

AN ACT REGULATING ALTERNATIVE HEALING THERAPIES

House Docket No. H.350 - <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/192/H350>

Senate Docket No. S.221 - <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/192/S221>

Overview

The state Attorney General, Maura Healey, has redrafted S.168, An Act Regulating Bodyworks, and refiled it on February 10, 2021, as An Act Regulating Alternative Healing Therapies. The identical bill has been filed in both the House and the Senate to ensure its passage.

Purpose of the Bill

According to the MA Attorney General's Office: "The bill creates a regulatory structure for alternative healing therapies to prevent criminals from using these currently unregulated practices as fronts for human trafficking."

The Bill Mandates

- The creation of a Board of Massage Therapy and Alternative Healing Therapies with 7 members.
 - 3 licensed massage therapists
 - 2 licensed alternative healing therapists
 - 1 law enforcement representative
 - 1 consumer
- The establishment of standards of professional and ethical conduct for alternative healing therapies that reflect national, state or other recognized professional organization or certification standards of each discipline; approval and operation of alternative therapy training and certification programs; establish standards for continuing education reflecting acceptable national, state or other recognized professional organization or certification standards of each discipline; adopt rules and regulations to define and differentiate among varying scopes of practice within alternative healing therapies;
- The establishment of a Massachusetts alternative healing therapies advisory council to study and make recommendations to the board on the regulation of alternative healing therapies. There will be one licensed practitioner of each discipline.
- The council shall inform the board on the scope of practice of each discipline and current standards adopted by each discipline's respective national, state or otherwise recognized professional organization or certification process
- The Council is to make recommendations regarding new and emerging alternative healing therapies that may fall under the scope of the boards' authority.
- Alternative Healing Therapy Programs must be licensed by the Office of Private Occupational School Education and must meet minimum standards for training, facilities, instructors and curriculums. For more information please see the following link:
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/information-for-schools-office-of-private-occupational-school-education>

Modalities Affected (Include but not limited to)

- Asian Bodywork Therapy
- Reflexology
- Structural Integration or Rolfing
- Feldenkrais Method
- Trager Approach
- Ayurvedic Therapies
- Polarity or Polarity Therapy
- Qi Gong
- Body Mind Centering
- Reiki, Levels II and Above
- Energy and Somatic Healing Practices

Licensure Requirements

- High school diploma or equivalent
- 18 years of age or older
- 2 professional letters of reference with at least 1 being from an employer or professional in the alternative healing therapy or medical field
- Good moral character as determined by the discretion of the Board
- **Successfully completed a course of study, supervised instruction, or certification process reflecting a national, state, or other recognized professional organization standard at a licensed alternative health therapy program that has been determined appropriate by the Board**
- Has not been convicted in any jurisdiction of sexually related crime
- Proof of professional liability coverage
- Demonstrates professional competence

Additional Licensure Regulations

The board may grant a license to an applicant for an alternative healing therapist license who:

- A. Provides documentation, acceptable to the board, that demonstrates that the applicant has provided an appropriate number of hours of an alternative healing therapy, as determined by the board, to members of the public for compensation
- B. Has been authorized to practice an alternative healing therapy by the municipal board of health within the commonwealth, provide the authorization shall be valid not more than 2 years after the date of the application
- C. Provides proof of the successful passage or compliance with a training or certification process reflecting a national, state, or other recognized professional organization standard acceptable to the board
- D. Provides proof of professional liability insurance

Additional Regulations

- A member of the police department of a town may, upon appropriate legal process, enter and inspect any premises in that town used for massage, alternative healing therapy or the giving of vapor baths
- The act shall take effect upon its passage