The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Department of Public Health

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Lieutenant Governor

**Kiame Mahaniah, MD, MBA**

Secretary

**Robert Goldstein, MD, PhD**

Commissioner

From: Board of Registration of Chiropractors

To: Licensed Chiropractors

Re: **Guidance for Chiropractic Practice in Massachusetts by Students Enrolled in their**

**Final Academic Year of Chiropractic College**

Date: October 2, 2025

**I. Purpose**

The Board of Registration of Chiropractors issues this guidance to implement M.G.L. c. 112, s. 91A and to clarify the responsibilities of both students and preceptor chiropractors. Nothing in this guidance shall supersede specific requirements applicable to chiropractic practice and chiropractic facilities.

**II. Statutory Authorization**

On November 10, 2024, Governor Maura Healey signed into law [An Act Relative to Strengthening Massachusetts' Economic Leadership](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2024/Chapter238)  (chapter 238 of the acts of 2024) which allows qualified chiropractic students to practice chiropractic under the direct supervision of a preceptor chiropractor, provided all statutory requirements are met. The statutory requirements are codified in M.G.L. c. 112, s. 91A (“Section 91A”) which states:

1. *For the purposes of this section, “preceptor chiropractor” shall mean a registered chiropractor authorized to practice chiropractic in the commonwealth who is:*

 *(i) designated by an approved chiropractic school or college as an instructor; and*

 *(ii) the chiropractor of record at the chiropractic facility to which a student extern is assigned.*

*(b) An individual that is a current student enrolled in the final academic year at a chiropractic school or college approved by the board may practice the full scope of chiropractic under the direct supervision of a preceptor chiropractor; provided, that the student extern shall have:*

*(i) completed all academic and clinical class requirements for the degree of doctor of chiropractic from a chiropractic school or college approved by the board; and*

*(ii) passed at least 3 of the 4 levels of the examinations administered by the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners.*

*(c) The student extern shall practice under the direct supervision and license of the preceptor chiropractor and shall not be authorized to sign legal documents generally signed by the preceptor chiropractor; provided, however, that the board, in its discretion, may authorize a student extern to practice chiropractic pursuant to this section at more than 1 chiropractic facility. An individual may be authorized by the board to practice chiropractic as a student extern for not less than 4 weeks and not more than 16 weeks during the student’s final academic year.*

**III. Qualification and Responsibilities of Student Externs**

To practice under Section 91A, the student extern must:

1. Be a student currently enrolled in the final academic year at a chiropractic school or collegeaccredited by the Council on Chiropractic Education.
2. Have passed all the academic and clinic requirements set by their school to be eligible for the school’s preceptorship program.
3. Have passed Parts I, II and III of the national board examination administered by the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners.
4. Receive written authorization to practice from the Board before practicing as a student extern. The Board’s written authorization will state the start and end dates of the authorized preceptorship, the name of the facilities in which the student is authorized to practice, and the name of the preceptor chiropractor.

During the preceptorship, the student extern must:

1. Practice chiropractic only in a licensed chiropractic facility under the direct supervision of their preceptor chiropractor.
2. Practice under Section 91A authorization for no less than four (4) weeks and no more than sixteen (16) weeks.
3. Verbally disclose that they are a student to the patient and comply with their school’s badge, name tag, and other identification requirements.
4. Practice chiropractic in compliance with the laws and regulations governing chiropractic in Massachusetts. Student extern must not present themselves as a person who can practice chiropractic without supervision.
5. Not sign legal documents generally signed by the preceptor chiropractor.

**IV. Qualifications and Responsibilities of Preceptor Chiropractor**

To serve as a preceptor chiropractor, an individual must:

1. Be a currently licensed Massachusetts chiropractor designated by an approved chiropractic school or college as an instructor, and
2. Be the chiropractor of record at the chiropractic facility where the student extern is assigned.

In order to allow a student extern to practice under the authorization of Section 91A, a preceptor chiropractor shall:

1. Verify that the student extern meets the statutory requirements to practice as a student extern and has received written authorization from the Board to practice at the preceptor chiropractor’s chiropractic facility.

Note: The preceptor chiropractor must obtain independent verification and/or official documentation from the chiropractic college. It is not sufficient for the preceptor chiropractor to rely upon an individual’s representation of their educational status.

1. Provide student extern with an orientation to the chiropractic practice, equipment, and protocols which aligns to the student extern’s academic preparation and competencies.
2. Provide direct supervision to the student extern. Direct supervision means the preceptor chiropractor ensures student competency and skill to perform all delegated tasks. Direct supervision requires the preceptor chiropractor to be in the treatment room when the student extern performs a primary chiropractic procedure.[[1]](#footnote-1) Direct supervision requires the preceptor chiropractor be on the same premises as the extern and readily available and able to offer assistance to the extern and patient, when the extern is providing patient care.
3. Be responsible for all patient care provided by the student extern and all acts or omissions of the student extern.
4. Ensure that the patient is verbally informed that the student extern is a student and not a licensed chiropractor and ensure that the patient’s consent to receive treatment by the student extern is documented in the patient record.
5. Ensure that student extern’s treatment of patients is accurately documented in the patient record.
6. Not allow the student extern to practice chiropractic for more than sixteen (16) weeks or after graduation from chiropractic school.

**V. Additional Guidance**

The student extern may operate an x-ray only under the direct supervision of the preceptor chiropractor.

Preceptorships may occur only at a licensed chiropractic facility with the facility’s chiropractor of record serving as the preceptor chiropractor supervising the student extern.

A chiropractor who is practicing in a solo practice would need to obtain a chiropractic facility license prior to qualifying as a preceptor chiropractor.

Post-graduate trainees are not eligible to practice as student externs. An individual who has graduated chiropractic college cannot practice as a chiropractor in Massachusetts without a Massachusetts chiropractic license.

**VI: To Set Up a Chiropractic Preceptorship**

Chiropractic students or chiropractors who meet the qualifications in Section 91A and are interested in setting up a preceptorship in Massachusetts should email: chiropractorsboard@mass.gov.

1. Primary Chiropractic Procedure means a chiropractic adjustment or manipulation, done either by hand or by instrumentation, which is applied directly to the body for the purpose of maintaining or improving health. 233 CMR 2.01. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)