

OCCUPATIONS CODE
TITLE 3. HEALTH PROFESSIONS
SUBTITLE H. PROFESSIONS RELATED TO CERTAIN TYPES OF THERAPY
CHAPTER 455. MASSAGE THERAPY
(Effective September 1, 2019)

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS..... | 3 |
| Sec. 455.001. DEFINITIONS. | 3 |
| Sec. 455.002. MASSAGE THERAPY AS HEALTH CARE SERVICE..... | 4 |
| Sec.455.003. PRACTICES INCLUDED IN MASSAGE THERAPY. | 4 |
| Sec. 455.004. APPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER. | 4 |
| Sec. 455.005. EFFECT ON LOCAL LAW. | 4 |
| SUBCHAPTER B. POWERS AND DUTIES..... | 5 |
| Sec. 455.0511. GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES. | 5 |
| Sec. 455.052. RULES REGARDING MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS. | 5 |
| Sec. 455.053. RULES REGARDING MASSAGE SCHOOLS..... | 5 |
| Sec. 455.054. RULES REGARDING MASSAGE THERAPISTS..... | 6 |
| Sec. 455.055. RULES REGARDING MASSAGE THERAPY INSTRUCTORS..... | 6 |
| Sec. 455.0571. CONTINUING EDUCATION..... | 7 |
| Sec. 455.059. INSPECTIONS; INVESTIGATIONS..... | 7 |
| SUBCHAPTER C. MASSAGE THERAPY ADVISORY BOARD | 7 |
| Sec. 455.101. ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERSHIP..... | 8 |
| Sec. 455.102. DUTIES OF ADVISORY BOARD..... | 8 |
| Sec. 455.103. TERMS; VACANCIES..... | 8 |
| Sec. 455.104. PRESIDING OFFICER..... | 8 |
| Sec. 455.105. MEETINGS. | 8 |
| SUBCHAPTER D. LICENSING..... | 9 |
| Sec. 455.151. LICENSE REQUIRED..... | 9 |
| Sec. 455.152. INELIGIBILITY FOR LICENSE. | 9 |
| Sec. 455.1525. CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION REQUIREMENT FOR LICENSE ISSUANCE..... | 9 |
| Sec. 455.153. APPLICATION FOR LICENSE. | 10 |
| Sec. 455.154. GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO LICENSES..... | 10 |
| Sec. 455.155. LICENSE EXEMPTION..... | 11 |
| Sec. 455.156. LICENSE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASSAGE THERAPIST..... | 11 |
| Sec. 455.159. STUDENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM. | 12 |
| Sec. 455.160. LICENSE TERM AND RENEWAL. | 13 |
| Sec. 455.161. STUDENT PERMIT; ELIGIBILITY. | 13 |
| SUBCHAPTER E. PRACTICE BY LICENSE HOLDERS | 13 |
| Sec. 455.201. REFERRAL FROM PHYSICIAN. | 13 |
| Sec. 455.202. PRACTICE BY MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENT. | 14 |
| Sec.455.203. PRACTICE BY MASSAGE SCHOOL OR INSTRUCTOR AT SCHOOL..... | 15 |
| Sec. 455.2035. REPORTS TO DEPARTMENT..... | 15 |
| Sec. 455.204. DISPLAY OF LICENSE. | 16 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Sec. 455.205. PROHIBITED PRACTICES. | 16 |
| Sec. 455.206. ESTABLISHMENT CHANGE OF LOCATION PROHIBITED. | 16 |
| Sec. 455.207. POSTING OF CERTAIN NOTICES REQUIRED..... | 16 |
| SUBCHAPTER F. LICENSE DENIAL OR DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES | 17 |
| Sec. 455.251. GROUNDS FOR LICENSE DENIAL OR DISCIPLINARY ACTION..... | 17 |
| SUBCHAPTER H. OTHER PENALTIES AND ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS | 17 |
| Sec. 455.351. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF; CIVIL PENALTY. | 17 |
| Sec. 455.352. CRIMINAL PENALTY..... | 18 |
| Sec. 455.353. ENFORCEMENT BY PEACE OFFICERS. | 19 |

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 455.001. DEFINITIONS.

In this chapter:

- (1) "Commission" means the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation.
- (1-a) "Department" means the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.
- (2) "Executive director" means the executive director of the department.
- (3) "Instructor" means a person who instructs a student in any section of the course of instruction required for a massage therapist license.
- (4) "Internship program" means a program supervised by a massage therapy instructor in which a student provides massage therapy to the public.
- (5) "Massage establishment" means a place of business that advertises or offers massage therapy or other massage services. The term includes a place of business that advertises or offers any service described by a derivation of the terms "massage therapy" or "other massage services."
- (6) "Massage school" means an entity that:
 - (A) teaches at a minimum the course of instruction required for a massage therapist license; and
 - (B) has at least two instructors.
- (7) "Massage therapist" means a person who practices or administers massage therapy or other massage services to a client for compensation. The term includes a licensed massage therapist, therapeutic massage practitioner, massage technician, masseur, masseuse, myotherapist, body massager, body rubber, or any derivation of those titles.
- (8) "Massage therapy" means the manipulation of soft tissue by hand or through a mechanical or electrical apparatus for the purpose of body massage and includes effleurage (stroking), petrissage (kneading), tapotement (percussion), compression, vibration, friction, nerve strokes, and Swedish gymnastics. The terms "massage," "therapeutic massage," "massage technology," "myotherapy," "body massage," "body rub," or any derivation of those terms are synonyms for "massage therapy."
- (9) "Massage therapy instructor" means a licensed massage therapist who provides to one or more students instruction approved by the department in massage therapy.
- (10) "Sexually oriented business" has the meaning assigned by Section 243.002, Local Government Code, unless another meaning applies under local law.
- (11) "Other massage services" include any services offered or performed for compensation at a massage establishment that involve physical contact with a client, and may include the use of oil, lubricant, salt glow, a heat lamp, a hot and cold pack, or a tub, shower, jacuzzi, sauna, steam, or cabinet bath.
- (12) "Advisory board" means the Massage Therapy Advisory Board.
- (13) "Peace officer" means a person who is a peace officer under Article 2.12, Code of Criminal Procedure.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2005.

Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 (S.B. [202](#)), Sec. 1.239, eff. September 1, 2017.

Amended by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.001, eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 455.002. MASSAGE THERAPY AS HEALTH CARE SERVICE.

- (a) Massage therapy constitutes a health care service if the massage therapy is for therapeutic purposes. Massage therapy does not constitute the practice of chiropractic.
- (b) In this chapter, therapy or therapeutic procedures do not include:
 - (1) the diagnosis or treatment of illness or disease; or
 - (2) a service or procedure for which a license to practice medicine, chiropractic, physical therapy, or podiatry is required by law.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec.455.003. PRACTICES INCLUDED IN MASSAGE THERAPY.

Massage therapy includes the use of oil, salt glows, heat lamps, hot and cold packs, and tub, shower, or cabinet baths.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 455.004. APPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER.

This chapter does not apply to:

- (1) a person licensed in this state as a physician, chiropractor, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse, cosmetologist, or athletic trainer or as a member of a similar profession subject to state licensing while the person is practicing within the scope of the license;
- (2) a school approved by the Texas Education Agency or otherwise approved by the state; or
- (3) an instructor otherwise approved by the state to teach in an area of study included in the required course of instruction for issuance of a massage therapist license.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2005.

Sec. 455.005. EFFECT ON LOCAL LAW.

- (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), this chapter supersedes any regulation adopted by a political subdivision of this state relating to the licensing or regulation of massage therapists.
- (b) This chapter does not affect a local regulation that:
 - (1) relates to zoning requirements or other similar regulations for massage establishments;
 - (2) authorizes or requires an investigation into the background of an owner or operator of, or an investor in, a massage establishment; or
 - (3) does not relate directly to the practice of massage therapy as performed by a licensed massage therapist, including a regulation related to a license holder listed in Section 455.004, while the therapist:
 - (A) performs under the applicable licensing law; and
 - (B) works with a licensed massage therapist.
- (c) Except as provided by Chapter 243, Local Government Code, a political subdivision may not adopt a regulation of the type described by Subsection (b) that is more restrictive for massage therapists or massage establishments than for other health care professionals or establishments.

- (d) This chapter may not be construed to limit a municipality's authority to regulate establishments that offer bathing or showering services.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2005.*

SUBCHAPTER B. POWERS AND DUTIES

Sec. 455.0511. GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES.

- (a) The executive director shall administer and enforce this chapter.
- (b) The department shall:
- (1) investigate a person who may be engaging in or offering to engage in a practice that violates this chapter;
 - (2) regulate the number of school hours and the content of the coursework provided by a massage school or a massage therapy instructor; and
 - (3) prepare, recognize, administer, or arrange for the administration of an examination under this chapter.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.002, eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 455.052. RULES REGARDING MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS.

Rules adopted under this chapter relating to a massage establishment must contain minimum standards for:

- (1) the issuance, denial, renewal, suspension, revocation, or probation of a license under this chapter;
- (2) the qualifications of professional personnel;
- (3) the supervision of professional personnel;
- (4) the equipment essential to the health and safety of massage establishment personnel and the public;
- (5) the sanitary and hygienic conditions of a massage establishment;
- (6) the provision of massage therapy or other massage services by a massage establishment;
- (7) the records kept by a massage establishment;
- (8) the organizational structure of a massage establishment, including the lines of authority and the delegation of responsibility;
- (9) fire prevention and safety in a massage establishment;
- (10) the inspection of a massage establishment; and
- (11) any other aspect of the operation of a massage establishment necessary to protect massage establishment personnel or the public.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 4, eff. September 1, 2005.*

Sec. 455.053. RULES REGARDING MASSAGE SCHOOLS.

Rules adopted under this chapter relating to a massage school must contain minimum standards for:

- (1) the issuance, denial, renewal, suspension, revocation, or probation of a license under this chapter;
- (2) the qualifications of professional personnel;
- (3) the supervision of professional personnel;
- (4) the equipment essential to the education, health, and safety of students, massage school personnel, and the public;
- (5) the sanitary and hygienic conditions of a massage school;
- (6) the provision of massage therapy or other massage services by a massage school or student;
- (7) the maximum number of hours a student may accumulate in a massage school's internship program before the student is required to be licensed under this chapter;
- (8) the educational and clinical records kept by a massage school;
- (9) the organizational structure of a massage school, including the lines of authority and the delegation of responsibility;
- (10) fire prevention and safety in a massage school;
- (11) the massage school's curriculum and educational material;
- (12) massage school inspections; and
- (13) any other aspect of the operation of a massage school that the commission considers necessary to protect students, massage school personnel, or the public.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 4, eff. September 1, 2005.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 (S.B. [202](#)), Sec. 1.241, eff. September 1, 2017.*

Sec. 455.054. RULES REGARDING MASSAGE THERAPISTS.

Rules adopted under this chapter relating to a massage therapist must contain minimum standards for:

- (1) the issuance, denial, renewal, suspension, revocation, or probation of a license under this chapter;
- (2) the qualifications of a massage therapist;
- (3) the sanitary and hygienic conditions of the physical environment in which a massage therapist practices massage therapy;
- (4) the records kept by a massage therapist;
- (5) the inspection of the records, equipment, and sanitary and hygienic conditions of the physical environment used by a massage therapist in practicing massage therapy; and
- (6) any other aspect of the practice of a massage therapist necessary to protect the public.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 4, eff. September 1, 2005.*

Sec. 455.055. RULES REGARDING MASSAGE THERAPY INSTRUCTORS.

Rules adopted under this chapter relating to a massage therapy instructor must contain minimum standards for:

- (1) the issuance, denial, renewal, suspension, revocation, or probation of a license under this chapter;

- (2) the qualifications of a massage therapy instructor;
- (3) the supervision of a student by a massage therapy instructor;
- (4) the maximum number of hours a student may accumulate in an internship program under the supervision of a massage therapy instructor before the student is required to be licensed under this chapter;
- (5) the equipment essential to the education, health, and safety of students and the public;
- (6) the sanitary and hygienic conditions of the physical environment in which a massage therapy instructor teaches;
- (7) the provision of massage therapy or other massage services by a student or a massage therapy instructor;
- (8) the educational and clinical records kept by a massage therapy instructor;
- (9) the curriculum taught and educational material used by a massage therapy instructor;
- (10) the inspection of the records, equipment, and physical environment of a massage therapy instructor; and
- (11) any other aspect of a massage therapy instructor's instruction or operation of any portion of the course of instruction required for a massage therapist license.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 4, eff. September 1, 2005.*

Sec. 455.0571. CONTINUING EDUCATION.

- (a) The commission by rule shall establish the minimum number of hours of continuing education required for a person licensed under this chapter to renew the person's license.
- (b) The commission by rule shall provide for the recognition, preparation, or administration of continuing education programs for persons licensed under this chapter.
- (c) The department may develop and establish processes to:
 - (1) evaluate and approve continuing education providers and programs; and
 - (2) assess a license holder's participation in continuing education programs.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.003, eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 455.059. INSPECTIONS; INVESTIGATIONS.

The department, the department's authorized representative, or a peace officer may enter the premises of a massage establishment or massage school at:

- (1) reasonable times to conduct an inspection incidental to the issuance of a license; and
- (2) other times that the department, the department's authorized representative, or a peace officer considers necessary to ensure compliance with this chapter and the rules adopted under this chapter.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.004, eff. September 1, 2017.

SUBCHAPTER C. MASSAGE THERAPY ADVISORY BOARD

Sec. 455.101. ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERSHIP.

- (a) The advisory board consists of nine members appointed by the presiding officer of the commission with the approval of the commission as follows:
- (1) two members who are licensed massage therapists;
 - (2) two members who represent licensed massage schools;
 - (3) two members who represent licensed massage establishments;
 - (4) one member who is a peace officer with expertise in the enforcement of Chapter 20A, Penal Code, and Subchapter A, Chapter 43, Penal Code; and
 - (5) two members of the public.
- (b) Appointments to the advisory board shall be made without regard to the race, color, disability, sex, religion, age, or national origin of the appointee.

*Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 (S.B. [202](#)), Sec. 1.243, eff. September 1, 2017.
Amended by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.005, eff. September 1, 2017.*

Sec. 455.102. DUTIES OF ADVISORY BOARD.

The advisory board shall provide advice and recommendations to the department on technical matters relevant to the administration of this chapter.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.005, eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 455.103. TERMS; VACANCIES.

- (a) Members of the advisory board are appointed for staggered six-year terms. The terms of three members expire September 1 of each odd-numbered year.
- (b) If a vacancy occurs on the advisory board during a member's term, the presiding officer of the commission, with the commission's approval, shall appoint a replacement who meets the qualifications for the vacant position to serve for the remainder of the term.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 5, eff. September 1, 2005.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. [219](#)), Sec. 5.079, eff. April 2, 2015.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 (S.B. [202](#)), Sec. 1.244, eff. September 1, 2017.
Amended by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.005, eff. September 1, 2017.*

Sec. 455.104. PRESIDING OFFICER.

- (a) The presiding officer of the commission shall designate a member of the advisory board to serve as the presiding officer of the advisory board for a term of one year.
- (b) The presiding officer of the advisory board may vote on any matter before the advisory board.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 6, eff. September 1, 2005.
Amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1399 (H.B. [2644](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.
Amended by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.005, eff. September 1, 2017.*

Sec. 455.105. MEETINGS.

The advisory board shall meet at the call of the executive director or the presiding officer of the commission.

*Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 7, eff. September 1, 2005.
Amended by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.005, eff. September 1, 2017.*

SUBCHAPTER D. LICENSING

Sec. 455.151. LICENSE REQUIRED.

- (a) Unless the person is exempt from the licensing requirement, a person may not act as a massage therapist, massage school, massage therapy instructor, or massage establishment unless the person holds an appropriate license issued under this chapter.
- (b) Unless the person is exempt from the licensing requirement, a person may not represent that the person is a massage therapist, massage school, massage therapy instructor, or massage establishment unless the person holds an appropriate license under this chapter.
- (c) A person may not for compensation perform or offer to perform any service with a purported health benefit that involves physical contact with a client unless the person:
 - (1) holds an appropriate license issued under this chapter; or
 - (2) is licensed or authorized under other law to perform the service.
- (d) The department may issue one or more types of licenses not otherwise provided for by this chapter that authorize the license holder to perform a service described by Subsection (c). The commission may adopt rules governing a license issued under this subsection.

*Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 9, eff. September 1, 2005.
Amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1399 (H.B. [2644](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2007.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. [219](#)), Sec. 5.080, eff. April 2, 2015.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 (S.B. [202](#)), Sec. 1.245, eff. September 1, 2017.*

Sec. 455.152. INELIGIBILITY FOR LICENSE.

A person is not eligible for a license as a massage establishment, massage school, massage therapist, or massage therapy instructor if the person is an individual and has been convicted of, entered a plea of nolo contendere or guilty to, or received deferred adjudication for an offense under Chapter 20A, Penal Code, or Subchapter A, Chapter 43, Penal Code, or another sexual offense.

*Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 9, eff. September 1, 2005.
Amended by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.006, eff. September 1, 2017.
Amended by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 787 (H.B. [1865](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2019.*

Sec. 455.1525. CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION REQUIREMENT FOR LICENSE ISSUANCE.

- (a) The department shall require an applicant for a license to submit a complete and legible set of fingerprints, on a form prescribed by the department, to the department or to the Department of Public Safety for the purpose of obtaining criminal history record information from the Department of Public Safety and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- (b) The department may not issue a license to a person who does not comply with the requirement of Subsection (a).
- (c) The department shall conduct a criminal history record information check of each applicant for a license using information:
 - (1) provided by the individual under this section; and

- (2) made available to the department by the Department of Public Safety, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and any other criminal justice agency under Chapter 411, Government Code.
- (d) The department may:
 - (1) enter into an agreement with the Department of Public Safety to administer a criminal history record information check required under this section; and
 - (2) authorize the Department of Public Safety to collect from each applicant the costs incurred by the Department of Public Safety in conducting the criminal history record information check.
- (e) For purposes of this section, if the applicant for a license is an entity, the applicant must submit fingerprints as required by Subsection (a) for each individual who:
 - (1) personally or constructively holds, including as the beneficiary of a trust:
 - (A) at least 10 percent of the entity's outstanding stock; or
 - (B) more than \$25,000 of the fair market value of the entity;
 - (2) has the controlling interest in the entity;
 - (3) has a direct or indirect participating interest through shares, stock, or otherwise, regardless of whether voting rights are included, of more than 10 percent of the profits, proceeds, or capital gains of the entity;
 - (4) is a member of the board of directors or other governing body of the entity; or
 - (5) serves as:
 - (A) an elected officer of the entity; or
 - (B) a general manager of the entity.

*Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2005.
 Amended by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.007, eff. September 1, 2017.
 Amended by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 787 (H.B. [1865](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2019.*

Sec. 455.153. APPLICATION FOR LICENSE.

An applicant for a license under this chapter must:

- (1) submit an application in the manner and on a form prescribed by the executive director;
- (2) pass any required examination; and
- (3) include with the application the application fee set by the commission by rule.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
 Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 11, eff. September 1, 2005.
 Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. [219](#)), Sec. 5.081, eff. April 2, 2015.
 Amended by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.008, eff. September 1, 2017.*

Sec. 455.154. GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO LICENSES.

- (a) The holder of a license may exercise all professional rights, honors, and privileges relating to the practice of massage therapy.
- (b) A license is the property of the department and must be surrendered on demand.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 11, eff. September 1, 2005.*

Sec. 455.155. LICENSE EXEMPTION.

- (a) Section 455.151 does not apply to an establishment or person that:
 - (1) holds a license, permit, certificate, or other credential issued by this state under another law; and
 - (2) offers or performs massage therapy under the scope of that credential.
- (b) A licensed massage therapist who practices as a solo practitioner is not required to hold a license as a massage establishment.
- (c) A place of business is not required to hold a license under this chapter if:
 - (1) the place of business is owned by the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state;
 - (2) at the place of business, a licensed massage therapist practices as a solo practitioner and:
 - (A) does not use a business name or assumed name; or
 - (B) uses a business name or an assumed name and provides the massage therapist's full legal name or license number in each advertisement and each time the business name or assumed name appears in writing;
 - (3) at the place of business, an acupuncturist, athletic trainer, chiropractor, cosmetologist, midwife, nurse, occupational therapist, perfusionist, physical therapist, physician, physician assistant, podiatrist, respiratory care practitioner, or surgical assistant licensed or certified in this state employs or contracts with a licensed massage therapist to provide massage therapy as part of the person's practice; or
 - (4) at the place of business, a person offers to perform or performs massage therapy:
 - (A) for not more than 72 hours in any six-month period; and
 - (B) as part of a public or charity event, the primary purpose of which is not to provide massage therapy.
- (d) A sexually oriented business may not:
 - (1) hold a license under this chapter; or
 - (2) operate as a massage establishment under this chapter.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 11, eff. September 1, 2005.
Amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1399 (H.B. [2644](#)), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2007.*

Sec. 455.156. LICENSE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASSAGE THERAPIST.

- (a) The department shall issue a license to each qualified applicant who applies for a massage therapist license.
- (b) An applicant for a license under this section must be an individual and:
 - (1) present evidence satisfactory to the department that the person has satisfactorily completed massage therapy studies in a 500-hour minimum, supervised course of instruction provided by a massage therapy instructor at a massage school, a licensed massage school, a state-approved educational

institution, or any combination of instructors or schools, in which at least:

- (A) 200 hours are taught by a licensed massage therapy instructor and dedicated to the study of massage therapy techniques and theory and the practice of manipulation of soft tissue, with at least 125 hours dedicated to the study of Swedish massage therapy techniques;
 - (B) 50 hours are dedicated to the study of anatomy;
 - (C) 25 hours are dedicated to the study of physiology;
 - (D) 50 hours are dedicated to the study of kinesiology;
 - (E) 40 hours are dedicated to the study of pathology;
 - (F) 20 hours are dedicated to the study of hydrotherapy;
 - (G) 45 hours are dedicated to the study of massage therapy laws and rules, business practices, and professional ethics standards;
 - (H) 20 hours are dedicated to the study of health, hygiene, first aid, universal precautions, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); and
 - (I) 50 hours are spent in an internship program;
- (2) pass the required examinations; and
 - (3) be at least 18 years of age.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, Sec. 14.220(a), eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 11, eff. September 1, 2005.

Amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1399 (H.B. [2644](#)), Sec. 4, eff. September 1, 2007.

Amended by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1105 (H.B. [4007](#)), Sec. 6.009, eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 455.159. STUDENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM.

- (a) An internship program must:
 - (1) meet the qualifications established by the department;
 - (2) provide a student with a minimum of 40 hours of hands-on massage therapy experience; and
 - (3) be conducted on the school grounds or in a clinic or classroom setting provided by the massage school or massage therapy instructor.
- (b) A student must complete the first 250 hours of required training at a massage school or with a massage therapy instructor before the student is eligible to enter an internship program.
- (c) A student who is participating in an internship program must be under the supervision and direction of a massage therapy instructor during the hours that the student is working in the program.
- (d) A student who is participating in an internship program may:
 - (1) make an appointment with a client;
 - (2) interview a client;
 - (3) provide massage therapy, including providing massage therapy for compensation in an amount set by the massage school or massage therapy instructor and paid to the school or instructor;

- (4) collect and review a client evaluation with the student's supervisor; and
- (5) perform other tasks necessary to the business of providing massage therapy to the public.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 14, eff. September 1, 2005.*

Sec. 455.160. LICENSE TERM AND RENEWAL.

- (a) A license issued under this chapter is valid for two years. A license holder must renew the license biennially.
- (b) Repealed by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 , Sec. 1.298(7), eff. September 1, 2017.
- (c) Repealed by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 , Sec. 1.298(7), eff. September 1, 2017.
- (d) Repealed by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 , Sec. 1.298(7), eff. September 1, 2017.
- (e) Repealed by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 , Sec. 1.298(7), eff. September 1, 2017.
- (f) Repealed by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 , Sec. 1.298(7), eff. September 1, 2017.
- (g) Repealed by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 , Sec. 1.298(7), eff. September 1, 2017.
- (h) On receipt of a request for a renewal of a license issued under this chapter, the department shall conduct a criminal background check under Section 455.1525.

*Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, Sec. 14.222(a), eff. Sept. 1, 2001.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 15, eff. September 1, 2005.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. [219](#)), Sec. 5.084, eff. April 2, 2015.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 (S.B. [202](#)), Sec. 1.248, eff. September 1, 2017.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 (S.B. [202](#)), Sec. 1.249, eff. September 1, 2017.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 (S.B. [202](#)), Sec. 1.298(7), eff. September 1, 2017.
Amended by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 787 (H.B. [1865](#)), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2019.*

Sec. 455.161. STUDENT PERMIT; ELIGIBILITY.

- (a) The department shall require a student enrolled in a massage school in this state to hold a permit stating the student's name and the name of the school. The permit must be displayed in a reasonable manner at the school.
- (b) The department shall issue a student permit to an applicant who submits an application to the department for a student permit accompanied by any required fee.
- (c) An applicant for a student permit described by this section shall:
 - (1) submit an enrollment application to the department in a form and manner prescribed by the department; and
 - (2) satisfy other requirements specified by the department.

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 787 (H.B. [1865](#)), Sec. 4, eff. September 1, 2019.

SUBCHAPTER E. PRACTICE BY LICENSE HOLDERS

Sec. 455.201. REFERRAL FROM PHYSICIAN.

A person issued a license may receive referrals from a physician to administer massage therapy.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 455.202. PRACTICE BY MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENT.

- (a) A massage establishment may employ only licensed massage therapists to perform massage therapy or other massage services.
- (b) A massage establishment may not:
 - (1) employ an individual who is not a United States citizen or a legal permanent resident with a valid work permit;
 - (2) employ a minor unless the minor's parent or legal guardian authorizes in writing the minor's employment by the establishment;
 - (3) allow a nude or partially nude employee to provide massage therapy or other massage services to a customer;
 - (4) allow any individual, including a client, student, license holder, or employee, to engage in sexual contact in the massage establishment;
 - (5) allow any individual, including a student, license holder, or employee, to practice massage therapy in the nude or in clothing designed to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any individual; or
 - (6) allow any individual, including a student, license holder, or employee, to reside on the premises of the massage establishment.
- (c) A massage establishment shall:
 - (1) properly maintain and secure for each client the initial consultation documents, all session notes, and related billing records; and
 - (2) make available to the department on request the information kept as provided by Subdivision (1).
- (d) For purposes of this section:
 - (1) "Nude" means a person who is:
 - (A) entirely unclothed; or
 - (B) in a manner that leaves uncovered or visible through less than fully opaque clothing any portion of the breasts below the top of the areola of the breasts or any portion of the genitals or buttocks.
 - (2) "Sexual contact" includes:
 - (A) any touching of any part of the genitalia or anus;
 - (B) any touching of the breasts of a female without the written consent of the female;
 - (C) any offer or agreement to engage in any activity described in Paragraph (A) or (B);
 - (D) kissing without the consent of both persons;
 - (E) deviate sexual intercourse, sexual contact, sexual intercourse, indecent exposure, sexual assault, prostitution, and promotions of prostitution as described in Chapters 21, 22, and 43, Penal Code, or any offer or agreement to engage in such activities;
 - (F) any behavior, gesture, or expression that may reasonably be interpreted as inappropriately seductive or sexual; or

- (G) inappropriate sexual comments about or to a client, including sexual comments about a person's body.
- (e) Subsection (b)(6) does not apply to:
 - (1) a place of business exempted under Section 455.155(c)(2) from the requirement to hold a license as a massage establishment; or
 - (2) a licensed massage therapist who practices as a solo practitioner and who is exempted under Section 455.155(b) from the requirement to hold a license as a massage establishment.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. 2696), Sec. 17, eff. September 1, 2005.
Amended by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. 2747), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2019.*

Sec.455.203. PRACTICE BY MASSAGE SCHOOL OR INSTRUCTOR AT SCHOOL.

- (a) A massage school must meet the minimum standards of operation established by commission rule.
- (b) An instructor must meet the minimum requirements established by commission rule.
- (c) A massage school or massage therapy instructor licensed under this chapter shall give each prospective student a notice that clearly states the number of course hours that the student must successfully complete before the student is eligible to hold a massage therapist license under this chapter.
- (d) The notice under Subsection (c) must be given to the prospective student at a time and in a manner that provides the student with a sufficient opportunity to read the notice and, if necessary for understanding and clarity, discuss the notice with massage school officials or with the massage therapy instructor before:
 - (1) the student signs an enrollment contract; and
 - (2) the massage school or the massage therapy instructor accepts the student in a course of study.
- (e) The course of instruction in massage therapy provided by a licensed massage school is a postsecondary education program.
- (f) A massage school that provides instruction to persons beyond the age of compulsory education is authorized to operate educational programs in massage therapy at the postsecondary level.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. 2696), Sec. 18, eff. September 1, 2005.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. 219), Sec. 5.085, eff. April 2, 2015.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 482 (H.B. 1049), Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 2015.
Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 (S.B. 202), Sec. 1.250, eff. September 1, 2017.*

Text of section effective on July 01, 2020

Sec. 455.2035. REPORTS TO DEPARTMENT.

- (a) A massage school shall maintain a monthly progress report regarding each student attending the school. The report must certify the daily attendance record of each student and the number of credit hours earned by each student during the previous month.
- (b) On a student's completion of a prescribed course of instruction, the school shall notify the department that the student has completed the required number of hours and is eligible to take the appropriate examination.

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 787 (H.B. 1865), Sec. 5, eff. July 1, 2020.

Sec. 455.204. DISPLAY OF LICENSE.

- (a) A person who holds a license shall publicly display the license as specified by the department.
- (b) Each massage establishment must post in plain sight the license for each massage therapist who practices in the massage establishment.
- (b-1) The license of a massage therapist that is posted under Subsection (b) must have attached to the front of the license a photograph of the massage therapist.
- (c) Each massage school, massage establishment, massage therapy instructor, or massage therapist shall present the person's license on the request of the department, an authorized representative of the department, or a peace officer.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 19, eff. September 1, 2005.

Amended by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. [2747](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 455.205. PROHIBITED PRACTICES.

- (a) A massage therapist may not perform massage therapy for compensation or without compensation at or for a sexually oriented business.
- (b) A massage school or a massage therapy instructor may not require the successful completion of more course hours than the number of hours required for licensing as a massage therapist under this chapter.
- (c) A person who is not licensed under this chapter may not use the word "massage" on any form of advertising unless the person is expressly exempt from the licensing requirements of this chapter.
- (d) A sexually oriented business may not use the word "massage" or "bath" on a sign or any form of advertising.
- (e) A person advertising massage therapy or other massage services is presumed to be engaging in conduct regulated by this chapter.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 20, eff. September 1, 2005.

Sec. 455.206. ESTABLISHMENT CHANGE OF LOCATION PROHIBITED.

A massage establishment may not change the location of the establishment without obtaining a new massage establishment license under this chapter.

Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 21, eff. September 1, 2005.

Sec. 455.207. POSTING OF CERTAIN NOTICES REQUIRED.

- (a) Each massage establishment and massage school shall display in the form and manner prescribed by the commission a sign concerning services and assistance available to victims of human trafficking.
- (b) The sign required by this section must:
 - (1) be in English, Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, and any other language required by commission rule;
 - (2) include a toll-free telephone number of a nationally recognized information and referral hotline for victims of human trafficking; and
 - (3) be displayed in a conspicuous place clearly visible to the public.
- (c) The commission by rule shall establish requirements regarding the posting of signs under this section.

SUBCHAPTER F. LICENSE DENIAL OR DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Sec. 455.251. GROUNDS FOR LICENSE DENIAL OR DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

- (a) The commission or executive director may refuse to issue a license to a person and shall suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew the license of a person or shall reprimand a person licensed under this chapter if the person:
 - (1) obtains a license by fraud, misrepresentation, or concealment of material facts;
 - (2) sells, barter, or offers to sell or barter a license;
 - (3) violates a rule adopted by the commission under this chapter;
 - (4) engages in unprofessional conduct as defined by commission rule that endangers or is likely to endanger the health, welfare, or safety of the public;
 - (5) violates an order or ordinance adopted by a political subdivision under Chapter 243, Local Government Code; or
 - (6) violates this chapter.
- (b) The commission or executive director shall revoke the license of a person licensed as a massage therapist or massage therapy instructor if:
 - (1) the person is convicted of, enters a plea of nolo contendere or guilty to, or receives deferred adjudication for an offense involving prostitution or another sexual offense; or
 - (2) the commission or executive director determines the person has practiced or administered massage therapy at or for a sexually oriented business.
- (c) The commission or executive director shall revoke the license of a person licensed as a massage school or massage establishment if the commission or executive director determines that:
 - (1) the school or establishment is a sexually oriented business; or
 - (2) an offense involving prostitution or another sexual offense that resulted in a conviction for the offense, a plea of nolo contendere or guilty to the offense, or a grant of deferred adjudication for the offense occurred on the premises of the school or establishment.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, Sec. 14.222(c), eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 23, eff. September 1, 2005.

Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. [219](#)), Sec. 5.086, eff. April 2, 2015.

Amended by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 838 (S.B. [202](#)), Sec. 1.251, eff. September 1, 2017.

SUBCHAPTER H. OTHER PENALTIES AND ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS

Sec. 455.351. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF; CIVIL PENALTY.

- (a) The attorney general, a district or county attorney, a municipal attorney, or the department may institute an action for injunctive relief to restrain a violation by a person who:
 - (1) appears to be in violation of or threatening to violate this chapter or a rule adopted under this chapter; or
 - (2) is the owner or operator of an establishment that offers massage therapy or other massage services regulated by this chapter and is not licensed under this chapter.

- (b) The attorney general, a district or county attorney, a municipal attorney, or the department may institute an action to collect a civil penalty from a person who appears to be in violation of this chapter or a rule adopted under this chapter. The amount of a civil penalty shall be not less than \$1,000 or more than \$10,000 for each violation.
- (c) Each day a violation occurs or continues to occur is a separate violation.
- (d) An action filed under this section by the attorney general or the department must be filed in a district court in Travis County or the county in which the violation occurred.
- (e) The attorney general, district and county attorney, municipal attorney, and the department may recover reasonable expenses incurred in obtaining injunctive relief or a civil penalty under this section, including court costs, reasonable attorney's fees, investigative costs, witness fees, and deposition expenses.
- (f) A civil penalty recovered in an action by the attorney general or the department under this section shall be deposited in the state treasury.
- (g) In an injunction issued under this section, a court may include reasonable requirements to prevent further violations of this chapter.
- (h) Notwithstanding Section 22.004, Government Code:
 - (1) a person may not continue the enjoined activity pending appeal or trial on the merits of an injunctive order entered in a suit brought under this subchapter;
 - (2) not later than the 90th day after the date of the injunctive order, the appropriate court of appeals shall hear and decide an appeal taken by a party enjoined under this subchapter; and
 - (3) if an appeal is not taken by a party temporarily enjoined under this article, the parties are entitled to a full trial on the merits not later than the 90th day after the date of the temporary injunctive order.
- (i) In this section:
 - (1) "Operator" means a person who is supervising a massage establishment or massage school at the time a violation occurs or the establishment or school is inspected. If no person is supervising, then any employee, contractor, or agent of the owner who is present at the establishment or school is the operator.
 - (2) "Owner" includes a person:
 - (A) in whose name a certificate of occupancy has been issued for a massage establishment or massage school and any person having control over that person; or
 - (B) who operates a massage establishment or massage school under a lease, operating agreement, or other arrangement.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
 Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 31, eff. September 1, 2005.
 Amended by Acts Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1399 (H.B. [2644](#)), Sec. 5, eff. September 1, 2007.*

Sec. 455.352. CRIMINAL PENALTY.

- (a) A person commits an offense if the person is required to be licensed under this chapter and the person:
 - (1) knowingly violates Section 455.151, 455.159, 455.202(b), 455.203(a) or (c), 455.204(b) or (c), or 455.205(b), (c), or (d); or
 - (2) collects a fee or any other form of compensation for massage therapy without being licensed under this chapter.

- (a-1) A person commits an offense if the person is required to be licensed under this chapter and the person knowingly violates Section 455.205(a). An offense under this subsection is a Class B misdemeanor, unless the actor has previously been convicted one or two times of an offense under this subsection, in which event it is a Class A misdemeanor. If the actor has previously been convicted three or more times of an offense under this subsection, the offense is a state jail felony.
- (b) An owner or operator of a massage establishment commits an offense if the person knowingly violates Section 455.151(a), 455.155(d), 455.202(a), 455.204(b) or (c), or 455.205(d). An offense under this subsection is a Class B misdemeanor, unless the actor has previously been convicted one or two times of an offense under this subsection, in which event it is a Class A misdemeanor. If the actor has previously been convicted three or more times of an offense under this subsection, the offense is a state jail felony.
- (c) An owner or operator of a massage school commits an offense if the person knowingly violates Section 455.151(a), 455.159, 455.203(a) or (c), 455.204(b) or (c), or 455.205(b), (c), or (d).
- (d) Except as provided by Subsections (a-1), (b), and (c), an offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor.
- (e) If it is shown at the trial of an offense under this section that the defendant has been previously convicted of an offense under this section, the offense is a Class A misdemeanor.

*Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1300 (H.B. [2696](#)), Sec. 32, eff. September 1, 2005.*

Sec. 455.353. ENFORCEMENT BY PEACE OFFICERS.

A peace officer of this state, including a peace officer employed by a political subdivision of the state, may enforce this chapter.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.