



I'm going to get a massage!

Massage therapy is the manipulation of soft tissue by hand or through a mechanical or electrical apparatus for the purpose of body massage.

The term includes effleurage (stroking), petrissage (kneading), tapotement (percussion), compression, vibration, friction, nerve strokes, and Swedish gymnastics. Massage therapy may include the use of oil, lubricant, salt glows, heat lamps, hot and cold packs, or tub, shower, jacuzzi, sauna, steam or cabinet baths.

In Texas, all massage establishments and any individual providing massage therapy services are required to have a license from the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR).

Please note that a national certification such as the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB) or a school diploma or other document is NOT a license to work in the State of Texas.

Texas massage therapists, establishment owners and massage school owners must have a license issued by TDLR. All massage therapists, establishment owners and massage school owners undergo a national fingerprint-based criminal history check. Previous convictions, nolo contendere or guilty pleas or deferred adjudications for sexual or human trafficking offenses will keep an applicant or license holder from receiving a license.

At the establishment

The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation Massage Therapy program has rules and guidelines to safeguard your health and well-being when you get a massage. TDLR performs inspections on massage establishments to ensure that facilities and massage therapists are appropriately licensed.

Be observant after you enter the establishment. Does it look clean? Are the linens and towels fresh? Is the massage oil kept in closed containers? If the establishment looks dirty, you should go somewhere else.

Look for the licenses for the establishment AND the massage therapist who will be providing your service. Both establishment and massage therapist licenses should

be posted prominently near the front of the establishment. TDLR massage therapist licenses must include a photo of the licensee. If the manager and massage therapist can't – or won't – show you licenses, then go somewhere else.

Massage establishments may not allow nude or partially nude employees to provide massages or other massage services to clients. Sexual contact is not allowed in a licensed massage establishment. This includes physical contact, behavior, gestures, or comments that may reasonably be interpreted as inappropriate, seductive, or sexual.

Consultation document

Before receiving any massage therapy services for the first time, you should be given a consultation document that will include information on:

- the type of massage therapy services or techniques you will be receiving during the massage therapy session;
- the parts of your body that will be massaged or the areas of your body that the massage therapist must avoid. Be sure to include any medical issues you may have – some conditions could be aggravated by certain types of massage;
- a statement that, if you are a female, the massage therapist shall not engage in breast massage without your written consent;
- a statement that draping will be used during the session, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by both you and the massage therapist;
- both your signature and the massage therapist's.

As a client of massage therapy services, if you become uncomfortable for any reason, you may ask the massage therapist to end the session.

Check whether your massage establishment or massage therapist is licensed in Texas:

<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/LicenseSearch/LicenseSearch.asp>

Report unlicensed activity or file a complaint:

<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/complaints/>

MESSAGE CONSUMER PROTECTION