

## Responses to Survey - Board of Massage Therapy

Total responses: 108 (of which 1 out-of-state)

<b>Highest Compliment</b>	<b>Ability to monitor on behalf of licensees</b> - 35 <b>Ability to keep profession from criticism because of bad actors</b> - 29 <b>Other:</b> -Keeps people who are not trained from hurting someone and giving us who are trained a bad name. - Monitor the profession on behalf of licensees and the public. - Provides respectability and accountability for ethical standards. - I was initially opposed to licensing massage therapists. The process has been relatively painless and the grandfather clause alleviated much of the angst and distress with the Montana massage therapy community.... Everyone in the office in Helena has always been helpful and positive.	<b>Ability to streamline Continuing Ed</b> - 14 <b>None</b> - 23
<b>Biggest Complaint</b>	<b>Licensing fees too high</b> - 37 <b>Licensing renewal timelines too strict</b> - 10 <b>Other:</b> Hard to find contact phone numbers. - CEU costing too much and having to have 12 CEUs each year. (6) - Let professionals renew their licenses within a year from the date they got it. Not all at the same time. Also respond to our needs in a timely manner, don't wait a week to call us back with a answer. Also go back to the old computer system for renewing our licenses and the old database where other therapists from other states with the same exact licensing number are NOT listed! - In small areas like where we live, the customers act as the best regulation. - Under the guise of protecting the public the state has, due to the weak grandfathering regulations in place since 2010 fostered a dramatic increase in prostitution activity in the larger cities and probably licensed people with little or no education about massage. It gives the appearance that this regulation is simply another way to increase state revenue. In most states where massage licensing is in effect the practice of massage has health care provider status and like most other healthcare providers falls under the Department of health not labor & industry, which is sorely equipped to investigate medical complaints of malpractice or issues of conduct. Having RN's apply for a separate license to do massage is also another way of getting more money when they are the superior in medical and ethical education as is currently required to obtain a license to practice nursing. In a state with less than 1 million in total population there never was a need to regulate massage and those "businesses" that cater to those desiring a "happy ending" type of massage will always be in business so regulation is a moot point to them. Now that they are licensed to do what they call massage, it is unlikely that there will be any complaints registered. It is ridiculous to require a national certification test, which basically is a repeat of the test that most massage schools already require in their 500-hour program. Why pay hundreds of dollars for something that doesn't really allow you to practice nationally without licensing and is a test of what you already demonstrated in the educational environment. Conduct does need to be regulated but that can happen on a local/county level and if revenue is needed it is there. - Regulations too inconsistent. Why are Rolfers exempt? - Online renewal does not allow me to get past search. - Yearly renewal is too often. - 24 CEUs are too much as there are not enough educational opportunities without traveling long distances, and missing income as many of us are self employed. - Licensing is not effective at keeping those that are providing sexual services from promoting themselves as massage therapists. - Way too easy to obtain this license. - Not getting emails about how the board is progressing. - The person that the massage therapists must communicate with is rude and impatient. (2) - Inconsistencies. - Does not require insurance and does not enforce laws for nonlicensed massage therapists. - Practice of medicine defined too broadly: overlaps with anything health-related. - What does my money go for? How are they going to enforce the licensing? - Since this is a new board maybe it's not fair to state "lack of information" but it seems like things are still in flux re CEUs and how they will be determined/evaluated. - Enforcing continuing ed requirements is unnecessarily burdensome and does more for massage schools who glean the revenue than from the therapists who have to scrape the money together to fulfill the license renewal requirements. - Unnecessary as most of the places that really need the licensing are grandfathered in. The places that give us the bad name are already known and even then reputable salons still get phone calls at all hours of the night and it doesn't really help keep the creepy people out of the business. - The licensing board is lacking in professionalism. We are paying high rates for our licenses so we can practice in this beautiful state. The least they could do is be prompt, allow Montana its own site for licensing instead of combining us with everyone... - I need more communication from the board as to what is going on. It's difficult to find the guidelines for CEUs.	<b>Board's response to unlicensed practice</b> - 10 <b>Regulations too strict</b> - 5 <b>None</b> - 33

**Other reasons the board is important:** - Our licensing board is important because it helps protect the work that I've dedicated a large percent of my adult life from those who lack necessary and fundamental education and quality control from possibly causing undue harm to an unknowing public. Our board is important for the state because it shows that if we're going to allow people to practice massage therapy on the public, we're going to set some quality control measures to ensure that the public is protected. - Ensures that our profession upholds moral ethics, is properly educated with the basics and creates an atmosphere of cooperation and professionalism in our arena of practice. - I have had a lot of anatomy and physiology and assessment training and I don't consider someone who has had none or very limited knowledge of these subjects a massage therapist. In addition, there has been progress in the field of massage therapy to bring it up to the level of a medical professional and there should be regulations to help us continue to grow with integrity and honesty in this field. The general public doesn't really know who is a qualified massage therapist without designations that indicate sufficient training. - Assigns accountability of providers holding licensure. - Licensure brings cohesiveness to a profession and a board is the glue that keeps it all together. You cannot have ANY licensing without a board. I absolutely cannot understand what this foolishness is about. If you do away with the board you must do away with the license. This is like saying you must have a drivers license but then not having any one seeing that you do. - For me it gives a platform to work from. For the state it is a money trap, fines, and money for a law firm in Helena. - Clarifies professional requirements, education, scope of practice, and allows practitioners to bring before the board issues that arise concerning events within the massage therapy community. It is also a place for people to file complaints and have a resolution. The board helps maintain the professional integrity of the practice. It helps resolve issues that concern "overlapping" of other licensed practices. The board helps to restrain people who put themselves forward as practitioners without being licensed. The board discusses and resolves issues that affect public health, safety, welfare, issues that need an in-depth look and meaningful decision that is fair to all parties concerned. This is a "new" licensed profession in Montana some of the applications of the law still are being worked out and the board is the place that adequate and functional "rules and regulations" can be established. - It just keeps the ethical therapist ethical and the bad apples will continue whether they are required to be licensed or not. Somewhat hypocritical law passed by numerous politicians who belong to the gentleman's clubs throughout the state and either partake or turn a blind eye to the late night massage activity that goes on within these organizations. - It helps us be recognized as a legitimate alternative medical therapy that qualifies for reimbursement from insurance companies, which allows us to provide beneficial care to patients who otherwise might not be able to afford therapeutic massage therapy. - The "public" tends to view a licensed practitioner as capable and respectful in their chosen profession. I live in Wyoming where we have no licensure, as of yet. This has created much confusion, and many "massage therapists" who essentially have little or no training representing themselves as professionals. I am working with my colleagues to bring forth a practice act in our state. - The public can be confident that massage therapists are qualified and know what they are doing. - The board should be protecting the licensees in addition to the safety of the public. There are unqualified/unethical practitioners that tarnish the name of qualified and ethical professionals. - It is important if the state actually recognizes that massage therapy is a creditable form of intervention effective in facilitating for the physiology of those who bless us with their patronage. Stress is the major cause of many medical conditions and although massage is not equivalent to brain surgery, it does have a clinical benefit providing for a reduction in stress hormone production, an increase in endorphin hormone production that alleviates pain and discomfort while increasing immune function. After a lifetime of practicing massage (53 years) it is criminal to pass massage regulation without giving consideration to education, liability insurance requirements, investigative expertise, and the assumption by the state that licensing boards have the innate right to levy fines without due process under the judicial system in accordance with the US Constitution. - It protects massages therapists from being ousted by other professions that do similar things.

<b>Public Health - 9</b>	<b>Public Welfare - 2</b>	<b>Public Safety - 16</b>	<b>None of these- 30</b>	<b>All or combination - 44</b>
<b>Scope of Practice:</b>	<b>Too Narrow - 25</b>	<b>Too Broad - 6</b>		<b>Just Right - 62</b>

**Problems with own BA or other professions' scope of practice** - None with own profession = 95. Yes = 10 of which: Board of Barbers/Cosmetologists - 1  
Board of Physical Therapy Examiners - 6. Board of Medical Examiners - 1. Board of Athletic Trainers - 1. Board of Nursing - 1.

-- **Comments regarding just right scope:** -- Massage therapy techniques are variable and do not always fit neatly into a specific package. The wording in the law reflects that variability and doesn't appear to make practicing massage therapy in Montana a difficult thing to do. Energy workers do not need to be licensed, and as long as a massage therapist is not trying to step into the realm of physical therapy or naturopathy the scope seems, to me, to be just right. -- My license holds boundaries between what we provide and what we don't provide. It allows other professionals in the health care industry to work with us and not overlap services.

-- **Comment regarding too broad a scope:** Licensure has not changed anything except for the added expense of obtaining and keeping the license and the continuing education required. There are still so-called massage businesses in the state that are known for other "activities".

-- **Comments regarding too narrow a scope:** -- I think we should be able to recommend certain stretches and exercises that would help strengthen our clients. (several similar responses) Also, I think we should be able to recommend nutritional supplements that would be beneficial to our clients. - I don't understand why myofascial release (including modalities such as structural integration and rolfing) are not included in the scope of practice for massage therapists, as well as reflexology. These are taught in massage schools as part of massage and are included in courses that qualify for CEUs. If you are going to regulate the profession, regulate all the modalities that are considered massage therapy based on the AMTA or AMA's definition. - Our training teaches us things like in home exercise...we are not allowed to share if we find imbalances, we now have to be extremely careful in wording everything. I feel that licensing has not protected me but just opened us to more unnecessary legal liabilities. - The Physical Therapist board wish to control and minimize what massage therapists can claim to practice, as we "threaten" their own job security; however, they're perfectly fine being able to claim that they practice massage therapy, which is laughable.

**What laws/regulations have caused the most problems?** None =

I was initially opposed to licensing massage therapists. The process has been relatively painless and the grandfather clause alleviated much of the angst and distress with the Montana massage therapy community. However, it still feels that enforcing continuing ed requirements (especially in this recession) is unnecessarily burdensome and does more for massage schools who glean the revenue than from the therapists who have to scrape the money together to fulfill the license renewal requirements. Having said that, everyone within the office in Helena has always been helpful and positive. It is still a Board that is getting settled in and we are all waiting for things to be finalized. -- The practice of medicine definition regulating the Board of Medical Examiners can be construed to cover everything I do as a massage therapist. I also practice alternative healing modalities that are energy-based such as Quantum-Touch, Reiki, Matrix Energetics, and Reconnective Healing. These are not included in the definition of massage therapy, and could be construed as practicing medicine without a license. I would like to have exceptions written into the law for this type of healing work. - Though I have not entirely read through the Cosmetologist Licensing Board's scope, I am certified in body treatments from another state. If I'd like to offer scrubs or mud wraps to clients, do I need to have a cosmo. license, or can it qualify under my massage license? Though I am putting it on skin, I am not treating blemishes or acne, rosacea, etc. I need clarity. - State-to-state inconsistency as far as required education hours and continuing education credits. Every state having their own regulations and requirements is a hindrance for those Licensed Massage Therapists who plan to move to another state than that of the state they went to school in. - Continuing education requirements. (12)

<b>Consumer complaint filed?</b>	No = 98 Yes = 2 Board was effective = No. 2 - One noted the matter was dropped. The other gave a broad complaint that included: State boards just don't seem to be equipped to see anything that isn't in the regulations. The practice of involving legal beagles to write and advise on the "law" seems to set aside any desire to exercise common sense when creating boards. <i>[much process discussion deleted]</i> The counties of the state should be provided with the means to enact the local level of public health issue complaint investigation, fee collection, enforcement when necessary and adjudication when needed at the local court level when a criminal act has been committed. The county should have the right to suspend or revoke a license for proven inappropriate conduct. Any fines that are levied must be through the court system.
<b>Nonlicensee comments</b>	Saying Board of Massage Therapists: Necessary for Public Health - 148, Public Safety - 102, Public Welfare - 93 Of 1346 respondents some marked all or a combination -

as of June 2013: