

Effective: June 05, 2023

Curriculum Guidelines for Applications

Policy: 2023-06-05

Purpose:

To clarify for Massage Therapy Schools the Board Approved curriculum for a minimum 650 hours of study as set forth in G.L. c. 13, s. 99; 269 CMR 2.01.

Policy:

190 hours in the Anatomy and Physiology of the Body, Pathology, and Kinesiology; 300 hours in supervised Massage Theory and Technique; and 60 hours in Ethics, Professionalism and Business Practices. Additionally, the 650-hour course of study shall include 100 hours of unpaid and supervised clinical internship or externship experience; The hours are further defined so that the curriculum of an approved massage school shall include:

Anatomy and Physiology including the structure and function of the following body systems:

- Integumentary System,
- Musculoskeletal System
- Cardiovascular System
- Blood Lymphatic and Immune systems
- Nervous system & Endocrine system
- Respiratory system
- Digestive system
- Urinary system
- Reproductive system

Pathology: The study of common pathologies encountered in the practice of massage and how they impact the application of massage, specific indications, contraindications, and precautions to the application massage in the presence of these pathologies.

Kinesiology: Location, identification and palpation of the bellies and attachments of the major muscles of external movement of the body.

300 Hours of Massage Theory and Technique: To include the following learning objectives in the areas of:

Effects of touch and massage techniques:

- Identify and describe the physiological effects of touch and specific massage.
- Identify and describe potential emotional effects of touch and specific massage techniques.
- Define and describe the interpersonal and physical components of a therapeutic environment.

- Develop competency in musculoskeletal palpation and pain assessment skills relating to the appropriate application of massage techniques.
- Develop a safe and effective treatment plan, based on client goals, assessment findings, and understanding of effects of massage.
- Write clear, concise, and accurate notes of client treatment sessions.
- Demonstrate commonly recognized techniques that are within the scope of practice and training for massage therapy disciplines. Demonstrate techniques that are appropriate for each body area, including endangerment sites.
- Demonstrate the use of draping during treatment as a professional boundary.
- Identify and practice appropriate methods of sanitation and personal hygiene in the performance of massage sessions.
- Pursuant to 269 CMR 3.01(2)(e), 300 supervised classroom hours in Massage Theory and Technique, 150 hours of which meet the definition of “massage” in M.G.L. c. 112, §§ 227.

Self-care:

- Identify and describe the effect of physical fitness and lifestyle habits on the performance of massage techniques.
- Identify and demonstrate biomechanical skills necessary for the safe and effective performance of massage techniques.

60 Hours of Ethics and Professionalism

Professionalism and Communication:

- Define and demonstrate active listening, rapport, empathy, and feedback.
- Identify strategies to effectively deal with emotional and behavioral client responses to massage therapy treatment.
- Describe the principles of conflict resolution and apply conflict resolution skills effectively in the client-therapist relationship.
- Define and discuss the differences between a personal and a professional relationship.
- Discuss the importance of professional boundaries Describe techniques for establishing and maintaining safe and respectful boundaries with clients.
- Identify and describe the purpose of a code of ethics. Identify and describe the purpose of Standards of Practice specific to massage therapy. ☐ Identify confidentiality principles related to massage therapy.
- Identify common ethical situations in massage therapy and strategies to effectively resolve ethical issues.
- Identify and design effective methods for time management, client scheduling, and maintenance of the work environment.
- Outline an employment strategy, including short and long-term professional goals.
- Create, maintain, and identify legal requirements for retaining client, financial and tax records.
- Demonstrate knowledge of federal, state, and local regulations as they pertain to massage therapy practice.
- Identify the elements of effective job search and marketing materials (such as resumes, brochures, business cards).
- Identify and discuss common methods of marketing for massage therapy.
- Identify strategies to develop and maintain a client base.

- Discuss the value of ongoing education and skill development as a professional.
- Describe methods for identifying advanced training programs to enhance performance, knowledge, and skills.
- Identify the role of professional associations for massage therapists.

100 hours of unpaid and supervised clinical or internship experience:

A minimum of 60 hours of which must be dedicated to the actual hands-on practice of massage therapy, supervised by a licensed massage or qualified health care professional. The other clinic or internship hours may be dedicated to assessment and treatment planning, treatment note preparation, clinic management and or externship practice supervised by a school approved on-site supervisor and evaluated by a school faculty member. The 100 hours may be dedicated entirely to hands-on practice.