



## Virginia Board of Nursing

### **VIRGINIA Board of Nursing**

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except Holidays

Massage Therapy is regulated by the [Virginia Board of Nursing](#). In 2016 the Statute was changed. The new law goes into effect on July 1, 2016. No exemptions for SI are listed in the earlier or current statutes, although other professions are specifically exempted under the new statute. The new law also changes the provision for violations and prosecution: prior law said that it was a misdemeanor to claim to be a certified massage therapist or massage therapist unless you were one; the new law says that it is a misdemeanor to engage in massage therapy or hold oneself out to be a massage therapist without being licensed. This is a significant change in the law. It does appear as though one could petition the board to accept the BCSI exam. Below are the laws in effect before and after the statutory change.

### **Laws and Regulations governing massage therapy (till July 1, 2016):**

[http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing\\_laws\\_regs.htm](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing_laws_regs.htm)

#### **Statute (till July 1, 2016):**

##### **§ 54.1-3000. Definitions.**

"Massage therapy" means the treatment of soft tissues for therapeutic purposes by the application of massage and bodywork techniques based on the manipulation or application of pressure to the muscular structure or soft tissues of the human body. The terms "massage therapy" and "therapeutic massage" do not include the diagnosis or treatment of illness or disease or any service or procedure for which a license to practice medicine, nursing, chiropractic therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, acupuncture, or podiatry is required by law.

##### **§ 54.1-3008. Particular violations; prosecution.**

A. It shall be a Class 1 misdemeanor for any person to:

7. Claim to be, on and after July 1, 1997, a certified massage therapist or massage therapist or use any designation tending to imply that he is a massage therapist or certified massage therapist unless he is certified under the provisions of this chapter.

**Regulation:**

**Part II. Requirements for Certification.**

**18VAC90-50-40. Initial certification.**

A. An applicant seeking initial certification shall submit a completed application and required fee and verification of meeting the requirements of §54.1-3029 A of the Code of Virginia as follows:

1. Is at least 18 years old;
2. Has successfully completed a minimum of 500 hours of training from a massage therapy program, certified or approved by the State Council of Higher Education; or an agency in another state, the District of Columbia or a United States territory that approves educational programs, notwithstanding the provisions of §22.1-320 of the Code of Virginia;
3. Has passed the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage, the Licensing Examination of the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards, *or an exam deemed acceptable to the board; and*
4. Has not committed any acts or omissions that would be grounds for disciplinary action or denial of certification as set forth in §54.1-3007 of the Code of Virginia and 18VAC90-50-90.

B. No application for certification under provisions of §54.1-3029 B of the Code of Virginia shall be considered unless submitted prior to July 1, 1998.

C. An applicant who has been licensed or certified in another country and who, in the opinion of the board, meets the educational requirements shall take and pass an examination as required in subsection A of this section in order to become certified.

**Laws and Regulations governing massage therapy (post July 1, 2016):**

<https://dzdx4ocwzatbw.cloudfront.net/public/pdf/va-hb-562-enrolled.pdf>

**§ 54.1-3000. Definitions.**

"Massage therapy" means the treatment of soft tissues for therapeutic purposes by the application of massage and bodywork techniques based on the manipulation or application of pressure to the muscular structure or soft tissues of the human body. The ~~terms~~ term "massage therapy" and "~~therapeutic massage~~" ~~do~~ does not include the diagnosis or treatment of illness or disease or any service or procedure for which a license to practice medicine, nursing, midwifery, chiropractic ~~therapy~~, physical therapy, occupational therapy, acupuncture, athletic training, or podiatry is required by law or any service described in § 54.1-3001(18).

**§ 54.1-3001. Exemptions.** (There are many professions specifically exempted under the new statute, but Structural Integration is not listed.)

**§ 54.1-3008. Particular violations; prosecution.**

A. It shall be a Class 1 misdemeanor for any person to:

~~7. Claim to be, on and after July 1, 1997, a certified massage therapist or massage therapist or use any designation tending to imply that he is a massage therapist or certified massage therapist unless he is certified under the provisions of this chapter~~ Engage in the practice of massage therapy or hold himself out as practicing massage therapy unless he holds a license as a massage therapist issued by the Board.

#### **Article 5.**

~~Certification-Licensure of Massage Therapists.~~

§ 54.1-3029. Qualifications for a licensed massage therapist.

A. In order to be ~~certified~~ licensed as a massage therapist, the applicant shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant:

1. Is at least 18 years old;

2. Has successfully completed a minimum of 500 hours of training from a massage therapy program, certified or approved by the State Council of Higher Education or an agency in another state, the District of Columbia, or a United States territory that approves educational programs, notwithstanding the provisions of § 23-276.2;

3. Has passed the ~~National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage,~~ the Licensing Examination of the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards, *or an exam examination deemed acceptable to the Board of Nursing; and*

4. Has not committed any acts or omissions that would be grounds for disciplinary action or denial of certification licensure as set forth in this chapter.

~~B. The Board may certify any applicant who has been practicing massage therapy for up to 10 years prior to July 1, 1997, and has completed at least 200 hours of training in an education program. Such programs may be, but shall not be required to be, certified or approved by the State Council of Higher Education or an agency in another state, the District of Columbia, or a United States territory that approves educational programs, or has been in practice for 10 years or more prior to July 1, 1997, and has completed 20 hours of such training; or has passed the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork prior to 1994.~~

~~C. The Board may issue a provisional certification license to an applicant prior to passing the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork-Licensing Examination of the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards for such time and in such manner as prescribed by the Board. No more than one provisional certification license shall be issued to any applicant.~~

~~D. C. The Board may certify license without examination any applicant who is licensed or certified as a massage therapist in another state, the District of Columbia, a United States possession or territory, or another country, and, in the opinion of the Board, meets the requirements for certified licensed massage therapists in the Commonwealth.~~

#### **Board Members:**

[http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing\\_board.htm](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing_board.htm)

#### **Board Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes:**

[http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing\\_calendar.htm](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing_calendar.htm)