

POLICY

TENNESSEE MASSAGE LICENSURE BOARD

Initial Policy Rescinded 5/10/22- see details below in red

DISTANCE LEARNING IN MASSAGE SCHOOLS

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Massage Licensure Board hereby rescinds its prior distance learning policy.

Board rules require that massage programs consist of at least five hundred “classroom hours.” Due in part to restrictions related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, for instruction taking place March 15, 2020 or later, the Massage Licensure Board will consider up to 40% of the total contact hours in a Tennessee Massage School’s total curriculum that are offered in an online or distance learning format to be “classroom hours,” with the limitation that hands-on and clinical coursework should not be offered in an online or distance learning format. Coursework that should not be offered via distance learning includes and is not limited to subjects such as massage technique, massage clinic, kinesiology, and palpation; however, portions of such courses that are purely “theory” may be completed via distance/online learning.

The Board encourages massage schools to structure their massage curricula to ensure that students are completing any online coursework and obtaining the required contact hours, and to keep careful records to show which coursework was completed in an online or distance learning formats. The Board expects that such records will be produced to the Board administrative office as requested.

The Board will promptly move forward to amend its rules governing massage school curricula to add these requirements and to give Tennessee massage schools greater certainty regarding their operations.

Effective immediately, Students who are enrolled in a Massage Program after May 31st, 2022 are no longer allowed to have classes online. The Tennessee Massage Licensure rules regarding Massage programs state the program must be THEC approved or approved by the THEC equivalent in other states for a 500 hour classroom program (0870-01-.05(1)(e)). The Board made the initial policy in light of the COVID 19 pandemic and the restriction that were related to the pandemic, however, the board deemed it is now time to return to the classroom as those restrictions have been lifted. There is no longer a provision that allows the board to consider up to 40% of the 500 classroom hours to be online.

Administratively updated 5/11/2022