

SENATE BILL 419

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6lr0775
CF HB 42

By: **Senators Simonaire and Augustine**

Introduced and read first time: January 29, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

Committee Report: Favorable

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 12, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Health Occupations – State Board of Massage Therapy Examiners – Revisions**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing an individual registered by the State Board of Massage
4 Therapy Examiners to practice massage therapy in the State to continue to practice
5 massage therapy beyond a certain date; altering the requirements an individual
6 must meet to qualify for a license to practice massage therapy; repealing obsolete
7 qualifications for registered massage practitioners; repealing the requirement that
8 the imposition of a certain administrative penalty be subject to certain hearing
9 requirements; altering certain reinstatement and reactivation requirements; and
10 generally relating to massage therapists.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Health Occupations
13 Section 6–301(a), 6–302, 6–305(d), 6–306, and 6–306.2
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
17 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article – Health Occupations**

19 6–301.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (a) Except as otherwise provided in this title, before an individual may practice
2 massage therapy in the State, the individual shall be:

3 (1) [On or before October 31, 2026:

4 (i) Licensed by the Board; or

5 [(ii)] (2) Registered by the Board to practice massage therapy in a
6 setting that is not a health care setting[; or

7 (2) On or after November 1, 2026, licensed by the Board].

8 6–302.

9 (a) In this section, “contact hour” means 50 minutes of actual instructional time
10 per each 60–minute hour.

11 (b) To qualify for a license, an applicant shall be an individual who:

12 (1) Is of good moral character;

13 (2) Is at least 18 years old;

14 (3) [Has] **EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION,**
15 **HAS** graduated from an institution of postsecondary education, as defined in § 10–101 of
16 the Education Article and approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission, with
17 at least 750 contact hours of education in a curriculum:

18 (i) Approved by the Board;

19 (ii) Endorsed by:

20 1. The Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation; or

21 2. An equivalent entity that accredits both institutions of
22 higher education and programs offering instruction in massage therapy; and

23 (iii) Accredited by an institutional accreditation agency recognized by
24 [the]:

25 1. **THE** United States Department of Education; **OR**

26 2. **ANOTHER ENTITY THAT ACCREDITS PROGRAMS**
27 **OFFERING INSTRUCTION IN MASSAGE THERAPY;**

1 (4) **[Has] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION,**
2 **HAS** completed 750 contact hours of education in a Board–approved program for the study
3 of massage therapy that includes the following areas of content:

4 (i) Anatomy, physiology, and kinesiology;

5 (ii) Massage therapy theory;

6 (iii) Contraindications and pathology;

7 (iv) Professional ethics;

8 (v) Health and hygiene;

9 (vi) Research;

10 (vii) Supervised hands–on techniques; and

11 (viii) Clinical assessment and documentation;

12 (5) Has passed an examination approved by the Board; and

13 (6) Submits to a criminal history records check in accordance with § 6–303
14 of this subtitle.

15 **[(c) On or before September 30, 2024, to qualify to be registered, an applicant shall**
16 **be an individual who:**

17 (1) Is of good moral character;

18 (2) Is at least 18 years old;

19 (3) Has graduated from a program for the study of massage therapy with
20 a curriculum:

21 (i) Approved by the Board;

22 (ii) Endorsed by:

23 1. The Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation; or

24 2. An equivalent entity that is an accrediting agency or
25 organization that accredits both institutions of higher education and programs offering
26 instruction in massage therapy;

27 (iii) Accredited by an institutional accreditation agency recognized by
28 the United States Department of Education; and

1 (iv) That requires at least 600 contact hours of classroom instruction
2 that includes the following areas of content:

- 3 1. Anatomy, physiology, and kinesiology;
- 4 2. Massage therapy theory;
- 5 3. Contraindications and pathology;
- 6 4. Professional ethics;
- 7 5. Health and hygiene;
- 8 6. Research;
- 9 7. Supervised hands-on techniques; and
- 10 8. Clinical assessment and documentation;

11 (4) Has passed an examination approved by the Board; and

12 (5) Submits to a criminal history records check in accordance with § 6-303
13 of this subtitle.]

14 **(C) (1) AN APPLICANT WHO HAS GRADUATED FROM AN OUT-OF-STATE**
15 **PROGRAM FOR THE STUDY OF MASSAGE THERAPY SHALL HAVE GRADUATED FROM A**
16 **PROGRAM FOR THE STUDY OF MASSAGE THERAPY THAT:**

17 **(I) HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE STATE'S HIGHER EDUCATION**
18 **COMMISSION OR SIMILAR ENTITY THAT REGULATES INSTITUTIONS OF**
19 **POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION;**

20 **(II) HAS BEEN ENDORSED BY:**

21 **1. THE COMMISSION ON MASSAGE THERAPY**
22 **ACCREDITATION; OR**

23 **2. AN EQUIVALENT ENTITY THAT IS AN ACCREDITING**
24 **AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION THAT ACCREDITS BOTH INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER**
25 **EDUCATION AND PROGRAMS OFFERING INSTRUCTION IN MASSAGE THERAPY;**

26 **(III) IS ACCREDITED BY AN INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION**
27 **AGENCY RECOGNIZED BY:**

1 **1. THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION;**
2 **OR**

3 **2. ANOTHER ENTITY THAT ACCREDITS PROGRAMS**
4 **OFFERING INSTRUCTION IN MASSAGE THERAPY; AND**

5 **(IV) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION,**
6 **REQUIRES AT LEAST 750 CONTACT HOURS THAT INCLUDES THE AREAS OF CONTENT**
7 **REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (B)(4) OF THIS SECTION.**

8 **(2) AN APPLICANT WHO HAS GRADUATED FROM AN OUT-OF-STATE**
9 **PROGRAM FOR THE STUDY OF MASSAGE THERAPY THAT DOES NOT MEET THE**
10 **CONTACT HOUR REQUIREMENT UNDER THIS SUBSECTION MAY SUPPLEMENT THE**
11 **REQUIRED HOURS WITH:**

12 **(I) CONTACT HOURS FROM A BOARD-APPROVED PROGRAM OF**
13 **STUDY OF MASSAGE THERAPY, ON A 1-HOUR TO 1-HOUR BASIS;**

14 **(II) BOARD-APPROVED CONTINUING EDUCATION HOURS, ON A**
15 **1-HOUR TO 1-HOUR BASIS; OR**

16 **(III) DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE OF HAVING COMPLETED AT LEAST**
17 **1,000 LICENSED, OUT-OF-STATE HOURS OF HANDS-ON MASSAGE THERAPY**
18 **EXPERIENCE WITHIN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING 2 YEARS.**

19 (d) (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, the Board may waive any
20 requirement of this subtitle for an applicant who is licensed, certified, or registered to
21 practice massage therapy in another state.

22 (2) The Board may grant a waiver under paragraph (1) of this subsection
23 only if the applicant:

24 (i) Pays the application fee set by the Board; and

25 (ii) Provides adequate evidence that the applicant:

26 1. Has completed educational requirements that the Board
27 determines to be equivalent to the Board-approved educational requirements in this State;

28 2. At the time the applicant became licensed, certified, or
29 registered in the other state, passed in that state or any other state an examination that
30 the Board determines to be equivalent to the examination required in this State; and

31 3. Is of good moral character.

1 (e) On or after October 1, 2024, the Board may not issue an initial registration to
2 practice as a registered massage practitioner.

3 (f) [On or before October 31, 2026, the] **THE** Board shall convert the registration
4 of an individual registered by the Board as a registered massage practitioner to a license
5 to practice massage therapy if the individual complies with regulations adopted by the
6 Board.

7 6–305.

8 (d) (1) Each licensed massage therapist or registered massage practitioner
9 shall notify the Board in writing of any change in the name or address of the licensed
10 massage therapist or registered massage practitioner within 60 days after the change
11 occurred.

12 (2) [Subject to the hearing provisions of § 6–309 of this subtitle, if] **IF** a
13 licensed massage therapist or registered massage practitioner fails to notify the Board
14 within the time required under this subsection, the Board may impose an administrative
15 penalty of \$100.

16 6–306.

17 (a) If a licensed massage therapist or registered massage practitioner fails for any
18 reason to renew a license or registration, the Board shall reinstate the license or
19 registration if the former licensed massage therapist or former registered massage
20 practitioner:

21 (1) Applies to the Board for reinstatement of the license or registration
22 within 5 years after the license or registration expires;

23 (2) Meets the renewal requirements of § 6–305 of this subtitle;

24 (3) Submits to the Board satisfactory evidence of having completed a State
25 and national criminal history records check in accordance with § 6–303 of this subtitle; and

26 (4) Pays to the Board the reinstatement fee set by the Board.

27 (b) (1) **[The] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OR (3) OF THIS**
28 **SUBSECTION, THE** Board may not reinstate the license of a former licensed massage
29 therapist or registration of a former registered massage practitioner who fails to apply for
30 reinstatement of the license or registration within 5 years after the license or registration
31 expires.

32 (2) [If the Board does not reinstate a license or registration under
33 paragraph (1) of this subsection, a] **A** former licensed massage therapist [or former
34 registered massage practitioner] may apply for a new license [or registration] by meeting

1 the licensing [or registration] requirements in effect at the time of application for obtaining
2 a new license [or registration] under this title and any additional requirements determined
3 by the Board.

4 **(3) A FORMER REGISTERED MASSAGE PRACTITIONER WHO FAILS TO**
5 **APPLY FOR REINSTATEMENT OF THE REGISTRATION WITHIN 5 YEARS AFTER THE**
6 **REGISTRATION EXPIRES MAY BE REINSTATED ONLY BY MEETING THE LICENSING**
7 **REQUIREMENTS IN EFFECT FOR OBTAINING A NEW LICENSE UNDER THIS TITLE AND**
8 **ANY ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS DETERMINED BY THE BOARD.**

9 6–306.2.

10 (a) The Board shall place a licensed massage therapist or registered massage
11 practitioner on inactive status if the licensee or registration holder submits to the Board:

12 (1) An application for inactive status on the form required by the Board;
13 and

14 (2) The inactive status fee set by the Board.

15 (b) A licensed massage therapist or a registered massage practitioner on inactive
16 status may reactivate the license or registration if the licensee or registration holder:

17 (1) Complies with the continuing education and CPR requirements that
18 are:

19 (i) Established in regulations adopted by the Board; and

20 (ii) In effect for the current license or registration renewal period in
21 which the licensee or registration holder seeks to reactivate the license or registration;
22 [and]

23 **(2) SUBMITS TO THE BOARD SATISFACTORY EVIDENCE OF HAVING**
24 **COMPLETED A STATE AND NATIONAL CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS CHECK IN**
25 **ACCORDANCE WITH § 6–303 OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND**

26 **[(2)] (3) Pays the reactivation fee set by the Board.**

27 **(C) A REGISTERED MASSAGE PRACTITIONER ON INACTIVE STATUS WHO**
28 **FAILS TO REACTIVATE A REGISTRATION WITHIN 5 YEARS OF FIRST BEING PLACED**
29 **ON INACTIVE STATUS MAY REACTIVATE THE REGISTRATION ONLY BY MEETING THE**
30 **LICENSING REQUIREMENTS IN EFFECT FOR OBTAINING A NEW LICENSE UNDER THIS**
31 **TITLE AND ANY ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS DETERMINED BY THE BOARD.**

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
2 1, 2026.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.