

Model Administrative Rules for State Massage Regulatory Boards

Continuing Education Requirements for Renewal of Licensure

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NOTE: The term "massage therapy" is broadly construed in these model rules to include practices under the descriptors of "bodywork" or "somatic therapy" where applicable to state law.

RULE 001 CONTINUING EDUCATION DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to this Section:

- (1) Approved continuing education: A professional development activity taught or facilitated by an individual or institutional provider based in subject matter that relates to the practice of massage therapy, and that is within one or more of the descriptions of Acceptable Subject Matter as set forth in Rule 003(a). Such providers are not required to be approved by the Board.
- (2) Continuing education: Professional development activities that enhance and expand the skills, knowledge, and attitudes of massage therapists that enable them to render competent service to clients, the profession and the public.
- (2) Distance learning: Courses taken by home study, whether delivered synchronously or asynchronously by computer-based means, videotape, audiotape or printed materials. Licensees shall demonstrate achievement of learning objectives and completion of course requirements to the provider before credit is given.
- (3) One "contact hour" of continuing education: At least 50 minutes of any one clock hour during which the student participates in a professional development activity in the physical presence of an instructor, or is actively engaged in a distance learning activity designed and delivered by a provider. One semester credit hour at a regionally-accredited college or university shall be equivalent to 16 contact hours.
- (4) Professional ethics: A system of conduct guided by principles which are intended to ensure the safe and effective practice of massage therapy. Acceptable subject matter for required professional ethics courses may include: compliance with the

statutes and administrative rules that govern the practice of massage therapy in this state, management of the client/therapist relationship, boundary functions, professional communication skills, conflict resolution, cultural diversity issues, and standards of practice.

RULE 002 CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

- (a) When renewing a license, licensees shall document that they have completed at least [xx] contact hours of approved continuing education during the immediately preceding licensure period, pursuant to *[citation to statute]*.
- (b) Distance learning, as defined in Rule 001 of this Section, shall not comprise more than half of the required continuing education hours per licensure period.
- (c) Licensees shall document that they have completed at least three contact hours of continuing education in professional ethics as defined in Rule 001 of this Section, out of the minimum of [xx] hours of approved continuing education required for license renewal. This may be obtained through supervised classroom instruction or distance learning.
- (d) Licensees shall ensure that each professional development activity for which they claim credit on their application for renewal of licensure is consistent with the definitions and requirements set forth in this Section.
- (e) Licensees must attend at least 90% of the published contact hours of an in-person professional development activity to be granted credit by the provider. Partial course credit shall not be granted.
- (f) The Board may audit licensees at random to ensure compliance with these requirements.

RULE 003 SUBJECT MATTER CRITERIA FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

These standards apply to courses and other professional development activities offered by providers of continuing education that have subject matter and learning objectives that relate directly to the practice of massage therapy. If there are certain practices that have been deemed exempt from massage therapy licensure in the governing statutes, professional development activities involving such practices may still be eligible for license renewal if they meet the criteria set forth below.

(a) The following areas of subject matter are deemed acceptable for license renewal:

- (1) Applications of massage therapy for specific needs, conditions or client populations;
- (2) Theory, philosophy or methodology of manual, energetic or movement-based techniques which are utilized with clients for therapeutic, educational or relaxation purposes;

- (3) The structure, function, kinesiology or pathologies of the body;
- (4) Client assessment protocols; skills for client record keeping and case management; strategies for interfacing with other licensed health care providers;
- (5) Theory or practice of ergonomics as applied to therapists or clients;
- (6) The use of external adjunctive agents such as water, light, sound, heat, cold or topical applications of plant or mineral-based substances;
- (7) The use of mechanical devices or adjunctive tools that mimic the actions made possible by the hands;
- (8) Body-centered or somatic psychology, psychophysiology, interpersonal skills – which may include communication skills, boundary functions, and the phenomena of transference, countertransference and projection;
- (9) Standards of practice; professional ethics; compliance with the statues and administrative rules that govern the practice of massage therapy in this state; compliance with Federal regulations such as HIPAA and ADA;
- (10) Strategies for the marketing or development of massage therapy practices; procedures for third-party reimbursement;
- (11) Hygiene; standard precautions and methods of infectious disease control; organization and management of the treatment environment;
- (12) Development or analysis of research protocols for massage therapy;
- (13) First Aid or Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation;
- (14) Participation in supervision groups, facilitated by a licensed massage therapist with at least ten years of professional experience or another licensed health care provider; or
- (15) Teacher training, which may include areas of knowledge, skills or attitudes set forth in the *Core Competencies for Massage Therapy Teachers*, published by the Alliance for Massage Therapy Education.

(b) The following areas of subject matter are deemed unacceptable for continuing education courses:

- (1) Practices outside the scope of massage therapy which are prohibited pursuant to *[citation to governing statute or rule]*;
- (2) Psychological counseling or diagnostic methods, emotional release-based cathartic therapies, or regression-oriented therapies;
- (3) Courses taken by licensees for personal enrichment or self-care, including dance, yoga, Pilates, t'ai chi, martial arts, strength training or fitness classes, meditation, astrology, religious or spiritual practices;

- (4) Ancillary business administration skills, including bookkeeping, accounting, tax preparation, use of computer hardware or software, technical writing or graphic design;
- (5) Apprenticeship with another massage therapist or another licensed health care provider;
- (6) Teaching experiences where the licensee is either a presenter or a teaching assistant, and where the licensee is compensated for their teaching role;
- (7) Volunteer service work, or participation in professional membership organizations;
- (8) Provision of massage therapy services as part of a research study; or
- (9) Therapeutic sessions where the licensee is in the role of client receiving the professional service.