

Washington State Board of Massage

The mandate of the Board of Massage is to protect the public's health and safety, and to promote the welfare of the state by regulating the competency and quality of professional healthcare providers under its jurisdiction.

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Board Members

Chair
Stephanie Dickey, LMT

Vice Chair
Anthony Sharpe,
Public Member

Tonya Cox, LMT

Heidi Williams, LMT

Vacant – LMT

Welcome to the Board of Massage Newsletter

Message from the Chair – Stephanie Dickey, LMT

Greetings to all of the licensed massage therapists in Washington State who provide care and warmth daily as a valuable health service.

I am in my fourth year on the Board of Massage and have seen many changes. In my time on the board we accomplished a major overhaul of the massage chapter of rule and have reopened them for continued development. There have been two chairs and some new board members along the way. As a matter of fact, we have two new faces and a vacant professional member position. Many new faces are involved in carefully updating, listening, and refining the rules you use every day.

I am very excited to be in my new role as board chair and I take it very seriously. I hope to bring an element of the history of the process, how we got where we are, as well as the balance of bringing forward the issues that need attention and refining to our profession as it grows. I strive to bring professionalism, safety, and validity to what we do every day. I look forward to serving you and the public in this role.

We have a lot to pay attention to in our field right now. I encourage you all to get involved any way you can to help us with the ever-changing road we are on. Come to board meetings, send us your feedback, and follow the legislation. You have a voice and good ideas so please share them with us. Most of all we hope that this newsletter helps answer questions and is informative, so give it and [the past ones](#) a bit of your time for reading.

~ As always, it is our pleasure to serve you in the state of Washington as we continue to uphold our mission and dedication to public protection ~

Are You Interested in Applying to Serve on a Board?

Board profiles, upcoming opportunities to serve, and applications are on the [Governor's webpage](#).

Stay Informed

To stay up-to-date and receive email notifications about rulemaking and other board activities, subscribe and encourage others to subscribe to the Health Systems Quality Assurance, Health Professions, Massage List at [GovDelivery](#).



Rules Update

The board has been hard at work making updates to its chapter of rules. Some significant changes the board will propose are to the rules for training, continuing education, breast massage, recordkeeping, record retention, and adding a new rule for massage of the floor of the perineal region. Draft language is on the board's [Rules in Progress](#) webpage.



The board has scheduled a special meeting for April 12, 2019, to do a comprehensive review of the proposed amendments before moving to the next phase of rulemaking.

The rules writing [process](#) is open to the public. The public is welcome to take part in helping us write rules. Rules workshops occur during open public board meetings. [Send us your comments](#)

Proposed Legislation of Interest

The 2019 legislative session began on January 14. Below are some bills of interest to the massage profession. Bills do not become law unless and until the Governor signs them. At this time, the bills contain only **proposed** language.



An overview of the legislative process can be found on the legislature's [webpage](#). Also take note of the [Session Cutoff Calendar](#).

[SHB 1082](#) and [SSB 5097](#) Concerning the licensure and certification of massage therapists and reflexologists

- Beginning January 1, 2020, a massage therapist or a reflexologist would have to have a government-issued photo ID on his or her person or available for inspection at all times they are practicing.

[HB 1848](#) Exempting foot zone therapy from reflexology certification

- The bill exempts individuals practicing foot zoning from the requirement to have a reflexology credential.

[SHB 1198](#) Requiring health care providers sanctioned for sexual misconduct to notify patients

- Beginning October 1, 2019 health care providers sanctioned for sexual misconduct would be required to provide their patients with a copy of the disciplinary order, notice and duration of the sanctions, date the sanctions were imposed, and a signed disclosure that the patient received a copy of the order. The provider would have to obtain the patient's signature prior to their first visit after the sanctions are imposed.

Apply Online

The Department of Health has rolled out an online application for initial massage therapist credentials. You can check out the features of the online application portal on [YouTube](#). Information about how to access the online application for massage therapists is on the [Department's website](#).

Renew Your Credential Online

The majority of health professionals whose credentials are within 90 days of their expiration date may renew their **active status** license, registration, or certification online.

For more information about how to renew your credential online, please visit the [Renewals Online](#) webpage or contact our Customer Service Office at 360-236-4700 or hsqa.csc@doh.wa.gov.

Board Staff

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[Sue Gragg](#)

Program Managers

[Megan Maxey](#)

[Kris Waidely](#)

Program Manager Associate

[Brandon Williams](#)

Program Support

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Relationships with Patients

Periodically, the Department of Health receives complaints about healthcare practitioners, including licensed massage therapists, dating and/or having sexual relationships with current or former patients. [WAC 246-830-550\(3\)](#) specifically prohibits sexual misconduct as defined in [WAC 246-16-100](#). These rules apply even if the relationship *is* consensual. The sanction schedule for sexual misconduct or contact can be found in [WAC 246-16-820](#).

Access your  **Massage Laws**

[Chapter 18.108 RCW](#)

[Chapter 246-830 WAC](#)

[Chapter 18.130 RCW](#)

[Chapter 246-12 WAC](#)

[Chapter 246-16 WAC](#)

Use of Cannabis Infused Oils and Lotions by an LMT

Items containing 0.3% THC or less are considered hemp or a cannabis health and beauty aid ([RCW 69.50.575](#)). These products are legal for massage therapists to use in their practice. However, it is not within the scope of practice for massage therapists in Washington State to use any products, including topical lotions and oils that contain more than 0.3% THC on their clients – regardless of being medical or recreational and regardless of whether the client provides the product. In applying cannabis oils or lotions as part of massage therapy, the therapist would be illegally administering a Schedule 1 drug. Please see our [medical marijuana webpage](#) for more information.

Licensing Statistics (February 20, 2019)

Licenses Issued in 2018	1,027	Inactive	224
Active	13,866	Pending	347
Active with Conditions	8	Revoked	83
Active on Probation	2	Summary Suspension	1
Denied	65	Surrendered	31
Expired	22,765	Suspended	126

Disciplinary Statistics 2009 – 2017

Biennium	STIDs	Agreed Orders	Default Orders	Final Orders	Notices of Decision
2009 – 2011	23	16	10	5	17
2011 – 2013	14	22	36	10	16
2013 – 2015	8	30	14	3	45
2015 – 2017	24	26	22	6	18

Licensing Fees

The Massage Therapist Program is projected to have a funding deficit of -\$2.2 million by June 2019 and forecasted to be about -\$4.8 million by June 2025. Per [RCW 43.70.250](#), each health profession's program budget must be self-sustaining and borne by the profession.

A fee increase will be necessary to correct this trend. The primary factor contributing to this scenario is higher disciplinary costs than most other professions. The key cost drivers are disciplinary cases involving unlicensed practice and sexual misconduct.

Stay [up to date](#) on the massage license and renewal fees.



Do You Have an Idea for the Newsletter?

Please share any input on topics you'd like to see included in the newsletter with Megan Maxey at megan.maxey@doh.wa.gov.



National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is observed every year on January 11.

This observance was started in 2011 by presidential proclamation of National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

[The Blue Campaign](#)



2019 Meeting Dates*

-  January 11 | Kent
-  March 8 | Kent
-  April 12 | Tumwater
-  May 3 | Tumwater
-  July 19 | Spokane
-  September 6 | Kent
-  November 1 | Tumwater

* Dates and locations are subject to change. For the most up-to-date meeting information, please visit the board's [meeting webpage](#).

How Do I...?

- [File a Complaint](#)
- [Look Up a Healthcare Provider](#)
- [Update My Contact Information](#)
- [See a List of Sanctioned Providers](#)



- [U.S. Sex Trafficking Industry Makes \\$2.5 Billion a Year Through Illegal Massage Parlors](#)
- [Kent Police Shut Down 18 Illegal Massage Parlors](#)
- [MLB, MLBPA to Donate \\$500,000 to Nonprofits to Help Combat Human Trafficking](#)
- [Seattle police raid 11 massage parlors, freeing 26 women](#)
- [Massage Therapy as an Alternative to Opioids](#)

Board Member Spotlight – Anthony Sharpe



I am the public member and vice chairman of the Board of Massage. I am a semi-retired licensed insurance agent living in Eastern Washington. I was first appointed to the board by Governor Gregoire in April 2012 and then re-appointed by Governor Inslee in May 2016. As the public member of the board, I have the same responsibilities as the professional members. I believe my role as the public member is to bring the perspective of the community at large in order to provide strong public safety and consumer protection. I am proud to have served the citizens of the state of Washington on the Board of Massage for the past seven years.

Useful Resources

- ◆ [Massage Therapy Website](#)
- ◆ [American Massage Therapy Association \(AMTA\)](#)
- ◆ [AMTA – Washington Chapter](#)
- ◆ [Associated Bodywork and Massage Professionals](#)
- ◆ [Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards](#)
- ◆ [National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork](#)
- ◆ [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#)
- ◆ [Washington State Massage Therapy Association](#)

