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**POLICY ON DISTANCE EDUCATION IN
MASSACHUSETTS MASSAGE THERAPY SCHOOLS**

The Board of Registration of Massage Therapy (“Board”) sets minimum standards for training and curriculum for Massage Therapy schools in the Commonwealth. G.L. c. 13, s. 99; 269 CMR 2.01. To be approved by the Board, a course of study must “include a minimum of 650 classroom hours or an equivalent number of credit hours of supervised instruction at a Licensed Massage School, including 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 and 228(a), and including 100 hours of unpaid and supervised clinical or externship experience.” 269 CMR 3.01(2)(e),

The Board defines “distance education” to mean “a method of education which occurs when a student and instructor are not physically in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. Distance education uses one or more distance technologies to support regular and substantive interactions between the instructor and students.”

At meetings on May 24, 2021 and June 7, 2021, the Board voted that massage therapy educational programs in Massachusetts may include distance education in accordance with the following parameters.

- 1) When seeking the Board’s approval of a massage therapy course of study, the massage school must identify courses that will include distance education. Further details about the proposed distance education shall be provided if requested by the Board;
- 2) No more than 50% of the required 650 hours of theory and classroom work may be completed through distance education;
- 3) The instruction of hands-on technique(s) and clinical hours should not be delivered through distance education;
- 4) All assessments shall be conducted in person; and
- 5) Schools shall obtain written acknowledgment from students of the approximate number of hours that will be provided by the school via distance education prior to or at the time of the student enrolling in the program.

This policy supersedes and replaces the Board’s “Policy to Allow Massage Schools the Option of Remote Clinical Hours for Massage Therapy Students during the COVID State of Emergency.”