

FAQ's about New Massage Therapy and Bodywork Therapy Law

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Effective December 1, 2010, an active state license is **required** to practice massage therapy and bodywork therapy in Wisconsin. The passage of AB 588, now designated as Chapter 460 <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/Stat0460.pdf>. Below are frequently asked questions about how this will affect the profession.

Qualifications

Q. If I already have a Wisconsin State Certification, how does this affect me?

A. You should have upgraded your state certification to a state license by December 1, 2010 if you are actively practicing. *Even if you did not get a renewal postcard*, go to drl.wi.gov, click on Renewal Information, then License Renewal Online and follow the instructions. It is possible to request a hard copy of the application by calling 888-506-4239 or 608-261-4460. The cost is \$75 and the new credential will be good through February 28, 2013. Remember that you also need current CPR/AED certification from an approved provider.

Q. What if I have (or had) a state certification but am not currently practicing?

A. If you have a state certification but are not currently practicing, you should still be in the system and need to upgrade your state certification to a license in order to go back into practice. Keep in mind two things: 1) The grandparenting period expires December 31, 2011. 2) If your state credential lapsed more than 5 years ago, you will need to apply as if you never had one, so check your status online at drl.wi.gov soon!

Q. What is a course from an "approved provider" for CRP/AED?

A. It can be any course from the APPROVED provider list below that certifies you in the use of an Automated External Defibrillator. Note that many of these providers offer blended learning, meaning that you can do part of the course online and then have your hands-on skills tested by a certified instructor.

Here is the official language from the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services, also available at: http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/ems/License_certification/CPR.htm

- * American Heart Association
- * American Red Cross
- * American Safety and Health Institute (includes Medic First Aid)
- * Emergency Care and Safety Institute - (AAOS)
- * EMS Safety Services
- * National Safety Council
- * T-E-A-M CPR & AED

Any course offered by the above providers that includes the following is approved by this department to fulfill the cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillator (AED) training objectives for persons who are required, as a condition of licensure, certification, or registration to be proficient in CPR or in the use of an AED.

- * Instruction of CPR
- * Instruction in the use of an AED
- * Verified course completion through a certification/completion card

* Certification not to exceed two years

Q. Will I be required to complete continuing education in order to get this new credential?

A. No.

Q. Will my title change?

A. Yes, you will be a licensed massage therapist or bodywork therapist (LMT or LBT) instead of certified massage therapist or bodyworker (CMT or CBW).

Q. How do I qualify if I was not Wisconsin State Certified on the effective date, December 1, 2010?

A. There will be a one-year window of time to apply under the grandparenting provisions but you do need to have a license in order to legally practice. Applications are available at <http://drl.wi.gov> and must be printed out and submitted with appropriate documentation. Go to Professions and click on Massage Therapist or Bodywork Therapist, then print out application form #2909.

Grandparenting

A grandparenting provision was adopted in the law to recognize existing practitioners who had not previously become state certified. This window of opportunity will run from December 1, 2010 to December 31, 2011. During this period, satisfying *any one* of the following requirements to obtain a state license will be acceptable as a substitute for the usual combination of national exam plus educational program:

- * The applicant was actively engaged in the practice of massage or bodywork therapy by practicing for an average of 10 hours per week for at least 10 years; **OR**
- * The applicant passed a nationally administered entry-level competency exam; **OR**
- * The person was actively engaged in the practice of massage or bodywork therapy by practicing for an average of 10 hours a week for at least 3 years and successfully completed a 200 hour licensure program approved by the affiliated credentialing board; **OR**
- * At least 180 days before the effective date of this act (June 4, 2010 or earlier), the applicant graduated from a massage or bodywork training program that consisted of at least 600 hours.

All applicants must demonstrate that they have professional liability insurance, have training in CPR/AED and pay fees.

Q. What will the qualifications for licensure be after the grandfathering provision expires on December 31, 2011?

A.

1. Complete an approved, minimum 600-hour massage therapy or bodywork therapy program.
2. Pass a nationally administered, entry-level competency exam accepted by the board.
3. Pass a state exam on massage and bodywork laws and regulations.
4. Demonstrate proof of professional liability insurance (*which is included in your AMTA membership*).
5. Pay the fee.

Exemptions

Q. Bodywork is a general term; are any practitioners exempt from licensure?

A. Specific practices are not named in the law. However, there are four exemption categories by description:

1. Persons manipulating only the soft tissue of the hands, feet, and ears; and

2. Persons using touch, words, and directed movement to change a client's awareness of existing patterns of movement; and
3. Persons using touch to affect the energy systems of the human body; and
4. Persons using touch and education to effect change in the structure of the body while engaged in the practice of structural integration.

Two additional groups are not required to get a license as a massage therapist or bodywork therapist: 1) persons whose scope of practice includes massage therapy or bodywork therapy; 2) persons who are authorized to practice by another state or country and are providing a demonstration with or consultation to another license holder.

Q. What title will I use if I practice one of the exempt practices?

A. A person who is exempt from licensure may use the terms "bodywork," "bodyworker," and "bodywork therapy."

Affiliated Credentialing Board

The law created the Massage Therapy and Bodywork Therapy Affiliated Credentialing Board. A credentialing board has similar responsibilities to an examining board. Members are appointed by the governor and subject to senate confirmation; they will have authority to issue administrative rules interpreting the licensing law, and they will have authority to investigate complaints and discipline licensees.

Q. Who is appointed to the Massage Therapy and Bodywork Therapy Credentialing Board?

A. The board is comprised of **six massage and bodywork therapists** who have engaged in the practice of massage or bodywork therapy for **at least two years**. One represents private, occupational schools approved by the Educational Approval Board and one represents massage and bodywork programs offered by the Wisconsin Technical Colleges. A **seventh member is a public member**. Each member will serve a four-year term.

Q. How do I apply to be a member of the board?

A. Members of Wisconsin state boards and commissions are vital participants in developing policy, regulation, advisory and advocacy efforts for a wide variety of issues affecting all Wisconsinites. AMTA encourages members looking for a meaningful volunteer experience within the massage therapy profession to apply. This is not a paid position. **Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis.**

If you wish to apply, simply complete the *Appointments Application* (<http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=1320&locid=19>) and return it with your resume to the Governor's office by email (govappointments@wisconsin.gov) or fax it to (608) 267-7888. You can also mail your application to Governor's Office, Appointments Department, PO Box 7863, Madison, WI 53707-7863, (608)266-7493.

Q. What do I do if I want to work as soon as possible after graduation?

A. Graduates are encouraged to apply for a state license immediately after graduation, even if their national exam requirement has not been completed. Although the temporary licenses have yet to be approved by the Board via administrative rules, there is a 60-day grace period for new graduates in effect in the interim, providing the new graduate is supervised by a licensed massage therapist or bodywork therapist and clients are informed that their application for state licensure is pending.