ALABAMA MASSAGE THERAPY LICENSING BOARD
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

CHAPTER 532-X-5
MASSAGE THERAPY SCHOOLS

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532-X-5-.01 Requirements For Approved Massage Therapy Schools.

1. The board is authorized to approve massage therapy schools and to establish a list of approved massage therapy schools.

2. Successful completion of the curriculum at a board approved massage therapy school shall satisfy the educational requirements for licensure as a massage therapist.

3. An approved massage therapy school shall comply with all standards for approval established by the board and require a student to successfully complete a minimum of six hundred and fifty (650) hours of instruction, which shall consist of all of the following:

   a. One hundred (100) hours of anatomy and physiology, including thirty-five (35) hours of myology.

   b. Fifteen (15) hours of osteology.

   c. Ten (10) hours of circulatory system.

   d. Ten (10) hours of nervous system, with the remaining thirty (30) hours addressing other body systems at the discretion of the massage therapy school.

   e. Two hundred fifty (250) hours of basic massage therapy, the contradistinctions of massage therapy, and related touch therapy modalities, including a minimum of fifty (50) hours of supervised massage.

f. Fifty (50) hours of business, hydrotherapy, first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, professional ethics, and state massage therapy laws.

g. Two hundred fifty (250) hours of electives as determined by the massage therapy school.

4. An approved massage therapy school may not teach the use of techniques or procedures that require specialized training, licensure or expertise, including, but not limited to, laser therapy, injection therapy, manipulation of the joints or any diagnosis or treatment of an illness that normally involves the practice of medicine, chiropractic, physical therapy, podiatry, nursing, occupational therapy, veterinary medicine, acupuncture, osteopathy, orthopedics, hypnosis, or naturopathic.

5. An approved massage therapy school shall adhere to the following requirements for supervised student clinical learning experiences, including but not limited to supervised massage:

a. Supervised massage performed by a student shall be performed under the direct supervision of a registered massage therapy instructor employed by or contracted with an approved massage therapy school.

b. Supervised massage performed by a student shall be performed on the school premises.

c. The registered massage therapy instructor supervising the supervised massage shall have direct access to the student and the client.

d. The client shall be informed that the massage therapy session is being performed by a student massage therapist prior to beginning the session.

e. Students shall receive no compensation for any massage therapy session performed on the premises of the approved massage therapy school.

f. Student may be awarded hours for performing business-related tasks such as answering telephones, returning telephone calls, booking therapy appointments, computer or file data entry, laundry of linens if the school provides linens for student clinical use and any other business-related tasks which will aid the students in future massage work environments, but the hours awarded for those tasks may not be used to satisfy the minimum of 50 hours of supervised massage.

g. Student clinicals may not include manual labor on the school premises unrelated to everyday clinical sessions.

h. Students may not be required to clean the school premises beyond the normal sanitation procedures inclusive to treatment rooms and the immediate office space (i.e., appointment desk area, copy station, and client waiting room) used during clinical sessions.

i. Students may not be required to perform building maintenance, lawn care, facility housekeeping, including bathrooms, floors, or anything that does not apply to the education and career goal of a student.

6. An approved massage therapy school shall ensure that massage therapy courses are taught only by licensed massage therapists who are registered massage therapy instructors, and that all courses are taught by instructors who are academically and experientially qualified to teach the courses assigned to them.

7. An approved massage therapy school at which supervised massage is conducted on the premises shall meet all of the qualifications for a massage therapy establishment license as described in chapter 532-X-4-.02.

8. An approved massage therapy school shall carry professional and general liability insurance with an "A" rated or better insurance carrier in the amount of at least one million dollars ($1,000,000).

9. No later than October 1, 2025, an approved massage therapy school shall acquire and maintain registration as an assigned school through the National Certification of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Board (NCBTMB).

10. Within 2 years of board approval, all newly approved massage therapy schools must obtain and maintain registration as an assigned school through the National Certification of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Board (NCBTMB).

11. A massage therapy school located outside of the state of Alabama may be an approved massage therapy school, provided that, in addition to meeting all other requirements in this chapter, the out-of-state massage therapy school shall:

a. Be recognized by a regional professional accrediting body.

b. Be an accredited postgraduate training institute.

c. Provide a copy of the conforming curriculum.

12. Institutional and school policies, procedures, and other publications, whether written or electronic, shall:

a. Be printed, written, and/or spoken statements and representations regarding massage therapy schools and schools

shall be clear, factually accurate, and current. Supporting information shall be kept on file by the sponsoring school or school administrator and shall be readily available for review, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Policies concerning admission, financial aid, curriculum, schedules, and all other areas affecting the education and wellbeing of students shall be honestly and clearly stated in publications promoting the school.

2. Procedures, dates, and requirements for application, admission, financial aid, and other responsibilities and opportunities directly affecting students shall be clearly stated and shall be generally available to prospective and current students.

3. Policies regarding student admission and standing, evaluation of student progress, and the operation of schools shall be readily available to current and prospective students.

4. A description of tuition, fees, and other charges, as well as all policies pertaining thereto, shall be clearly described in the school's published literature. The total cost of the school shall be clearly stated.

13. Catalogs, advertising, and promotions shall clearly distinguish existing and recognized schools from those that are prospective or hypothetical.

14. All advertising and promotional materials shall include the correct name and location of the school and any parent institution.

15. All advertising promoting student clinical sessions shall clearly indicate that services provided by students are offered under the supervision of a licensed massage therapist by using the phrase, "under the supervision of" or "supervised by a licensed massage therapist." Students may not use personal advertisements for such services, but student names may be included in an instructor's advertisement, provided that the students' intern status is clearly disclosed in the ad.

16. Advertisements or any other type of recruitment materials shall not claim that students receive compensation for attending school or for providing student services.

17. All school and school advertising and promotional materials shall clearly disclose that they offer solely training, and not employment, in massage therapy. No overt or implied claim or guarantee of individual employment shall be made at any time therein.

18. No school shall use the term "accredited" unless it indicates the agency or organization by which it is accredited.

19. No school shall issue any certificate or diploma or confer any degree that misrepresents the course of study or instruction covered or completed or the accomplishments or standing of the student receiving such certificate, diploma, or degree.

20. The school shall not falsely represent its facilities in photos, illustrations, computerized images, or by other means.

21. Schools that utilize placement statistics and/or state examination pass rates in advertising, promotional literature, and/or verbal presentations shall use corroborative data from reliable and current sources, e.g., state agencies, previous calendar year statistics, etc. to support its claims.

(22) Massage therapy schools shall complete the Massage Therapy Education Annual Report in a format specified by the board within the time specified.

(23) Massage therapy schools must satisfy other standards as may be imposed by the board through rule.
Author: Alabama Massage Therapy Licensing Board
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §34-43A-6.
History: New Rule: Filed January 29, 2001; effective March 5, 2001. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed April 20, 2009; effective May 25, 2009. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed February 10, 2012; effective March 16, 2012. **Repealed and New Rule:** Published September 30, 2024; effective November 14, 2024. **Amended:** Published September 30, 2025; effective November 14, 2025.

532-X-5-.02 Approved School Renewal.

1. A massage therapy school approved by the board must register bi-annually with the board, submitting a renewal form and/or application, the renewal fee, a current curriculum, and a list of all instructors of massage therapy who teach or supervise at the school.

a. Should a change in ownership, curriculum, instructors, staff, or address of the school occur during the year subsequent to obtaining approval from the board, the school must notify the board of such change within thirty (30) days of the earlier of the date of the school's authorization of the proposed change or of implementation of the change.

1. The board must consider continued approval of a massage therapy school after a change of ownership, curriculum, or staff.

2. If a massage therapy school submits an annual renewal application with current curriculum which does not meet the minimum standards set forth in the applicable laws and regulations, the board shall send a deficiency notice to the school and suspend the approval of the school.

3. The school shall have six (6) months in which to correct the deficiency and submit a renewal form with fee and copy of the conforming curriculum. Approval of a massage therapy school may be withdrawn by the board if the massage therapy school modifies its curriculum without notice to the board, falls below the minimum standards required by the statutes and these rules and regulations, violates any standard applicable to the accreditation of the school, or violates any applicable rule or regulation of the board.

Author: Alabama Massage Therapy Licensing Board
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §34-43A-6.
History: New Rule: Filed January 29, 2001; effective March 5, 2001. **Amended:** Filed November 9, 2006; effective December 14, 2006. **Amended:** Filed April 20, 2009; effective May 25, 2009. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed February 10, 2012; effective March 16, 2012. **Repealed and New Rule:** Published September 30, 2024; effective November 14, 2024. **Amended:** Published September 30, 2025; effective November 14, 2025.

532-X-5-.03 Requirements For Massage Therapy Instructors Teaching And Conducting Clinical.

(1) Except as provided in Section 34-43A-4(a)(4), Code of Ala. 1975, every massage therapy instructor teaching a course in massage therapy at a massage therapy school located in this state shall be licensed by the board as a massage therapist and registered as a massage therapy instructor. Instructors who are not teaching massage therapy are not required to register.

(a) An adjunct massage therapy instructor shall be dually licensed in the state where he or she resides or be nationally certified, or both.

(b) A massage therapy instructor shall satisfy all of the following:

1. Be currently licensed as an Alabama massage therapist and maintain a current unencumbered license.

2. Possess training and experience in the field of study and have at least three (3) years of experience in the field of massage and be supported by management in their professional development and teaching skills.

(c) Academic studies such as anatomy and physiology, business, and related sciences may be taught by a non-massage therapist professional who has experience in the field.

(d) To engage in animal massage by a massage therapist under the direction or prescription of a licensed veterinarian, the applicant must graduate from a nationally approved school and complete a minimum of one hundred (100) hours of postgraduate training and education in animal anatomy, pathology, and physiology for the type of animal on which the therapist will perform therapeutic massage.

Author: Alabama Massage Therapy Licensing Board
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §34-43A-6.
History: New Rule: Filed January 29, 2001; effective March 5, 2001. **Amended:** Filed April 20, 2009; effective May 25, 2009. **Amended:** Filed February 10, 2012; effective March 16, 2012. **Repealed and New Rule:** Published September 30, 2024; effective November 14, 2024.

532-X-5-.04 Massage Therapy School Deficiencies.

(1) The board shall conduct surveys and evaluations as often as necessary to determine compliance with all standards set forth in this Chapter.

(2) If a massage therapy school submits an annual renewal application with a current curriculum that does not meet the minimum standards set forth in the applicable laws and regulations, the board shall:

(a) Send a deficiency notice to the school requiring a plan of correction to be submitted to the board within ninety (90) days to address the issues and outline the plans of the school to come into compliance.

(b) The school shall have six (6) months in which to correct the deficiency.

(c) Failure to come into compliance may result in withdrawal of school approval.

Author: Alabama Massage Therapy Licensing Board
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §34-43A-6.
History: New Rule: Filed January 29, 2001; effective March 5, 2001. **Repealed:** Filed April 20, 2009; effective May 25, 2009. **New Rule:** Published September 30, 2024; effective November 14, 2024.

532-X-5-.05 Withdrawal Of School Approval.

(1) Approval of a massage therapy school may be withdrawn by the board if the massage therapy school does any of the following:

(a) Modifies its curriculum without notice to the board.

(b) Falls below the minimum standards required by the statutes and these rules and regulations.

(c) Violates any standard applicable to the accreditation of the school by registering and/or certifying body.

(d) Violates any applicable statute or regulation.

Author: Alabama Massage Therapy Licensing Board
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §34-43A-6.
History: New Rule: Published September 30, 2024; effective November 14, 2024.

532-X-5-.06 Application For New Massage Therapy School Approval.

(1) To be approved by the board, a massage therapy school located in the state of Alabama must apply directly to the board for approval and meet all of the following requirements for approval:

(a) Submit a completed application, including applicable fees, and submit the following information:

1. Sample transcript and diploma.

2. Provide documentation of a curriculum plan, catalog, or other course description that includes a minimum number of required hours of instruction in the subjects required by the board as delineated in this chapter.

3. Proof of coverage of the required carry professional and general liability insurance with an "A" rated or better insurance carrier for at least one million dollars ($1,000,000).

4. A list of instructors and credentials.

Author: Alabama Massage Therapy Licensing Board
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §34-43A-6.
History: New Rule: Published September 30, 2024; effective November 14, 2024.