

## License Requirements

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### Definition of Practice of Massage Therapy - Education Law, Section 7801

The practice of the profession of massage therapy is defined as engaging in applying a scientific system of activity to the muscular structure of the human body by means of stroking, kneading, tapping and vibrating with the hands or vibrators for the purpose of improving muscle tone and circulation.

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### General Requirements

This page covers the basic requirements and procedures to follow in applying for a license as a massage therapist in New York State. Any use of the title "massage therapist" or "masseur," "masseur," or any derivation of the title, within New York State, requires licensure as a massage therapist.

To be licensed as a massage therapist in New York State you must:

- be of good moral character;
- be at least 18 years of age;
- meet education and examination requirements;
- meet experience requirements (if applicable);
- be a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States (USCIS I-551 Status/"Green Card."); and
- have completed a course in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) within three years prior to licensure.

In addition, an applicant must also submit evidence of English proficiency ([if applicable](#)). There is an experience requirement *only* for massage therapists licensed in another jurisdiction who seek licensure by [endorsement](#).

Submit an application for licensure and the other forms indicated, along with the appropriate fee, to the Office of the Professions at the address specified on each form. It is your responsibility to follow up with anyone you have asked to send us material.

The specific requirements for licensure are contained in Title 8, [Article 155](#), Section 7800 of New York's Education Law and [Part 78](#) of the Commissioner's Regulations.

You should also read the [general licensing information](#) applicable for all professions.

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### Fees

The fee for licensure is \$100.

The fee for a limited permit is \$35.

Fees are subject to change. The fee due is the one in law when your application is received. If fees are increased by statute retroactively, you will be billed for the difference.

- Do not send cash.
- Make your personal check or money order payable to the New York State Education Department. Your cancelled check is your receipt.

- Mail your application and fee to:

NYS Education Department  
Office of the Professions  
PO Box 22063  
Albany, NY 12201

**Please Note:** Payment submitted from outside the United States should be made by check or draft on a United States bank and in United States currency; payments submitted in any other form will not be accepted and will be returned.

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## Partial Refunds

If you withdraw your licensure application you may be entitled to a partial refund.

- For the procedure to withdraw your application, contact the Massage Therapy Unit at [opunit3@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:opunit3@mail.nysed.gov) or by calling 518-474-3817 ext. 270 or by fax at 518-402-5354, or by letter.
- The State Education Department is not responsible for any fees paid to an outside testing or credentials verification agency.

If you withdraw your application, obtain a refund, and then decide to seek New York State licensure at a later date, you will be considered a new applicant, and you will be required to pay the licensure and registration fees and meet the licensure requirements in place at the time you reapply.

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## Education Requirements

To meet the professional education requirement for licensure, you must:

- Complete high school or its equivalent and graduate from a school or institute of massage therapy with a **program registered by the New York State Education Department\*** as licensure qualifying, or its substantial equivalent in both subject matter or extent of training, provided that the program in such school or institute shall consist of classroom instruction with a total of not less than 1000 hours in specific subjects satisfactory to the Department.
- Complete coursework in anatomy, physiology, neurology, myology or kinesiology, pathology, hygiene, first aid, CPR, infection control procedures, the chemical ingredients of products that are used and their effects, as well as the theory, technique and practice of both oriental and western massage/bodywork therapy. Within the 1000 hours of education, you will have had to complete a minimum of 150 hours of practice on a person.

**\*Please Note:** If your program is not listed, contact the State Board for Massage Therapy to determine if it is a New York State licensure qualifying program.

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## Examination Requirement

To meet the examination requirement for licensure, you must pass the New York State Massage Therapy Examination (see **New York State Massage Therapy Examination Blueprint**). Before being admitted to the examination, you must have met all requirements for licensure except citizenship.

The examination is offered twice annually, in January and August. You must file a separate examination scheduling application with CASTLE Worldwide, Inc. The examination scheduling application is available through Castle Worldwide, Inc at:

CASTLE Worldwide, Inc.  
Attn: NY Exams  
PO Box 570  
Morrisville, NC 27560

Phone: 800-655-4845 or 919-572-6880

E-mail: [info@castleworldwide.com](mailto:info@castleworldwide.com)

Web: [www.castleworldwide.com/castests/webdesign/DEFAULTnew\\_york\\_state.htm](http://www.castleworldwide.com/castests/webdesign/DEFAULTnew_york_state.htm)

Your application for licensure in New York State and your application to take the examination must be filed by the following deadlines:

Exam Date	Application for Licensure in New York State	Application to Take the Licensure Examination
January	November 1	November 1
August	June 1	June 1

**Reasonable Testing Accommodations**

Reasonable testing accommodations are available if you have a disability and may require reasonable testing accommodations for the examination. In order to apply for testing accommodations, be sure to check the "reasonable testing accommodations" box on the Castle examination scheduling application. When your application is received, Castle will send you a Request for Reasonable Testing Accommodations Form, to be completed and returned to Castle. (If you wish to obtain the request form in advance, you may download the form from the Web at [www.castleworldwide.com/castests/webdesign/accommodations.pdf](http://www.castleworldwide.com/castests/webdesign/accommodations.pdf) or call Castle at 800-655-4845 or 919-572-6880). In addition, you must also submit a letter from an appropriate healthcare provider who has diagnosed your disability, indicating the nature and the extent of the disability and the corresponding recommendations for test accommodations. Documentation of any testing accommodations provided for you in the past should also be submitted. Castle forwards testing accommodation requests to the State Education Department for approval. If you need further information regarding testing accommodations, you may contact the New York State Education Department Bureau of Professional Examinations at [opexams@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:opexams@mail.nysed.gov) or 518-474-3817 ext. 290 or by writing to them at:

New York State Education Department  
 Bureau of Professional Examinations  
 89 Washington Avenue  
 Albany, NY 12234-1000.

**Applicants Licensed in Another Jurisdiction**

If you are licensed in another state, country or territory based on specific education and examination requirements, and have practiced massage therapy in that state, country or territory for at least two years, you may be eligible for licensure by endorsement.

A. You may be eligible for licensure by endorsement if you:

- o Submit a completed application for licensure to New York State and the appropriate fee
- o Are at least 21 years of age
- o Present evidence of graduation from high school or its equivalent
- o Have not taken and failed the New York State Massage Therapy examination
- o Are a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States
- o Have been determined by the Department to be of good moral character
- o Are in good standing as a licensee in each state, country or territory in which you are licensed to practice massage therapy
- o Received a certificate for completing a course in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation within the three years prior to New York State licensure

B. In addition to meeting the requirements of Section A, you must satisfy the following requirements:

If you have been licensed and practiced 2 - 4 years in another state, country or territory, you must:

- o Meet the New York State 1,000-hour education requirement for licensure
- o Provide evidence of at least two years of acceptable post-licensure professional experience\* in massage therapy, including western and/or oriental massage therapy techniques, in the state, country, or territory where you were licensed
- o You must have passed a written examination for licensure in the state, country, or territory in which you are licensed to practice massage therapy, which is satisfactory to the State Board for Massage Therapy and acceptable to the department, based upon the determination that limitations in the examination's scope and content, as compared to the content of the New York State Massage Therapy Examination, were addressed by you through the professional experience in massage therapy which you gained in the state, country, or territory where you are licensed, following your licensure in that jurisdiction. This would be based upon a determination that the professional experience you had in massage therapy included but was not limited to western and/or oriental massage therapy techniques. For example, the National Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCETMB) along with professional experience in massage therapy may be used in making this determination.

\*One year of experience is defined as 52 weeks in which massage therapy is practiced an average of 12 hours each week.

OR

You must have passed a written examination for licensure in the state, country, or territory in which you are licensed to practice massage therapy, which is satisfactory to the State Board for Massage Therapy and acceptable to the department, based upon the determination that it is comparable in scope and content to the New York State Massage Therapy Examination.

If you have been licensed and practiced 5 or more years in another state, country or territory, you must:

- Have received a degree, diploma or certificate from an approved program of massage therapy of at least 500 clock hours
- Have completed a total of at least 800 clock hours of classroom instruction, including the classroom instruction completed in the massage therapy program from which you graduated, comprised of:
  - o At least 300 clock hours of classroom instruction that includes study in each of the following subjects: anatomy, physiology, neurology, myology or kinesiology, pathology, hygiene, and first aid; and
  - o At least 200 clock hours of classroom instruction that includes study in massage theory and technique, including at least 50 clock hours in oriental theory and technique and at least 50 clock hours in western theory and technique; and
  - o Other classroom instruction, if needed to complete the 800-clock hour requirement, in subjects that are related to massage theory, technique and practice and satisfactory to the State Board for Massage Therapy and acceptable to the Department.
- Provide evidence of at least five years, within the 10 years immediately preceding your application for licensure, of acceptable post-licensure professional experience\* in massage therapy, including western and/or oriental massage therapy techniques, in the state, country, or territory where you were licensed
- You must have passed a written examination for licensure in the state, country, or territory in which you are licensed to practice massage therapy, which is satisfactory to the State Board for Massage Therapy and acceptable to the department, based upon the determination that limitations in the examination's scope and content, as compared to the content of the New York State Massage Therapy Examination, were addressed by you through the professional experience in massage therapy which you gained in the state, country, or territory where you are licensed, following your licensure in that jurisdiction. This would be based upon a determination that the professional experience you had in massage therapy included but was not limited to western and/or oriental massage therapy techniques. For example, the National Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCETMB) along with professional experience in massage therapy may be used in making this determination.

OR

You must have passed a written examination for licensure in the state, country, or territory in which you are licensed to practice massage therapy, which is satisfactory to the State Board for Massage Therapy and

acceptable to the department, based upon the determination that it is comparable in scope and content to the New York State Massage Therapy Examination.

If you need additional information to determine if you are eligible for licensure by endorsement, please contact the State Board for Massage Therapy at [msthbd@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:msthbd@mail.nysed.gov), by calling 518-474-3817 ext. 150, by fax at 518-486-4846 or by writing to:

New York State Education Department  
Office of the Professions  
New York State Board for Massage Therapy  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234-1000

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### **Limited Permits**

You may be issued a limited permit if you meet all of the licensure requirements except the examination and citizenship. Your permit will not be issued until all required documentation has been reviewed and approved by the New York State Education Department. If you are issued a limited permit, you must work under the personal, on-site supervision of an individual licensed and currently registered to practice massage therapy in New York State.

Your limited permit is valid for no more than one year from the date it is issued, or until the results of the first examination for which you are eligible are made known, whichever comes first. You may not be issued a limited permit if you have previously held a permit or have failed the New York State Massage Therapy Examination.

You may not engage in private practice if you hold a limited permit. You must be employed by a licensed massage therapist or by an entity authorized to practice massage therapy that engages a licensed massage therapist to provide personal, on-site supervision. You may apply for a limited permit (use Form 5) at the same time, or any time after, you submit your application for licensure (Form 1 and fee).

The fee for a limited permit is \$35.

<http://www.op.nysed.gov/mtlic.htm>

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