

269 CMR 5.00: Code Of Professional Ethics & Standards Of Professional Practice

By the [Division of Professional Licensure](#)

- 5.01: [Code of Professional Ethics](#)
 - 5.02 [Standards of Professional Practice](#)
 - 5.03 [Standards for Documentation](#)
-

5.01: Code of Professional Ethics

A Massage Therapist shall:

- (1) Represent his or her educational and professional qualifications honestly to all clients and the public;
- (2) Inform clients of the limitations of the Licensee's practice;
- (3) Consistently take measures to improve professional knowledge and competence by a regular assessment of personal and professional strengths and weaknesses through continuing education training;
- (4) Communicate honestly, including, but not limited to, respecting the client's right to treatment with informed and voluntary consent, either verbal or written, and to refuse, modify, or terminate treatment regardless of prior consent;
- (5) Keep the client well informed of procedures and methods that will be employed during the session;

(6) Maintain the confidentiality of all client information, unless law or court order mandates disclosure [or if the Massage Therapist reasonably believes that an individual is in serious foreseeable or imminent harm;](#)

(7) Respect the inherent worth and act in the best interest of all clients;

(8) Respect the client's autonomy;

(9) Take precautions to do no harm to the physical, mental, and emotional well being of clients and associates;

(10) Respect the client's physical, emotional social and intellectual boundaries with regard to privacy, disclosure, exposure, emotional expression, beliefs, and client's reasonable expectations of professional behavior;

(11) Maintain the right to refuse to treat any person in order to protect the mental, physical, emotional and professional boundaries and safety of the practitioner;

(12) Conduct all business and professional activities with honesty and integrity;

(13) Not engage in an interest, activity, or influence that conflicts with the practitioner's obligation to act in the best interest of the client;

(14) Refuse to accept gifts or benefits that are intended to influence a referral or treatment or that are purely for personal gain and not for the good of the client; and

(15) Report to the Board if the Massage Therapist has first-hand knowledge or evidence indicating any unethical, incompetent, or illegal act that has been committed by another Licensee.

(16) Report to the Board if the Massage Therapist has first-hand knowledge or evidence of unlicensed practice.

[Top](#)

5.02 Standards of Professional Practice

When engaged in the practice of Massage, a Massage Therapist shall:

(1) Perform a written or verbal intake interview with the client to determine whether any contraindications to Massage therapy exist and whether modifications, including pressure, technique, and duration of treatment, are appropriate;

(2) Acknowledge the limitations of, and contraindications for, Massage therapy;

(3) Provide only those services that the Licensee is qualified to perform and that are within the scope of practice of a Massage Therapist;

(4) Refer the client to other professionals or services if the treatment or service is beyond the Massage Therapist's scope of practice;

(5) If a plan of care or treatment is appropriate, explain the plan to the client, to others designated by the client, and to appropriate professionals with client permission;

(6) Provide Massage therapy services that meet or exceed the generally-accepted practice of the profession;

(7) Practice Massage therapy in accordance with accepted safe, sanitary and hygienic standards, including, but not limited to, following all standards of practice for disease control;

(8) Receive the written permission of either a parent or guardian for providing Massage therapy services to a client under 18 years of age prior to providing those services;

(9) Provide Massage therapy services to a client under 18 years of age only when a responsible adult chaperone is in the room, unless the parent or guardian waives this requirement in writing;

(10) Not perform Massage therapy in bars and/or adult entertainment facilities;

(11) Not initiate or engage in any behavior that is sexually suggestive or engage in any sexual conduct or activities with a client;

(12) Not knowingly aid and abet another person to use the term "Massage" as part of a professional title when that person is not authorized to do so; knowingly employ a person not authorized to use the regulated professional title in the course of such employment; advertise as a massage therapist, also known as a muscular therapist, myotherapist, masseur, masseuse or a Massage Therapy Establishment unless a person in its employment holds a valid license under M.G.L. c. 135; combine advertising for a licensed massage therapy service with advertising for an escort or dating services; use any sexually suggestive language or images in advertising; advertise as performing Massage in a form in which the person has not received training, or of a type that is not licensed or otherwise recognized by law or administrative rule; or advertise by using any term other than therapeutic Massage or Massage Therapy to refer to the service. The term "advertise" shall include, but not be limited to, the issuance of any card, sign, or device to another; the causing, permitting, or allowing of any sign or marking on or in any building, vehicle or structure; advertising in a newspaper or magazine or on television or on the internet; any listing or advertising in a directory

under a classification or heading that includes the word "massage" or commercials broadcast by airwave transmission.

(13) Unless prohibited by law, have the right to refuse to treat any person or part of the body at the Licensee's discretion;

(14) Unless prohibited by law, be allowed to pool or apportion fees received with other members of a business entity in accordance with any business agreement; and

(15) Adhere to the standards of documentation as provided in 269 CMR 5.03 *et seq.*

[Top](#)

5.03 Standards for Documentation.

(1) The Massage Therapist and client shall agree upon the purpose of the Massage session;

(2) No documentation is required if the Massage session is for general relaxation, given during sports or other kind of events, or given during a public demonstration as in chair Massage, unless the client is under 18 years of age. If the client is less than 18 years of age, the therapist must obtain written permission of either a parent or a guardian for the minor client's receipt of Massage therapy;

(3) If a written plan of treatment is requested or required, the client file shall include the following [contemporaneously created](#) documentation:

(a) The initial evaluation, which shall include:

1. The client's name, age, and gender;

2. Date of the session;

3. Pertinent medical history, including, but not limited to:

a. Client sensitivities and allergies;

b. Medical diagnoses, if available, and the source of the diagnosis;

c. Contraindications; and

d. Medications as disclosed by the client.

(b) Progress notes signed by a Massage Therapist rendering the Massage therapy, which shall include:

1. Subjective information, including the area of complaint as stated by the client and the date of onset;

2. Objective information, including any observations and objective testing, if applicable;

3. Ongoing assessments, if applicable;

4. Actions taken by the Massage Therapist;

5. Client response to Massage therapy treatment.

(c) A plan of treatment, if applicable, consisting of:

1. Goals or desired outcome of the treatment;

2. Modalities to be rendered;

3. Frequency and duration of treatment;

4. Referral to other professionals, if indicated; and

5. Client self-help education and instruction.

[Top](#)

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

M.G.L.c. 13, §13; c. 112, §§ 61 through 65E and §§227 through 235.