under their care for utilization of any product or service based upon the direct or indirect financial interest of the physical therapist.~~
- ~~(54) Provide accurate information to the consumer about the profession and the services provided.~~
- ~~(a) Physical therapists are not to use, or participate in the use of, any form of communication containing false, plagiarized, fraudulent, misleading, deceptive, or unfair statements.~~
- ~~(65) Accept the responsibility to protect the public and the profession from unethical, incompetent, or illegal acts to include, but not limited to, reporting any activity that appears to be unethical, incompetent, or illegal to the proper authorities.~~
- ~~(a) Physical therapists shall report any activity which appears to be unethical, incompetent, or illegal to the proper authorities.~~
- ~~(b) Physical therapists shall not participate in any arrangement in which patients are exploited due to the referring sources enhancing their personal incomes as a result of~~

~~referring, prescribing, or recommending physical therapy or a specific physical therapy practice.~~

~~(c) If a physical therapist is involved in an arrangement with a referring source in which income is derived from the services, the physical therapist has an obligation to disclose to the patient, within the scope of the state law, the nature of the income.~~

(6) Demonstrate integrity in all professional relationships that are directly related to physical therapy.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19, 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-33-3, 43-33-10, 43-33-13.1 and 43-33-18.

**SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES OF TO THE
GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY
BOARD RULE CHAPTER 490-9 CODE OF ETHICS,
BOARD RULE 490-9-.03 PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT FOR PHYSICAL THERAPIST
ASSISTANTS**

Purposes: The purpose of the rule amendment is to amend the name of the rule to “Code of Ethics” rather than “Principles of Conduct” as required by statute. The Board removed all disciplinary matters from Rules 490-9-.02 and 490-9-.03 and moved them to Rule 490-9-.04 Disciplinary Sanctions. The Board referenced national standards and guidelines for ethical and practical considerations in the practice of physical therapy.

Rule 490-9-.03 ~~Principles of Conduct~~Code of Ethics for Physical Therapist Assistants

Any individual who is licensed as a physical therapist assistant shall abide by the following ethical standards:

- (1) Act with consideration, within the scope of physical therapy, for the rights and dignity of all individuals.
 - (a) The physical therapist assistant shall hold as confidential information obtained while functioning as a physical therapist assistant.
 - (b) The physical therapist assistant shall provide optimal physical therapy care for all patients delegated by the physical therapist regardless of patient race, gender, age, religion, disability or sexual preference.
 - (c) The physical therapist assistant should be aware of the patient's physical, psychological and socioeconomic welfare in decisions and actions taken while rendering treatment.
 - (d) The physical therapist assistant shall communicate and interact with patients and all persons encountered with courteous regard and timeliness.
 - ~~(e) The physical therapist assistant shall not engage in any behavior that constitutes harassment or abuse of a patient, professional colleague or associate.~~
- (2) Comply with the laws and regulations governing the practice of physical therapy in the State of Georgia.
 - ~~(a) Physical therapist assistants are to practice only under the supervision of a licensed physical therapist.~~
- (3) Accept responsibility for the exercise of sound judgement.

- (a) Upon accepting delegation from a physical therapist, the physical therapist assistant shall provide services within the plan of care established by the physical therapist.
- (b) When the individual's needs are beyond the scope of the physical therapist assistant's expertise, the physical therapist assistant shall inform the supervising physical therapist.
- (c) When the physical therapist assistant determines that a change in the plan of care is needed, the assistant will contact the supervising physical therapist and request reevaluation of the patient's status.
- (d) When the physical therapist assistant determines that the patient has received maximum benefits from physical therapy, he/she shall so inform the supervising physical therapist.
- ~~(e) Physical therapist assistants are not to delegate to a less qualified person any activity which requires the unique skills, knowledge, and judgement of a physical therapist assistant.~~
- (~~f~~e) The primary responsibility for physical therapy care assisted by supportive personnel rests with the supervising physical therapist. Adequate supervision is the responsibility of both the physical therapist and the physical therapist assistant. To ensure appropriate supervision, the physical therapist assistant is expected to:
 - 1. Maintain effective channels of written and oral communication.
 - 2. Communicate critical information about the patient to the supervising physical therapist in a timely manner.
 - 3. Function within the established plan of care.
 - 4. Identify and document treatment activities and all special occurrences.
 - 5. Request re-evaluation of the patient and/or modification of the plan of care when necessary.
- (~~g~~f) Physical therapist assistants are obligated to advise their employer(s) of any practice ~~which that~~ causes a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant to be in conflict with the ethical principles of this section. Physical therapist assistants are to attempt to rectify any aspect(s) of their employment ~~which that~~ is in conflict with the principles of this section.
- ~~(4) Seek remuneration for their services that is deserved and reasonable.~~

- ~~(a) Physical therapist assistants shall not:~~
- ~~1. Directly or indirectly request, receive, or participate in the dividing, transferring, assigning, or rebating of an unearned fee;~~
 - ~~2. Profit by means of a credit or other valuable consideration, such as an unearned commission, discount, or gratuity in connection with furnishing of physical therapy services;~~
 - ~~3. Use influence upon individuals, or families of individuals under their care for utilization of any product or service based upon the direct or indirect financial interest of the physical therapist assistant;~~
- (54) Provide accurate information to the consumer about the profession and the services provided.
- ~~(a) Physical therapist assistants are not to use, or participate in the use of, any form of communication containing false, plagiarized, fraudulent, misleading, deceptive, or unfair statements.~~
- (65) Accept the responsibility to protect the public and the profession from unethical, incompetent, or illegal acts.
- ~~(a) Physical therapist assistants shall report any activity which appears to be unethical, incompetent, or illegal to the proper authorities.~~
- ~~(b) Physical therapist assistants shall not participate in any arrangement in which patients are exploited due to the referring sources enhancing their personal incomes as a result of referring, prescribing, or recommending physical therapy or a specific physical therapy practice.~~
- ~~(c) If a physical therapist assistant is involved in an arrangement with a referring source in which income is derived from the services, the physical therapist assistant has an obligation to disclose to the patient, within the scope of the State Law, the nature of the income.~~
- (6) Demonstrate integrity in all professional relationships that are directly related to physical therapy.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19, 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-33-3, 43-33-10, 43-33-13.1 and 43-33-18.

**SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES OF TO THE
GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY
BOARD RULE CHAPTER 490-9 CODE OF ETHICS,
BOARD RULE 490-9-.04 DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS**

Purposes: The purpose of the rule amendment is to update the rule to align with statutory language to reference the 'Health Care Practitioners Truth and Transparency Act', clarifies more clearly the that which may constitute unprofessional conduct as it relates to patient medical records, and addresses any potential violations of the requirements of the 'Patient Self-Referral Act.' A recent Medical Board case was discussed whereafter the Board voted to include language that regards the potential for sanctions for any sexual conduct related to the licensee's practice of physical therapy regardless of the consent of the parties involved.

Rule 490-9-.04. Disciplinary Sanctions

- (1) ~~When providing physical therapy treatment following appropriate consultation,~~
unprofessional and unethical conduct shall include but is not limited to the following:
- (a) Failing to adhere to the Code of Ethics for Physical Therapists and Physical Therapists Assistants, as codified in Rules [490-9-.01](#) through [490-9-.03](#).
 - (b) Delegating to an aide or unlicensed person any physical therapy task other than those codified in Chapter 490-8.
 - (c) Failing to provide continuous, immediate and physically present supervision of the aide or unlicensed person when designated tasks are performed.
 - (d) Performing the technique of dry needling without having met the training and competency requirements as codified in Rule [490-9-.05](#).
 - (e) Failing to adhere to the ~~'Consumer Information and Awareness Act'~~'Health Care Practitioners Truth and Transparency Act' as codified in O.C.G.A. § [43-1-33](#) which sets forth the type of licensure information that must be included on the name badges, facility notices, and advertisements.~~in relation to conspicuously posting and affirmatively communicating your type of regulatory designator (PT, PTA), level of education, and training to all current and prospective patients by way of a name badge, facility notices and advertisements.~~
 - (f) Failing to provide an evaluation on each patient and establishing a physical therapy diagnosis.

- (g) Failing to formulate and record in the patient's record a treatment program based upon the evaluation and any other information available.
- (h) Failing to perform periodic evaluation of the patient and documenting the evaluations in the patient's record and to make adjustments to the patient's treatment program as progress warrants.
- (i) Failing to maintain an accurate medical record or providing false information to any third party in the provision of physical therapy~~formulate and record a patient's discharge plan.~~
- (j) Directly or indirectly requesting, receiving or participating in the division, transferring, assigning, rebating or refunding of fees or remuneration earned, in cash or kind, for bringing or referring a patient. For purposes of this Rule:
 1. No physical therapist, physical therapy assistant, employee or agent thereof acting on his behalf, shall enter into or engage in any agreement or arrangement with any individual, entity, or an employee or agent thereof acting on his behalf, for the payment or acceptance or compensation in any form for the referral or recommending of the professional services of either. This prohibition includes any form of fee division or charging of fees solely for referral of a patient.
 2. This prohibition shall include a rebate or percentage of rental agreement or any arrangement or agreement whereby the amount received in payment for furnishing space, facilities, equipment or personnel services.
 3. Provided further, that this Rule shall not preclude a discount, waiver of co-payment or other reduction in price of services by a physical therapist if the reduction in price is properly disclosed to the consumer and third party payers and appropriately reflected in the costs claimed or charges made.
 4. Violating the Patient Self-Referral Act, O.C.G.A. § 43-1B-1 et seq., with respect to a referral from a patient to a provider of a designated health care service in which the physical therapist has an investment interest.
- (k) ~~Should it be determined that a licensee is in violation of this rule and the statutes referenced herein, the Board may impose any disciplinary or corrective measure allowed by law.~~ Failing to comply with the continuing education requirements as set forth in Rule 490-4-.02.

- (l) Committing an act of sexual intimacy, abuse, misconduct, or exploitation related to the licensee's practice of physical therapy, regardless of consent.
 - (m) Failing to obey an investigative subpoena.
 - (n) Engaging in any behavior that constitutes harassment or abuse of a patient. The physical therapist or physical therapist assistant shall not engage in any behavior that constitutes harassment or abuse of a professional colleague or associate while engaged in the practice of physical therapy.
- (2) Should it be determined that a licensee is in violation of this rule and the statutes referenced herein, the Board may impose any disciplinary or corrective measure allowed by law.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19, 43-1-20.1, 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-1-33, 43-33-3, 43-33-10, 43-33-11, 43-33-18 and 43-33-19.

**SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES OF TO THE
GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY
BOARD RULE CHAPTER 490-9 CODE OF ETHICS,
BOARD RULE 490-9-.06 TELEHEALTH**

Purposes: The purpose of the rule amendment is to ensure consistency and compliance with regulatory requirements of the Joint Secretary Rules and reflect that this rule applies equally to persons who hold a Compact Privilege to practice in the State of Georgia.

Rule 490-9-.06. Telehealth

- (1) The purpose of this rule is to define and establish guidelines for the practice of telehealth by the spectrum of technologies involving interactive physical therapy services.
- (2) Telehealth has been defined as the use of electronic communications to provide and deliver a host of health-related information and health care services including, but not limited to physical therapy related information and services, over large and small distances. Telehealth encompasses a variety of health care and health promotion activities including, but not limited to, education, advice, reminders, interventions, and monitoring of interventions. All provisions of Physical Therapy utilizing telehealth mechanisms must:
 - (a) conform to all Federal and State statutes, rules, regulations and policies governing the practice of physical therapy in the State of Georgia.
 - (b) With the exception of practices and services identified in O.C.G.A. § [43-33-11\(d\)](#), individuals providing physical therapy via telehealth to a patient/client in the State of Georgia must be licensed or hold a Compact Privilege in the State of Georgia.
 - (c) A physical therapist that is licensed in another jurisdiction of the United States may provide a consultation via telehealth to a physical therapist in the state of Georgia.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-25, 43-33-2, 43-33-10 and 43-33-11.

**RULES
OF
GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY
CHAPTER 490-9
CODE OF ETHICS
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Rule 490-9-.02 Code of Ethics for Physical Therapists

Any individual who is licensed as a physical therapist shall abide by the following ethical standard:

- (1) Act with consideration, within the scope of physical therapy, for the rights and dignity of all individuals.
 - (a) The physical therapist shall hold as confidential information obtained while acting in a professional capacity.
 - (b) The physical therapist shall provide optimal physical therapy care for all patients regardless of patient race, gender, age, religion, disability or sexual preference.
 - (c) The physical therapist should balance considerations of the patient's physical, psychological and socioeconomic welfare in professional decisions and actions and document these considerations in the patient's record of care.
 - (d) The physical therapist shall communicate and interact with patients and all persons encountered in a professional capacity with courteous regard and timeliness.
- (2) Comply with the laws and regulations governing the practice of physical therapy in the State of Georgia.
- (3) Accept responsibility for the exercise of sound judgment.
 - (a) When implementing treatment, physical therapists shall assume the responsibility for evaluating that individual; planning, implementing, and supervising the therapeutic

program; reevaluating and changing the program; and maintaining adequate records of the case, including progress reports.

- (b) When performing wellness and preventative services, physical therapists shall assume responsibility for providing optimal patient care.
- (c) When the individual's needs are beyond the scope of the physical therapist's expertise, the physical therapist shall so inform and assist the individual in identifying a qualified person to provide the necessary services.
- (d) When the physical therapists judge that benefit can no longer be obtained from their services, they shall so inform the individual receiving the services. It is unethical to initiate or continue services that, in the therapist's judgment, either cannot result in beneficial outcome or are contraindicated.
- (e) The physical therapist's ability to make independent judgment must not be limited or compromised by professional affiliations, including employment relationships.
- (f) Physical therapists are not to delegate to a less qualified person any activity which requires the unique skills, knowledge, and judgment of a physical therapist.
- (g) The primary responsibility for physical therapy care assisted by supportive personnel rests with the supervising physical therapist. Adequate supervision requires, at a minimum, that a supervising physical therapist perform the following activities:
 - 1. Establish effective channels of written and oral communication;
 - 2. Interpret and communicate critical information about the patient to the supportive personnel;
 - 3. Perform an initial evaluation of the patient;
 - 4. Develop a plan of care, including short and long-term goals;
 - 5. Delegate appropriate tasks to supportive personnel;
 - 6. Assess the supportive personnel's competence to perform assigned tasks;
 - 7. Provide supervision in accordance with the law, the patient's condition, and the specific situation;
 - 8. Identify and document precautions, special programs, contraindications, goals, anticipated progress, and plans for re-evaluation;
 - 9. Re-evaluate the patient, modify the plan of care when necessary, perform the final evaluation, and establish a follow-up plan.

(h) Physical therapists are obligated to advise their employer(s) of any practice which causes a physical therapist to be in conflict with the ethical principles of this section. Physical therapists are to attempt to rectify any aspect(s) of their employment which is in conflict with the principles of this section.

- (4) Provide accurate information to the consumer about the profession and the services provided.
- (5) Accept the responsibility to protect the public and the profession from unethical, incompetent, or illegal acts to include, but not limited to, reporting any activity that appears to be unethical, incompetent, or illegal to the proper authorities.
- (6) Demonstrate integrity in all professional relationships that are directly related to physical therapy.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19, 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-33-3, 43-33-10, 43-33-18, and 43-33-13.1.

Rule 490-9-.03 Code of Ethics for Physical Therapist Assistants

Any individual who is licensed as a physical therapist assistant shall abide by the following ethical standards:

- (1) Act with consideration, within the scope of physical therapy, for the rights and dignity of all individuals.
 - (a) The physical therapist assistant shall hold as confidential information obtained while functioning as a physical therapist assistant.
 - (b) The physical therapist assistant shall provide optimal physical therapy care for all patients delegated by the physical therapist regardless of patient race, gender, age, religion, disability or sexual preference.
 - (c) The physical therapist assistant should be aware of the patient's physical, psychological and socioeconomic welfare in decisions and actions taken while rendering treatment.
 - (d) The physical therapist assistant shall communicate and interact with patients and all persons encountered with courteous regard and timeliness.
- (2) Comply with the laws and regulations governing the practice of physical therapy in the State of Georgia.
- (3) Accept responsibility for the exercise of sound judgement.
 - (a) Upon accepting delegation from a physical therapist, the physical therapist assistant shall provide services within the plan of care established by the physical therapist.
 - (b) When the individual's needs are beyond the scope of the physical therapist assistant's expertise, the physical therapist assistant shall inform the supervising physical therapist.
 - (c) When the physical therapist assistant determines that a change in the plan of care is needed, the assistant will contact the supervising physical therapist and request reevaluation of the patient's status.
 - (d) When the physical therapist assistant determines that the patient has received maximum benefits from physical therapy, he/she shall so inform the supervising physical therapist.
 - (e) The primary responsibility for physical therapy care assisted by supportive personnel rests with the supervising physical therapist. Adequate supervision is the responsibility

of both the physical therapist and the physical therapist assistant. To ensure appropriate supervision, the physical therapist assistant is expected to:

1. Maintain effective channels of written and oral communication.
 2. Communicate critical information about the patient to the supervising physical therapist in a timely manner.
 3. Function within the established plan of care.
 4. Identify and document treatment activities and all special occurrences.
 5. Request re-evaluation of the patient and/or modification of the plan of care when necessary.
- (f) Physical therapist assistants are obligated to advise their employer(s) of any practice that causes a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant to be in conflict with the ethical principles of this section. Physical therapist assistants are to attempt to rectify any aspect(s) of their employment that is in conflict with the principles of this section.
- (4) Provide accurate information to the consumer about the profession and the services provided.
- (5) Accept the responsibility to protect the public and the profession from unethical, incompetent, or illegal acts.
- (6) Demonstrate integrity in all professional relationships that are directly related to physical therapy.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19, 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-33-3, 43-33-10, 43-33-18 and 43-33-13.1.

Rule 490-9-.04. Disciplinary Sanctions

- (1) Unprofessional and unethical conduct shall include but is not limited to the following:
 - (a) Failing to adhere to the Code of Ethics for Physical Therapists and Physical Therapists Assistants, as codified in Rules [490-9-.01](#) through [490-9-.03](#).
 - (b) Delegating to an aide or unlicensed person any physical therapy task other than those codified in Chapter 490-8.
 - (c) Failing to provide continuous, immediate and physically present supervision of the aide or unlicensed person when designated tasks are performed.
 - (d) Performing the technique of dry needling without having met the training and competency requirements as codified in Rule [490-9-.05](#).
 - (e) Failing to adhere to the 'Health Care Practitioners Truth and Transparency Act' as codified in O.C.G.A. § [43-1-33](#) which sets forth the type of licensure information that must be included on the name badges, facility notices, and advertisements.
 - (f) Failing to provide an evaluation on each patient and establishing a physical therapy diagnosis.
 - (g) Failing to formulate and record in the patient's record a treatment program based upon the evaluation and any other information available.
 - (h) Failing to perform periodic evaluation of the patient and documenting the evaluations in the patient's record and to make adjustments to the patient's treatment program as progress warrants.
 - (i) Failing to maintain an accurate medical record or providing false information to any third party in the provision of physical therapy.
 - (j) Directly or indirectly requesting, receiving or participating in the division, transferring, assigning, rebating or refunding of fees or remuneration earned, in cash or kind, for bringing or referring a patient. For purposes of this Rule:
 1. No physical therapist, physical therapy assistant, employee or agent thereof acting on his behalf, shall enter into or engage in any agreement or arrangement with any individual, entity, or an employee or agent thereof acting on his behalf, for the payment or acceptance or compensation in any form for the referral or recommending of the professional services of either. This prohibition includes any form of fee division or charging of fees solely for referral of a patient.

2. This prohibition shall include a rebate or percentage of rental agreement or any arrangement or agreement whereby the amount received in payment for furnishing space, facilities, equipment or personnel services.
 3. Provided further, that this Rule shall not preclude a discount, waiver of co-payment or other reduction in price of services by a physical therapist if the reduction in price is properly disclosed to the consumer and third party payers and appropriately reflected in the costs claimed or charges made.
 4. Violating the Patient Self-Referral Act, O.C.G.A. § 43-1B-1 et seq., with respect to a referral from a patient to a provider of a designated health care service in which the physical therapist has an investment interest.
- (k) Failing to comply with the continuing education requirements as set forth in Rule 490-4-.02.
 - (l) Committing an act of sexual intimacy, abuse, misconduct, or exploitation related to the licensee's practice of physical therapy, regardless of consent.
 - (m) Failing to obey an investigative subpoena.
 - (n) Engaging in any behavior that constitutes harassment or abuse of a patient. The physical therapist or physical therapist assistant shall not engage in any behavior that constitutes harassment or abuse of a professional colleague or associate while engaged in the practice of physical therapy.
- (2) Should it be determined that a licensee is in violation of this rule and the statutes referenced herein, the Board may impose any disciplinary or corrective measure allowed by law.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19, 43-1-20.1, 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-1-33, 43-33-3, 43-33-10, 43-33-11, 43-33-18 and 43-33-19.

Rule 490-9-.06. Telehealth

- (1) The purpose of this rule is to define and establish guidelines for the practice of telehealth by the spectrum of technologies involving interactive physical therapy services.
- (2) Telehealth has been defined as the use of electronic communications to provide and deliver a host of health-related information and health care services including, but not limited to physical therapy related information and services, over large and small distances. Telehealth encompasses a variety of health care and health promotion activities including, but not limited to, education, advice, reminders, interventions, and monitoring of interventions. All provisions of Physical Therapy utilizing telehealth mechanisms must:
 - (a) conform to all Federal and State statutes, rules, regulations and policies governing the practice of physical therapy in the State of Georgia.
 - (b) With the exception of practices and services identified in O.C.G.A. § [43-33-11\(d\)](#), individuals providing physical therapy via telehealth to a patient/client in the State of Georgia must be licensed or hold a Compact Privilege in the State of Georgia.
 - (c) A physical therapist that is licensed in another jurisdiction of the United States may provide a consultation via telehealth to a physical therapist in the state of Georgia.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-25, 43-33-2, 43-33-10 and 43-33-11.