

HAWAII BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPY
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated: July 2023

The answers to general questions (e.g. change of address, name change, duplicate pocket I.D. card/wall certificate, license verification request, etc.) can be found in the Professional and Vocational Licensing Division's Frequently Asked Questions: http://hawaii.gov/dcca/pvl/faqs/PVL_FAQs.pdf

MESSAGE THERAPIST EXAM AND LICENSE

1) What are the requirements to become a licensed massage therapist in Hawaii?

All applicants are required to:

- a) meet the minimum education and training hours requirement of 570 hours; including at least 50 hours of anatomy, physiology, and structural kinesiology; 100 hours of theory and demonstration; and 420 hours of practical massage training;
- b) pass the State of Hawaii licensure examination; and
- c) possess current infant and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation ("CPR") certificate from the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association.

More specific information can be found on the "Information/Requirements and Instructions" sheet that is attached to the application form.

2) Do I have to attend massage therapist school in Hawaii?

All applicants are required to meet the 570 hours of education and training. You may meet these requirements by:

- a) Attending and successfully completing a massage therapy program in a school that was licensed/registered/certified by the state department of education in the respective jurisdiction or by an agency authorized by the appropriate government agency of the respective jurisdiction (where you studied). The school must have been licensed/registered/certified while the student attended the program. Your school can be located in Hawaii or in another jurisdiction; OR

- b) Successfully completing an apprenticeship program under the direct supervision of a Hawaii licensed message therapist. The apprenticeship program shall be a minimum of 420 hours of hands on training under the direct supervision of a Hawaii licensed message therapist. NOTE: **Apprenticeship training obtain in other jurisdictions, outside the State of Hawaii, are not accepted toward Hawaii licensure requirements.**

More information about massage apprenticeships can be located under the “MESSAGE APPRENTICE” section of this document.

3) I am a licensed massage therapist in another state. How do I transfer my license to Hawaii?

Your out-of-state license CANNOT be transferred to Hawaii. You need to apply for a Hawaii license and meet the Hawaii requirements that are in place at the time you submit the application.

4) I took and passed the licensing exam for my other state license. Will Hawaii accept my passing score as a substitute for the Hawaii exam?

No, passing scores from other state’s licensing exams are not accepted. All applicants for a Hawaii license are required to take and successfully pass the Hawaii massage license exam.

5) I am nationally certified. Will Hawaii accept my national certificate?

No, your national certificate will not be accepted to meet Hawaii’s licensing requirements. All applicants are required to meet Hawaii’s licensing requirements.

6) I am nationally certified. Do I have to take the Hawaii exam?

Yes, all applicants are required to take and successfully pass the Hawaii massage license exam.

7) Where can I get an application form?

You may apply online at: <https://mypvl.dcca.hawaii.gov/>

Or, you may download the application form and instructions from this website:

http://hawaii.gov/dcca/pvl/boards/massage/application_publications

To request an application be mailed to you, please call (808) 586-3000 or send an email to massage@dcca.hawaii.gov and provide the following:

- Name
- Mailing address
- Specify the type of application

8) What documents do I have to submit with my application?

Information on submissions can be found on the instructions sheet that is attached to the application form.

9) How much are the licensing fees?

Information on fees can be found on the instructions sheet that is attached to the application form.

10) I don't know if my education and training meets Hawaii's requirements. Who may I talk with to find out if I meet Hawaii's requirements?

If you would like to have your education and training reviewed, you must submit a completed massage therapist application form and application fee and all required documents. A review will be conducted of your documents and you will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review.

11) When can I sit for the massage exam?

An applicant may sit for the massage exam after their completed* massage therapist application is approved by the Hawaii Board of Massage Therapy ("Board"). Once your application has been approved, an exam approval will be mailed to the address of record. You will need to register with the exam provider. As of January 2023, the exam provider is PSI Services, LLC.

For more information regarding an examination, including registration, see the candidate bulletin at <https://test-takers.psiexams.com/hitrade>. Alternatively, you may register via telephone at (833) 333-4754.

*An application is considered to be complete when ALL the requested information and required fees are provided.

12) What if my infant and adult CPR certification is not from the American Red Cross or American Heart Association?

An applicant may request for a waiver provided that the conditions of Hawaii Administrative Rules (“HAR”) §16-84-23(o) are met. Please see the massage therapist application instructions regarding what documents to submit if you are requesting a CPR waiver.

13) Can I take the exam out-of-state?

It is solely up to the exam provider if they can accommodate the exam candidate.

14) Can you give me my exam score over the phone/via email?

We do not send out exam scores nor do we give exam results over the phone or via email. PSI Services, LLC, the exam provider, sends exam results directly to the applicants. For questions regarding your exam results, please contact PSI Services, LLC.

15) When do I need to renew my massage therapist license and/or massage establishment license?

You must renew your massage therapist license and/or massage establishment license by June 30 of every even-numbered year. Licenses that are not renewed by June 30 of every even-numbered year become forfeited. A forfeited license may be restored within one year of the forfeiture. To restore a license, you may call the Licensing Branch at (808) 586-3000 between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Hawaiian Standard Time, and request to have a restoration application form sent to you.

16) Are there continuing education (“CE”) requirements for massage therapist licensure renewal?

Yes.

Beginning on July 1, 2022, requires all massage therapists to complete at least twelve (12) hours of continuing education within the 2-year period preceding the renewal date (**by June 30, 2024**), of which two (2) of those twelve (12) hours shall include first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or other emergency-related courses;

- Requires the Board to adopt rules relating to the requirements and standards that continuing education programs shall meet to obtain recognition and approval from the Board; and

- Authorizes the Board to conduct a random audit of licensees to determine compliance with the continuing education requirements during the preceding biennium. All licensees selected for audit will be provided written notice of their selection and required to respond within sixty (60) days of notification by and providing documentation verifying compliance with the continuing education requirements.

MESSAGE APPRENTICE

Apprenticeship training shall begin on the effective date of the permit. Apprenticeship training shall not be completed sooner than 6 months and shall not go on longer than 1 year from the date of the issuance of the permit. Apprenticeship training shall be conducted only in this State.

1) Where can I find the list of Board approved apprenticeship programs?

There are no “Board approved” apprenticeship programs. The Board does not have authority to approve apprenticeship programs.

2) If there are no approved apprenticeship programs, how do I complete one?

Even though there are no approved apprenticeship programs, the Board’s administrative rules set forth the course of study that an apprentice shall complete (see section 16-84-23(j), HAR). The apprentice trains under the direct supervision of a sponsoring massage therapist. The sponsoring therapist shall have a current Hawaii massage therapist license. The apprenticeship shall be conducted in a Hawaii licensed massage therapy establishment.

3) Is there a list of Board approved massage therapists that hold apprenticeship training programs?

No. The Board does not approve apprenticeship training programs, therefore, there is no list of approved programs.

4) Will the Board assign me to a sponsoring therapist?

No. You must locate a massage therapist that meets the sponsor requirements (see below) who is willing to allow you to apprentice under him/her.

5) If there is no list and the Board will not assign me to a sponsoring therapist, how do I know whether the massage therapist is authorized to train me?

The sponsoring massage therapist must possess at least three (3) years of massage therapist licensure in Hawaii; employed by or registered with a licensed massage therapy establishment; and must maintain an active license throughout the sponsorship period. In addition, all training must be conducted at a Hawaii licensed massage therapy establishment and the principal massage therapist of that establishment must authorize the apprentice training.

Ask the prospective sponsoring massage therapist to show you proof that he/she is licensed (ask for their license). Ask to see the licenses of the massage therapy establishment and the principal massage therapist. You may also visit our website to verify that the licenses of the individuals and massage therapy establishment are current and in good standing.

7) When can I start the apprenticeship?

You must first complete the academic studies of 50 hours in anatomy, physiology and structural kinesiology (combined total of 50 hours) and 100 hours of theory and demonstration of massage therapy. After you show proof of completion of these hours of academic study, you would submit an application for an apprentice permit. You may only begin your apprenticeship once your application has been approved and your sponsor receives the apprentice permit.

8) How do I obtain the 50 hours in anatomy, physiology and structural kinesiology and 100 hours of theory and demonstration of massage?

You may acquire these hours via different sources:

1. Through a licensed/registered/certified school in any jurisdiction (see the application instructions attached to the massage apprentice application for more information).
2. Through a Hawaii Board approved massage therapy workshop. (see question #1 below for the link to the list of Board approved workshops).

MESSAGE THERAPY WORKSHOP

1) Where can I find a list of Board approved workshops?

The list of approved massage workshops can be found on the Board's website:

<https://cca.hawaii.gov/pvl/boards/massage/>

Click on the "Massage Therapy Workshops" link. For more information regarding these workshops, please contact the establishments directly.

2) How do I apply to conduct a Board approved workshop?

You must submit a completed application and receive approval from the Board. The application can be found at:

http://hawaii.gov/dcca/pvl/boards/massage/application_publications

Click on the "Massage Therapy Workshops" link, then click "Application to Conduct Massage Therapy Workshop"

3) What are the qualifications to teach a Board approved workshop?

Please see HAR § 16-84-23(i), which states the qualifications to teach a Board approved workshop.

MESSAGE THERAPY ESTABLISHMENTS

1) I already have a Massage Establishment (MAE) license, but I'm moving to another location. Will my current license cover this new location?

No. MAE licenses are not transferable to a new location. You must file a Relocation application and obtain an approval before opening at this new location and engaging in massage therapy services.

2) Do I need a MAE if I want to work out of my home?

Yes. An MAE application must be filed and all requirements met. If a MAE is situated in any building used for residential purposes, the MAE shall be set apart and shall not be used for any other purpose.

3) I already have an MAE license and will be selling my business. Can the new owner operate at the current location under my license?

No. An MAE license is not transferable to a new owner. The new owner must apply for a new MAE license.

4) I will not be an employee of the MAE, but I would like to perform massage therapy services. Do I need a MAE license?

Yes. As an independent contractor and if the client is coming to you for massage therapy services in a fixed location, you would need to obtain an MAE license, in addition to your MAT license. You do not need an MAE license if you are only doing outcalls (going to the location of the client).

5) What if there is a change in the Principal Massage Therapist (PMT)? What do I do?

Please complete and submit the Change of Personnel form to report **all changes, additions or terminations** of your principal massage therapist and any changes, additions or terminations of any **licensed** massage therapist(s) **employed or terminated** by, or associated with the massage establishment.

7) When do I need to notify the Board of any changes to the PMT or MATs?

All subsequent changes in personnel must be reported to the Board in writing within forty-eight (48) hours of the change on a "Change of Personnel for Massage Therapy Establishments" form MA-12.

8) Do I need an MAE license if performing massage therapy services every week at a Farmer's Market?

Yes. An MAE license is required if massage therapy services are performed on a regular basis (e.g., open-air markets, farmers' markets, swap meets, flea markets).

9) Can I place my massage therapist and/or massage establishment license on inactive status?

Yes.

10) After licensure, how often will I have to renew?

All licenses expire on June 30 of each even numbered year.

11) I did not renew my license on time. Can I restore it?

Licenses that are not renewed by June 30 of every even-numbered year become forfeited. A forfeited license may be restored within one year of the forfeiture. To restore a license, you may call the Licensing Branch at (808) 586-3000 between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Hawaiian Standard Time, and request to have a restoration application form sent to you.

HAWAII BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPY

Guidance for Massage Therapists and Continuing Education (CE)

On June 25, 2021, Act 102, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2021 was signed into law.

Act 102, SLH 2021 amended Hawaii Revised Statutes § 452-16 (Renewal of license; fee; **continuing education**.) to require continuing education for all Hawaii massage therapists with the biennium commencing on **July 1, 2022** and every biennial renewal thereafter.

The continuing education requirement:

- **Beginning on July 1, 2022**, requires all massage therapists to complete at least twelve (12) hours of continuing education within the 2-year period preceding the renewal date (**by June 30, 2024**), of which two (2) of those twelve (12) hours shall include first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or other emergency-related courses;
- Requires the Board to adopt rules relating to the requirements and standards that continuing education programs shall meet to obtain recognition and approval from the Board; and
- Authorizes the Board to conduct a random audit of licensees to determine compliance with the continuing education requirements during the preceding biennium. All licensees selected for audit will be provided written notice of their selection and required to respond within sixty (60) days of notification by and providing documentation verifying compliance with the continuing education requirements.

The Board of Massage Therapy is still in the process of promulgating administrative rules relating to the requirements and standards that continuing education programs shall meet to obtain recognition and approval from the Board. This is a guidance document for your reference as you complete the CE courses required for licensure renewal before June 30 of every even-numbered year.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Will I be required to send CE completion certificates with my licensure renewal?

A: During licensure renewal, you will attest to completing the CE requirement, but you do not need to send copies of any certificates at that time. If you are selected for audit, you will then be required to submit copies of your CE completion certificates.

Q: Will I be required to complete CE if I renew on inactive status?

A: You do not need to complete CE if you renew on inactive status. However, upon reactivation of your license, you will need to provide proof that you met the CE requirement during the preceding biennium.

Q: Will I be required to submit CE completion certificates if I restore my license?

A: If you do not renew your license on time, your license is automatically forfeited. You have one year to restore your license. You must submit a restoration application, fees, including a late fee and proof of completion of the CE requirement for the preceding biennium. If you do not restore your license within one year, you will need to reapply as a new applicant.

Q: What topics are eligible for the CE requirement?

A: Two of the CE hours must be in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or other emergency-related training courses and must include a hands-on training component. The remaining ten CE hours shall be in any category that enhances the skills and knowledge of the massage therapist, including, but not limited to, professional ethics, theory and practice of massage therapy, modalities, and professional development. Practice-building business courses will not be accepted.

Q: What are the requirements for the first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), or other emergency-related training course?

A: Two of the continuing education hours shall include first aid, CPR, or other emergency-related course. The course must be completed and include a hands-on training component. The course must be sponsored by the American Heart Association (AHA) or American Red Cross (ARC). CPR courses that are sponsored by other providers will need to show curriculum consistent with AHA or ARC guidelines. This requirement is limited to a maximum of two CE hours per biennium.

Q: Will online courses be accepted?

A: Distance learning courses will be approved. Distance learning includes courses taken by home study, whether delivered synchronously or asynchronously online by computer means, by live or recorded video or audio media, or by printed materials. However, first aid, CPR, or other emergency-related courses that are completely online will not be accepted and must include a hands-on component.

Q: How long is one CE hour?

A: One CE hour must consist of at least 50 minutes of any one clock hour during which the student participates in a learning activity in the presence of an instructor, or in a distance learning activity designed and delivered by a provider.

Q: What are the requirements for a CE provider?

A: Providers of the CE courses shall include: massage schools approved by a state board of massage, nationally accredited massage certifying organizations, and local or national professional associations.

Q: What information needs to be on the CE completion certificate?

A: The CE provider shall issue written evidence to each attendee. This certificate shall include the name of the attendee; name of the provider; course or program title, date, and location; and the number of CE hours. Each licensee shall be responsible for maintaining their own completion certificates in the case that they are audited.