



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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LICENSURE OF MASSAGE PARLORS

By: Nicole Dube, Associate Analyst

You asked for information on the regulation of massage parlors in Connecticut. Specifically, you wanted to know whether they are licensed by the state and if the legislature has considered any bills on their regulation.

MASSAGE PARLOR REGULATION

Massage therapists are licensed by the Department of Public Health (DPH), but the department does not license or regulate massage parlors. They are regulated by municipalities through local business ordinances (e.g., building, planning, housing, zoning, health, and safety ordinances). In addition to general business rules, some municipalities have ordinances specific to massage parlors.

A 1975 law required the Department of Health Services (now DPH), to license and regulate massage establishments and massage therapists (PA 75-517, formerly codified at [CGS § 19a-92](#)). It also required the department to adopt regulations. The department held public hearings on proposed regulations and determined that local authorities were better able to regulate the massage business. Therefore, the law was never implemented and was subsequently repealed by PA 83-487 (See OLR Report [2004-R-0443](#) for additional information).

MESSAGE THERAPIST REGULATION

By law, DPH licenses and regulates massage therapists. To obtain a massage therapist license, an applicant must (1) pay a \$375 fee, (2) pass the National Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, and (3) graduate from a massage therapy school offering a course of study of at least 500 classroom hours that is accredited by (a) an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or a state board of postsecondary technical trade and business schools or (b) the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation. Licenses must be renewed every two years ([CGS § 20-206b](#)).

Only a DPH licensee can use the title “licensed massage therapist.” A licensee who doesn’t conform to accepted professional massage therapy standards may be subject to (1) license suspension or revocation, (2) a letter of reprimand, (3) probation, (4) fines of up to \$10,000, (5) imprisonment for up to 10 years, or (6) any combination of these ([CGS § 20-206c](#)).

PROPOSED LEGISLATION

We found only one bill proposed in 1991 that addressed massage parlor regulation. [Proposed HB 5393](#), An Act Concerning the Registration and Regulation of Massage Parlors, was referred to the Planning and Development Committee, but the committee took no action.

ND:ts