Board Certification for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork

CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

NCBTMB
CHOOSE BOARD CERTIFIED.℠

NCBTMB Mission: Elevating the massage therapy profession nationwide by establishing and advancing the highest credentials and standards of excellence.

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BOARD CERTIFICATION OVERVIEW

The National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork (NCBTMB) is a nationally accredited credentialing organization that sets higher standards for those who practice therapeutic massage and bodywork. It does this through a nationally recognized certification program—Board Certification. Board Certification represents the highest attainable credential within the profession; it is an advanced credential separate from entry-level massage therapy state licensure.

NCBTMB offers one certification examination: the Board Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (BCETMB). NCBTMB has included a content outline for the BCETMB within this handbook. The eligibility criteria for Board Certification can be found in the section titled "Eligibility Requirements" of this handbook. Please review these criteria carefully before submitting your application to test.

Once you have become Board Certified, you will join thousands of other massage and bodywork professionals who are committed to fostering higher standards of ethical and professional practice in the delivery of therapeutic massage and bodywork services.

NCBTMB contracts with Prometric, an independent testing company, to administer the Board Certification Examination. Prometric experts work closely with NCBTMB to develop the exam that evaluates the knowledge of therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals.

Prometric also scores the exam and sends the results to NCBTMB. NCBTMB oversees Prometric's activities to ensure that all components of the examination process meet national standards.

GENERAL EXAM INFORMATION

The Board Certification exam is a certification examination that candidates can take and pass to show they have earned a higher voluntary credential within the profession.

Exam Facts

- The Board Certification exam consists of 140 multiple-choice questions.
- Four choices are provided for each multiple- choice question. Only one choice is correct.
- You will have 140 minutes to complete the certification exam.
- A computer scores the exam as either pass or fail. You will receive on-screen notification of having either passed or failed the exam as soon as you have completed it.

NCBTMB offers resources to help you prepare for the exam. You can check out these resources in our Important Links & Resources section.

EXAM MAKE-UP

Assessment, Care Planning, and Documentation (25%)

Knowledge

- Interview techniques (e.g., open-ended and fact-finding questions, verbal and nonverbal communication skills, reflective listening)
- Assessment methods (e.g., health history, observation, palpation, range of motion, posture, gait, pain scale, special tests)
- Common pathologies, injuries, and pre-/post-surgical considerations
- Common prescription and non-prescription medications, their effects, and side effects (e.g., pain medications, muscle relaxants, cardiovascular agents, anti-inflammatories)
- Stages of tissue healing

- Special populations (e.g., pregnancy, oncology, geriatric, athletes, disabilities, palliative)
- Indications and contraindications
- How to customize a massage (e.g., analysis, synthesis, application of client information, and research data)
- How to communicate with clients in understandable terms
- Informed consent (e.g., risks and benefits)
- Documentation formats (e.g., Subjective, Objective, Assessment/Application, Plan [SOAP], Focus, Data, Action, Response [FDAR])
- Medically accepted terminology
- Health care practices (e.g., prescription for treatment, medical insurance, procedural codes)

Skills

- Use a variety of interview techniques to gather client information
- Conduct a variety of assessments (e.g., range of motion, posture, gait, pain scale, palpation)
- Develop a plan for the massage session (e.g., short-term, long-term where appropriate)
- Identify and discuss indications, contraindications, pathologies, and special accommodations, and adapt the session as needed
- Obtain informed consent
- Adapt massage for pre- and post-surgical considerations
- Adapt massage based on prescription and non-prescription medications
- Customize massage based on client's goals
- Monitor client responses, and solicit feedback during and after the session
- Educate client about the care plan, including self-care activities as appropriate
- Maintain client documentation
- Utilize medically accepted terminology in client documentation
- Collaborate with health care providers when appropriate
- Apply research evidence to client-centered care planning

Massage Techniques and Modalities (24%)

Knowledge

- General massage techniques (e.g., effleurage, petrissage, tapotement, vibration, friction)
- Massage modalities (e.g., Swedish, deep tissue, neuromuscular/trigger point therapy, proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation [PNF], Eastern and energetic bodywork therapies)
- Pressure and manual forces (e.g., compression, tension/decompression, friction/shear, bending, torsion, vibration)
- Stretching (e.g., barriers, end-feel)
- Joint mobilization
- Endangerment sites and adverse events
- Client positioning (e.g., prone, supine, bolstered, side-lying, seated)
- Appropriate use of tools and equipment
- Appropriate use of topical agents (e.g., analgesics, essential oils, CBD)
- Benefits and effects of techniques and modalities
- Draping techniques

Skills

- Apply massage and bodywork techniques in a safe manner, monitoring responses and adapting techniques as needed
- Utilize effective body mechanics during the session
- Identify the benefits of massage and bodywork techniques and modalities
- Identify endangerment sites and adverse effects

- Position clients for comfort and safety, utilizing positioning equipment as appropriate
- Apply appropriate draping techniques

Anatomy, Physiology, and Kinesiology (24%)

Knowledge

- Anatomy and physiology of all body systems, including:
  - Integumentary system
  - Muscular system
  - Skeletal system
  - Nervous system
  - Cardiovascular system
  - Lymphatic system
  - Endocrine system
  - Reproductive system
  - Respiratory system
  - Digestive system
  - Urinary system
- Immune response (e.g., inflammation, lethargy)
- Kinesiology (e.g., mechanics of body movement including levers, agonists, antagonists, synergists, compensatory patterns)

Skills

- Identify structures, functions, and interactions of body systems (i.e., integumentary, muscular, skeletal, nervous, cardiovascular, lymphatic, endocrine, reproductive, respiratory, digestive, urinary)
- Identify origins, insertions, actions, functions, and innervations of muscles
- Identify types of muscle contractions

Professional Practice (14%)

Knowledge

- NCBTMB's Standards of Practice
- Standard of care for safe practice procedures (e.g., infection control)
- Information literacy and research literacy (i.e., how to locate and evaluate research)
- Professional development (e.g., continuing education, specialty credentials, board certification)
- Therapist self-care (e.g., body mechanics, physical activity, hand-held tools, professional consultation, mentorships)
- Business entities (e.g., independent contractor, employee, business structure)
- Business practices and policies (e.g., marketing, cancellation, no-show)
- Accounting principles and financial record keeping (e.g., tax filings, profit and loss, income reporting, bartering)

- Professional liability insurance
- Emergency preparedness (e.g., medical emergencies, disaster preparedness)

Skills

- Maintain a clean, sanitary, safe, and accessible facility
- Clean, disinfect, and maintain tools and equipment
- Stay current with massage therapy research

- Participate in professional development
- Apply standard massage therapy business and employment practices
- Practice self-care regimen for injury prevention and career longevity
- Manage medical emergencies when they arise

Law and Ethics (13%)

Knowledge

- Massage practice laws and regulations (e.g., licensing, scope of practice, insurance requirements)
- Legal requirements for record keeping (e.g., retention, release, disposal, HIPAA)
- Establishment laws and zoning ordinances
- Ethical principles (e.g., confidentiality, autonomy, veracity, non-malfeasance, beneficence, nondiscrimination, empathy)
- Professional roles and boundaries (e.g., dual relationships, power differential, transference and countertransference)
- Ethical strategies for managing and resolving conflict (e.g., conflicts of interest, how and when to terminate a session, right of refusal)
- NCBTMB's Code of Ethics
- Cultural sensitivity
- When, where, and how to report inappropriate behavior and sexual misconduct (e.g., clients, peers)
- Mandatory reporting requirements (e.g., human trafficking, minors and dependent adults)

Skills

- Follow local and state laws and regulations for massage therapy practice, operating within scope of practice
- Maintain client information and records, safeguarding client confidentiality
- Apply ethical principles in professional interactions
- Establish and maintain professional, culturally sensitive relationships with clients
- Identify and manage legal and ethical conflicts
- Establish, communicate, and respect therapist/client roles and boundaries
- Report inappropriate behavior and sexual misconduct to the proper authorities

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

You may sit for NCBTMB's certification exam once you have met the following Board Certification requirements:

If you practice in a state that requires state licensure:

- Maintain a current massage therapy license and provide proof of a valid license.
- Provide a copy of a valid government ID.
- Pass a criminal background check (performed by NCBTMB).
- Agree to uphold NCBTMB's Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics.
- Provide proof that you are at least 18 years old at the time you sit for the Board Certification examination.

If you practice in a state that <u>does not</u> require state licensure:

- Provide the name, city and state of the massage school you attended.
- Upload an official school transcript.
- Provide a copy of a valid government ID.
- Pass a criminal background check (performed by NCBTMB).
- Agree to uphold NCBTMB's Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics.
- Provide proof that you are at least 18 years old at the time you sit for the Board Certification examination.

You must be able to prove that you have graduated from a formal training program. This proof must be in the form of an original official school transcript. Be sure to include all other documentation with your online application. NCBTMB reserves the right to request verification if needed.

All education and training courses must be completed satisfactorily or with a passing grade. If your school did not offer an ethics course, your school must explain where in the transcript you received the six clock hours of ethics instruction. For example, the school might explain that "six clock hours of ethics were taught in the course called Professional Business Practices."

You must have graduated from the program and met all requirements before you will be eligible to sit for the exam. For example, if you are enrolled in an 800-hour program, you must complete ALL 800 hours.

Portfolio Review:
All students who attend a school outside the United States **MUST** apply through the Portfolio Review process.

The Portfolio Review Process allows you to put a portfolio together of all your training. The Portfolio Review team reviews your portfolio to see whether the training that you have is equivalent to the training you would get in a formal program. Transcripts proving your education are required along with your application.

Should you pursue Portfolio Review, you are still required to demonstrate completion of a minimum 500-hour education. When applying via Portfolio Review, you must demonstrate completion of minimum hours in the following categories (totaling 500):

- 125 hours of Anatomy, Physiology, Kinesiology
- 40 hours of Pathology
- 200 hours of hands-on, Western-based massage therapy lab/clinic
- 4 hours of Business
- 6 hours of Ethics
- 125 hours of massage therapy education that completes the program

Please note: NCBTMB will only accept outlined acceptable core curriculum content that is hands-on and Western-based. For information on acceptable core curriculum content, visit www.ncbtmb.org and access acceptable course curriculum.

- Additionally, candidates must have received massage therapy education and meet the minimal criteria. Specifically, the program of study must have included:300 hours or 60% delivered In-Class (face-to- face); must be science-based information
- 200 hours or 40% of hands-on instruction delivered in-class (face-to-face) only

If your original program of study did not contain the above hours or educational components, you may apply external education earned through:

- College or University medical and/or business courses
- CE completed through NCBTMB Approved Providers

If you are a healthcare professional, or previously completed a related allied healthcare training program (e.g., nursing), you are required to demonstrate the following:

- Copies of your original allied health transcripts
- Proof of completion of a minimum of 200 hours in a massage therapy school or with an NCBTMB Approved Provider (via CE)

Please Note: Regardless of how you earn the required minimum 500-hours of education, you may be requested to provide the syllabus and/or learning outcomes for completed courses if course content is not obvious. Be prepared to provide this information in advance to avoid delays in processing your application.

Formal training must be received from a state-licensed/approved/exempt training/education institution.

Submit all documentation in English.

If, for any reason, any part of your application is denied, refunds will not be issued.

APPLYING FOR THE EXAM

To apply for the Board Certification exam, go to www.ncbtmb.org and follow these steps:

- Select "Create an Account."
- On the next screen, enter your primary email address. Click the button titled "Search."
- Fill in the required information.
- When you've completed the page, select the button "Continue."
- On the next page, scroll down to see "Board Certification in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork." Click on the button "Apply Now."
- On the next page, scroll down to the bottom, where you will be asked to select the primary state in which you practice. Select the state from the drop-down menu. Click the "Next" button.
- You will see a menu of eligibility requirements. Click on each step and complete the information required for that step. After completing each screen, click on "Save" and then hit the "Continue" button.

Your application must be complete to be reviewed. You must also complete your application within 30 days of starting it. If you do not complete and submit your application within this time, you will need to start over. Any documentation that you are having difficulties uploading may be emailed to info@ncbtmb.org or may be mailed to this address:

NCBTMB
500 Davis St, Ste 975, Evanston, IL 60201

Please ensure your name is on the documentation so NCBTMB employees know which account to upload it to.

Applying From a State Without Licensing or Applying Through Portfolio Review

Once you have started the application process, you will be asked to "Add a Degree." Click on this button to begin and follow these steps:

- On the following screen, start typing in your school's name. Once you start typing, a list of schools will appear in the drop-down menu. Select your school.
- If your school does not appear, click the button "My School Is Not Listed."
- You will be taken to a screen that asks you to provide information on your school. Follow the prompts to complete this information.
- Please note, you will be asked to upload a transcript from your school or other certificates to demonstrate completion of the minimum 500-hour educational requirement. If it is not obvious, please designate which courses satisfy which educational requirement on your transcripts and/or Certificates of Completion. This will reduce confusion and avoid lengthy delays in processing your application.
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Processing Time
Generally, Board Certification applications are processed within two to four weeks. Criminal background check processing times and the time it takes for results to be returned to NCBTMB may cause delays.

Once NCBTMB has processed your application, you will receive an email confirming the application and the next steps to scheduling your exam.

Please keep in mind that it is your (the applicant's) responsibility to submit all necessary documentation.
You must meet all criteria and submit everything before we can award your credential.

FEES

Pay fees by credit or debit card at www.ncbtmb.org when you submit your application. Please contact us at info@ncbtmb.org or by calling 1-800-296-0664 if you prefer to pay by check, as special arrangements will need to be made.

Please note that each of the fees entitles you to one examination registration, one copy of your results, and, when you pass the Board Certification Exam and meet the criteria, one copy of your certificate.

Fees:
- **Board Certification Examination Fee:** $275
- **Cancellation Processing Fees*:**
  - **Background check fee: $25**
  - **Processing fee: $75**
  - **Non-Sufficient Funds Fee: $30**

If, for any reason, any part of your application is denied, refunds will not be issued.
*Cancellation must be requested and received:
- Via e-mail within 90 days from the date of payment.
- Before a scheduled exam date
- Before an applicant is deemed ineligible to take the exam

If you have an exam scheduled, you must first contact Prometric to cancel the exam.

NOTE: **Fees are always subject to change.**

NCBTMB REVIEW OF APPLICATION

NCBTMB performs a criminal background check on all candidates. Each candidate must pass the criminal background check before being eligible to test.

Candidates have **90 days** from the date they are deemed eligible to schedule and sit for the exam.

When approved, you will receive an automated email, "Your Board Certification Exam Instructions," stating your eligibility period and instructions for scheduling your exam. This 90-day period starts as soon as you are made eligible. It is your (the applicant's) responsibility to schedule your exam directly with NCBTMB's testing agency, Prometric, at 1-800-350-7076 or www.prometric.com (please access the menu on the left of the page titled "Actions").

After scheduling your exam with Prometric, you will receive an email confirming your date, time, and location to the desired testing center.

Candidates who do not take the exam during this time period will forfeit their exam fee in full. You will also have to reapply and pay the full exam fee in order to again be considered eligible to take the exam.

All information submitted by an applicant/ candidate may be provided to law enforcement agencies and state, county and local regulatory agencies at the discretion of NCBTMB and/or the request of such agencies.

CRIMINAL CONVICTION POLICY

Massage therapists are placed in a position of trust with clients. These therapists have unsupervised physical contact with their clients. Violating this trust directly opposes the NCBTMB Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics. Below is a three-tiered review system for NCBTMB certification applicants with a conviction, plea of guilty, nolo contendere, or no contest to any misdemeanor or felony.

Convictions Resulting in Denial of Certification—No Appeal

Certain convictions present an unreasonable risk to clients. Board Certification will be denied in the following cases with no possibility of appeal:

- Sexual misconduct where the victim's consent was not given, such as forcible rape.
- Murder or attempted murder, manslaughter (except involuntary manslaughter).
- Other felony convictions of violence against persons, committed within the last seven years including—but not limited to—assault or battery with a dangerous weapon, aggravated assault or battery, or kidnapping.

Convictions Resulting in Denial of Certification—Appealable

Convictions of certain crimes present an unreasonable risk to clients. Therefore, any NCBTMB applicants with a history of any felony or misdemeanor crime set forth below shall be initially denied certification in all cases. With the exception of convictions referenced above, these certification decisions may be appealed:

- Sexual Crimes: Crimes involving prostitution or other forms of sexual misconduct not referenced in the No Appeal Convictions.
- Violent Crimes: Serious crimes of violence against persons, committed seven years ago or more, including—but not limited to—involuntary manslaughter, kidnapping, arson, and aggravated assault and/or battery with a dangerous weapon.
- Work Release, Parole, Probation: Applicants currently on work release, parole, or felony probation.
- Illegal Drugs (Felony): Felonies involving illegal drugs and/or controlled substances, including unlawful possession or distribution or intent to distribute unlawfully, all substances set forth in Schedules I through V of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act, as amended.
- Illegal Drugs (Misdemeanor): Misdemeanors involving illegal drugs and/or controlled substances, including all substances set forth in Schedules I through V of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act, as amended.
- DUIs: Crimes involving (but not limited to) driving while under the influence or ability impaired after a 3rd conviction.
- Assault and/or Battery: Misdemeanors involving assault and/or battery (without a dangerous weapon).
- Crimes Against Property (Felony): Felonies involving serious crimes against property, such as grand larceny, robbery, burglary, embezzlement or fraud.
- Crimes Against Property (Misdemeanor): Misdemeanor crimes against property, such as larceny, burglary, robbery, embezzlement or fraud;

Possible Denial of Certification
Applicants with convictions that do not include any of the conditions set forth above may be denied certification after careful consideration of the following factors:

- The seriousness of the crime;
- Whether the crime was violent in nature;
- Whether the applicant has multiple convictions;
- Whether the crime involved a minor, the elderly, or a person of diminished capacity;
- How much time has elapsed since the crime was committed;
- Whether the crime relates to client care;
- Whether the applicant was truthful and not misleading in explaining the terms and circumstances of their felony conviction.

Appeal to Ethics and Standards Committee:
Applicants who have been denied due to the criminal conviction policy may file an appeal in writing to the Ethics and Standards Committee no later than 30 calendar days after the date of the denial notification. Applicants who have been denied due to No Appeal convictions of this policy may not appeal the denial of their application.

TEST CENTERS AND DATES

NCBTMB contracts with Prometric to develop, administer, and deliver the Board Certification exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork. Test takers benefit from Prometric's extensive test delivery network with thousands of testing locations across the country and the opportunity to take the exam five days a week.

Please do not wait until the last week to schedule your exam as appointment times are limited. Extensions will not be given due to lack of availability at the testing center.

Please note you must have a current/valid Government I.D. and that visitors are not allowed in the test center.

Childcare is not provided. Children are not allowed in the testing center.

Any violation of testing policies and procedures may result in dismissal from the testing center, cancellation of exam scores and forfeiture of eligibility for certification and exam fees. Videos explaining what to expect may be found on the Prometric website at https://www.prometric.com.

SCHEDULING YOUR EXAM

All eligible candidates will receive an email with the subject line, "Your Board Certification Exam Instructions." Candidates can schedule appointments by calling Prometric at 1-800-350-7076 or using its online scheduling service at www.prometric.com (please access the menu on the left of the page titled, "Actions"). If your eligibility includes special ADA accommodations, you MUST schedule your exam by calling Prometric directly.

Be sure you plan your exam date well in advance. You should also pick alternate dates and times, just in case your first choice is not available. Exam appointments are subject to change if the test center is closed for some reason.

RESCHEDULING OR CANCELING YOUR EXAM

Exam Scheduled
To reschedule an exam by phone, you must notify Prometric, NCBTMB's testing partner, at 1-800-350-7076 or www.prometric.com (please access the menu on the left of the page titled, "Actions") within one month prior to your scheduled exam.

Please be aware that cancelling your exam appointment instead of rescheduling within your 90-day window, cancels your entire eligibility window You will not be able to schedule again and will be required to reapply and pay all application fees with NCBTMB. Please note the below cut-off dates and associated fees:

- **30 or more days prior to the scheduled appointment:** No additional charges
- **29-5 days prior to scheduled appointment:** Prometric will collect a $35 fee at the time of rescheduling/cancelling exam appointment.
- **4 days or less prior to scheduled appointment:** Full test fee will be retained. No refunds issued.

After you have cancelled your exam with Prometric, you must notify NCBTMB of the cancellation.

Exam NOT Scheduled

If you have not scheduled your exam and wish to receive a partial refund of your application fee, **you must contact NCBTMB at 1-800-296-0664 or via email at info@ncbtmb.org within 90 days of NCBTMB's receipt of your payment.** Your refund, minus a $75 processing fee along with a $25 background check fee, will be sent within six weeks of the written request. Once NCBTMB receives your refund request, you will no longer be eligible to take the exam.

If your request to cancel your application is not received by your eligibility expiration date, and you do not sit for the examination, you forfeit your entire application and all examination fees. If you decide to take the examination at a later date, you will need to reapply as a new candidate. You will have to resubmit your application and payment and abide by all current policies, requirements, and applicable fees.

MISSING YOUR SCHEDULED EXAM

If on the day you are scheduled to take the exam you do not appear, and you have not rescheduled or canceled your exam as outlined above, you will forfeit the full exam fee.

If you missed your scheduled exam appointment, you will need to submit for retake along with the application fees. Once this is processed, you will be reset for a new ninety-day eligibility period.

Extenuating Circumstances

In rare circumstances, you may be allowed to reschedule the exam, free of charge, one time only. Documentation will be required in all instances. There are five acceptable reasons for missing a scheduled exam:

- Serious illness—either you or an immediate family member
- Death in the immediate family
- Traffic accident in route to the exam site
- Unexpected military duty call-up
- Natural disaster (hurricane, earthquake, flood, blizzard, etc.) (Note: Not allowable are isolated events including power outages, high winds, icy roads, etc.)

If your reason is accepted, you will be allowed to reschedule your exam, free of charge, one time only. You will need to call NCBTMB at 1-800-296-0664 and state your reason for missing the exam. This must be done no later than **four business days** after the missed exam date. NCBTMB reserves the right to request additional evidence to support your reason for missing the exam.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

NCBTMB and Prometric pledge to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended (42 USCG Section 12101, et. seq.), and with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000e, et seq.), to the best of their ability. If you need special accommodations because of a disability, you may ask for special

testing services. This request must be submitted as part of the application for Board Certification and is on the menu of application requirements. All requests are handled on an individual basis.

If you are requesting special accommodations, you must submit a letter from an appropriate health care professional that is licensed to evaluate the disability. The letter must be written on the healthcare professional's letterhead and include the professional's title, address, telephone number and date.

The letter must also include a diagnosis of the disability and explain why special testing accommodations are necessary. The letter must have an original signature from the professional and be dated no more than five years prior to application. Faxes and photocopies will not be accepted.

Official documentation regarding your disability must be submitted to NCBTMB at the time you apply. Special accommodations will be provided at no additional charge.

Policy on non-discrimination
NCBTMB does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, creed, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, medical condition, or physical disability.

COMPUTER BASED TESTING

You will take your examination using Computer Based Testing (CBT) technology. You do not need extensive computer experience to take the examination. At the beginning of your examination, a tutorial will be provided on how to take the test. You will be instructed on how to provide responses to the items that appear on the examination. Once you begin your test, you will not be able to go back to the tutorial section.

DO NOT click "End Exam" until you have completed the exam and all reviews.

When "End Exam" is selected, the examination will end, and you will not be able to review or change any answers. Staff at the testing center will only be able to answer questions that you might have about CBT—they have no knowledge about the exam content. Your exam will be scored, and you will receive an on-screen notification of having either passed or failed the exam as soon as you have completed it. You will also receive a diagnostic score report via email within 24 hours following completion. This is **not** an official score report.

EXAMINATION DAY

Arrival Time
You must arrive at the Test Center thirty (30) minutes before your scheduled appointment to complete the admission process required before testing begins.

What to Bring on Exam Day
Testing centers utilize biometric procedures for validating candidate identification. The candidate's government issued photo ID will be scanned, the candidate will be photographed, and other security procedures will be enacted.

The candidate must present at least one form of identification, which must include a current, valid (not expired) government issued picture ID and your signature. This could include:

- Driver's License
- Passport
- Military ID Card
- State ID Card

The primary form of identification listed above MUST be issued by the national government in the country where you are testing. If your government issued identification is from a country other than the country in which you are testing, you must present your passport for identification. The passport must be current (not expired).

A Social Security Card, Visa, Work/School ID, etc. are **NOT** acceptable forms of identification. You do not need to bring your Confirmation Letter to the testing site.

Does your ID match your application name?
NCBTMB and our test vendor, Prometric, will not allow identification (ID) discrepancies. Please make sure that your photo ID and the name on the NCBTMB application do not result in any of the following discrepancies:

Substitute for either the first or last name are not permitted
- "Smith" to "Jones"
- "Mary" to "Margaret"

Incorrect letters on any documentation
- "Diller" vs. "Ditter"

Maiden name as a middle name on one document, while given middle name is used on another document
- "Mary Elizabeth Smith" vs. "Mary Jones Smith"

Legal name changes must be approved by NCBTMB prior to scheduling an appointment. Name discrepancies are one of the most common reasons why applicants are not allowed to test. If you encounter one of the ID/name discrepancies above, or if the name on your application does not match your current/valid Government I.D., the Prometric testing center has been instructed to not allow you to test. You will forfeit your exam and all associated fees. Please contact NCBTMB to discuss how to resolve these ID/name discrepancies if this relates to you.

Late Arrival
Candidates who arrive late for their exam will lose their reservation. They will be considered absent. Candidates must arrive at the Test Center thirty (30) minutes before their scheduled appointment to complete the admission process required before testing begins.

Inclement Weather
If severe weather or a natural disaster makes the testing center inaccessible or unsafe the exam will be canceled. Exams that are canceled due to severe weather will be rescheduled as soon as possible, without additional

charge. Candidates should contact Prometric to determine if the center is closed and for rescheduling information.

What to Do if Your Test Center is Closed
Sometimes unforeseen circumstances require a test center to unexpectedly close. Should this happen, Prometric will try contacting you by e-mail and by telephone within 48-72 hours to reschedule your appointment.

Exam Security
When you arrive at the testing center, you will be asked to sign in on a test center log, present your

identification, and submit biometric samples (such as fingerprint or palm scan). Failure to comply with any of these requirements may result in your dismissal from the testing center and/or forfeiture of eligibility to test.

No materials, notes, papers and/or electronic devices of any kind, other than a visual aid pre-approved in writing by NCBTMB pursuant to the ADA Accommodation Request Form, are permitted in the examination room or center.

The performance of all candidates is monitored and will be analyzed to detect fraud. No candidate is permitted to give or receive assistance from others during the testing period. If a test proctor observes or is notified that an applicant is behaving unethically during the exam (including such time an applicant is outside the examination room), such applicant's examination results shall be withheld pending further review.

Examples of unethical conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Unauthorized possession, receipt or disclosure of materials relating to the examination during or after the examination testing period;
- Use of a cell phone or other communication device during the examination testing period;
- Other evidence indicating the security of the examination has been breached;
- Any other assistance that would provide the recipient of such information with an advantage while taking the current or future examination.

Any individual suspected of such a violation will be subject to NCBTMB disciplinary and/or legal action.

Additionally, no test materials, notes, documents or memoranda of any kind are to be taken from the examination room. Any individual who removes or attempts to remove exam materials will be subject to NCBTMB disciplinary and/or legal action.

Candidates in violation of any NCBTMB testing policy are subject to forfeiture of examination fee, cancellation of exam scores, forfeiture of eligibility to test and disciplinary and/or legal action. Sanctions could result in the removal or denial of certification.

All exam materials, including all questions and all forms of the exam, are copyrighted and the property of NCBTMB. Any distribution of these materials through reproduction, or oral or written communication, is strictly prohibited and punishable by law.

Prometric Test Center Regulations

Candidates are required to be professional, civil and respectful always while on the premises of the test center. All exams are continuously monitored by video and audio recording, physical walk-throughs, and through the observation window. The Test Center Administrator (TCA) is authorized to dismiss you from the test session for a violation of any of the Test Center Regulations, including exhibiting abusive behavior towards the TCAs or other candidates. If you are found to have violated any of the regulations during your exam, the TCA is required to notify Prometric and your test sponsor. Prometric, alone or in conjunction with your test sponsor, shall then take any further action necessary to sanction your conduct, up to and including invalidation of your test score and/or pursuit of civil or criminal charges.

Prometric Test Center Check-In Procedures and Breaks

- Original, valid (unexpired), government issued photo & signature bearing identification is required in order to take an exam.
- Validity and the number of acceptable IDs are predetermined by your test sponsor.

- You will be scanned with a metal detector wand prior to every entry into the test room.
- You will be required to raise your pant legs above your ankles, empty and turn all pockets inside-out, and raise shirt sleeves above your wrists prior to every entry into the test room.
- If you are wearing eyeglasses, you will be required to remove them for visual inspection to ensure they do not contain a recording device. Large jewelry items must be stored in your locker due to concerns over concealed recording devices.
- You are permitted two bathroom breaks during the exam for a maximum of 10 minutes per break. Each time you leave the test room, you must sign out. Repeated or lengthy departures from the test room will be reported to the test sponsor.
- You will have no access to your locker, cell phones and notes within it during bathroom breaks. All candidates must inform the TCA before accessing a stored item during a break, including medicine.
- Upon return from a break, without exception, you must go through all security checks, present valid ID, sign-in and, if required by the test sponsor, provide a fingerprint to be re- admitted to the test room.

Prohibited Items and Examinee Conduct in the Test Center

- Weapons are not allowed in any Prometric Test Center.
- Unauthorized personal items may not be brought into the test room. Such items include, but are not limited to, outerwear, hats, food, drinks, purses, briefcases, notebooks, watches, cell phones, electronic devices, or wearable technology.
- Written notes, published materials, and other testing aids are strictly prohibited in the test room, except where allowed by your test sponsor. Test center staff will refer to the applicable Client Practices for allowances.
- Written notes or electronic devices discovered in the test room will be confiscated by the Test Center Administrator.
- Only soft earplugs (with no wires/cords attached) and center-supplied tissues are permitted in the test room.
- All materials issued by the TCA must be returned at the conclusion of testing. Used scratch paper must be returned before new scratch paper will be issued by the TCA during your exam.
- Light clothing items removed for comfort, such as sweaters, suit jackets, scarves, etc., must be hung on the examinee's chair, not placed in laps or on the workstation desktop. Outerwear such as heavy coats, parkas, raincoats, etc., is not permitted in the test room.
- Talking to other candidates in the test room, referring to their screens, testing materials or written notes is strictly prohibited.

Note: Client/test sponsor practice policies shall supersede these regulations if a conflict exists.

Your Privacy

Your exam results will be encrypted and transmitted to Prometric and to the exam sponsor. The testing center does not keep any information other than when and where you took your exam.

The Prometric Privacy Policy Statement provides additional information regarding this; you can obtain this by visiting prometric.com or by contacting Prometric at 1-800-856-4139.

RESULTS & SCORE REPORTS

How Your Exam is Scored

The Exam is graded via a Scale Score. Each question is graded as right or wrong; no partial credit is awarded.

What to Expect Once You Finish Your Exam
Your exam will be scored, and you will receive an on-screen notification of having either passed or failed the exam as soon as you have completed it. You will also receive a diagnostic score report via email within 24 hours following completion. This is not an official score report. Your performance will be communicated as either 'Pass' or 'No Pass.'

A candidate's performance on examinations shall remain confidential unless otherwise stipulated by the examinee.

To obtain an official score report, complete the request in your account profile by clicking Account and then My Participation. A $40 fee applies per score report.

If you fail the exam, you will be given diagnostic information about your overall performance. The information will identify areas of weakness, should you wish to try again. The diagnostic score report will also provide information on how to apply for a future exam.

Unlike individual candidate misconduct, testing irregularities can occasionally affect a group of test takers. Such problems include, but are not limited to, administrative errors, defective equipment or materials, improper access to test content and/ or the unauthorized general availability of test content, as well as other disruptions of test administrations (e.g., natural disasters and other emergencies). In such cases, you must complete an incident report before leaving the Prometric test facility.

When group-testing irregularities occur, Prometric will investigate and provide information to NCBTMB. Based on this information, NCBTMB may direct Prometric to either not score the test or cancel the test score. When appropriate, NCBTMB will arrange with Prometric to give affected test takers the opportunity to retake the test as soon as possible, without charge. NCBTMB will notify affected test takers of the reasons for the cancellation and their options for retaking the test.

NCBTMB's appeals process does not apply to group testing irregularities.

IF YOU FAIL THE EXAM

If you fail the Certification Examination, you may retake it after 45 days from the time you took the previous test. You may take the Board Certification exam two times within a six-month period.

NCBTMB's Policy on Challenging Results
Candidates who fail the examination and believe this was due to an error in electronic scoring will be directed to the testing vendor for questions. Following completion of the examination, candidates may comment in writing on any question(s) they believe contain errors in content. Comments will be forwarded to the NCBTMB CEO. If the CEO judges that an item(s) should not be scored, the CEO will promptly notify all affected candidates. Candidates whose status changes from "fail" to "pass" will be issued board certification provided they comply with all other requirements.

If you need to challenge the exam results based on the content of the exam, contact NCBTMB directly, in writing, at info@ncbtmb.org.

An applicant shall have thirty (30) days to file a written request for an appeal following receipt of such notice that they were unsuccessful in their attempt at any NCBTMB examination.

Exam Attempt Limits
A candidate can only take the board certification exam a total of five times.

Appeals to the Certification Board
Within 30 days of the date of the denial of a request to take the exam more than five times, an applicant may submit a written notice of appeal of the testing decision to the CEO. The notice of appeal must state the reasons why the applicant believes they should be allowed to take the exam again. The Board will consider the appeal. In all cases, the decision of the Board is final.

NCBTMB STUDY TOOLS

Looking for a study guide? NCBTMB offers a free study guide online on our website. Check out the study guide at BC-Study-Guide.

NCBTMB also created a series of webinars that highlight the different exam categories. You can check out these webinars on our website in our important links & resources section.

NCBTMB's Online Practice Exam is available for subscription purchase at https://testrun.com/NCBTMB. The NCBTMB Online Practice Exam provides access to thousands of sample test questions, personalized reports, identifiable reports of your strengths and weaknesses, and much more. One, three, and six-month subscriptions are available.

NCBTMB has created a Test Prep Ebook to help you learn strategies to prepare for the Board Certification Exam. Tackle test anxiety while mapping out the best study schedule for you.

Practice+ gives you the opportunity to experience the exam before exam day. You can experience the look and feel of the actual testing platform and practice navigating the exam interface.

The use of these resources is voluntary. Use of this product does not guarantee a passing exam score.

CERTIFICATION LENGTH AND USE OF MARKS AND SEALS

Your Board Certification in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork will remain current for a period of two years from the date you become Board Certified.

You will receive a frameable certificate and a set of wallet cards. You will also receive an email from Credly.com with information to claim your digital badge. While Board Certified, you may use the registered certification marks BCTMB® and the following seal:

Do Not Copy

Certification Mark Approved Uses: BCTMB® certificants in good standing may use the initials BCTMB®, the seal, or the words “Board Certified in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork” (Certification Marks) on materials such as

business cards, stationery, or advertising that promotes the practitioner personally as an individual Board Certified in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork.

Certification Marks Unapproved Uses: BCTMB® certificants may not use the Certification Marks with any other description qualifier, such as "endorsed," "recommended," or the like. The Certification Marks may not be used on promotional materials promoting services as an instructor, except in biographical information. The Certification Marks may not be used in conjunction with any other product such as clothing, books or videos.

Altering Certification Marks: Certificants may not alter the Certification Marks in any way.

Expiration/Revocation of Certification: If your certification is expired or revoked, your Credly badge will be expired. In addition, you must immediately cease using the Certification Marks and/or the seal. Failure to comply will result in NCBTMB taking action against you up to and including legal proceedings.

RECORDS RETENTION

NCBTMB will retain records of candidates who test under the policies and procedures in this handbook for six years. These documents shall remain confidential and be deleted after the six-year cycle. NCBTMB will maintain electronic records of all applicants and certificants, subject to the retention policy. NCBTMB maintains test scores (passing and failing) indefinitely for all candidates in a secure electronic format.

All applications for renewal, and their supporting documentation, are maintained by NCBTMB for a period of six years (three renewal cycles).

RENEWING YOUR CERTIFICATION

You must renew every two years to maintain your certification status.

Renewal is a process whereby the Board Certified practitioner demonstrates ongoing efforts to enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform in a professional and ethical manner. Renewal also helps assure the public that the Board Certified practitioner remains committed to adhering to the NCBTMB Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. You may begin earning credits toward renewal the day after you pass the exam and have met all requirements to become Board Certified.

Current renewal requirements are the following:

- 24-hours of Continuing Education from NCBTMB Approved Providers* Refer to the directory for providers and courses;
- 3 hours must be in Ethics;
- NCBTMB-approved scientific, anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, and business courses may also be applied;
- All courses must be completed within your eligible two-year renewal period;
- CE cannot be used multiple times within or across renewal periods and cannot be carried over. (If you renew late, your CE must be dated after your late renewal approval date.);

  *Note: Only up to 4 CEs will be accepted in Self-Care. Self-Care is NOT a requirement.
- Pass a criminal background check (performed by NCBTMB);
- Agree to uphold NCBTMB Standards of Practice & Code of Ethics;
- Have a valid massage license if you are practicing in a state that requires state licensure.

Please Note:
If your Board Certification has been expired over one year, you must apply for Board Certification and must take the Board Certification exam.

If you are an NCBTMB Approved Provider, you may not use courses that you are teaching as CE credits. The only exception to this rule is that you may use an ethics course that you taught to fulfill the ethics requirement.

You can review the current renewal requirements at www.ncbtmb.org to learn more about this process and to prepare for your continued education. If you have any additional questions about renewal, please call NCBTMB at 1-800-296-0664 or email info@ncbtmb.org.

CERTIFICATION APPEALS

Applicants who have been denied eligibility to sit for the certification examination or whose renewal applications have been denied may appeal the decision in the following manner:

- **Timeframe:** No later than 30 days after the date of notice of denial to sit for the certification examination, the applicant must submit a written notice of appeal to the staff liaison of the Ethics and Standards Committee. The request must state the reasons why the applicant believes their application should not be denied.
- **Review:** The appeal will be reviewed by the Ethics & Standards Committee.
- **Appeals to the Board:** No later than 30 days after the date of the notice of the Committee's decision, a certificant may submit a written notice of appeal of the decision of the Ethics and Standards Committee to the CEO. The notice of appeal must state the reasons why the certificant believes the decision of the Ethics and Standards Committee was in error. The Board will consider the appeal. In all cases, the Board's decision is final.
- **Unallowable Appeals:** There is no appeal allowed for the following:
  - on the basis of an incomplete application,
  - on the basis of a candidate's failure to pass the board certification examination.
- **Rescoring:** A candidate may request in writing to NCBTMB that their examination be rescored. The testing company will conduct any necessary rescoring. Request for rescoring must be made no later than 90 days after the date examination results were sent to the candidate. A candidate may request a single rescoring for each examination taken.
- **Standing:** While a recertification appeal is pending in front of the Ethics and Standards Committee, the certificant will remain in good standing if the renewal application was submitted while the person was certified.

NCBTMB takes its role in serving the public's trust very seriously. In accordance with the rules and procedures regarding ethical and professional disciplinary complaints, NCBTMB publishes sanctions imposed on certificants found to be in violation of our Code of Ethics and/or Standards of Practice.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST CERTIFICANTS

At NCBTMB, we take grievances regarding the conduct of our certificants very seriously. We handle all complaints according to NCBTMB's Rules and Procedures Regarding Ethical and Professional Discipline Complaints.

Parties That May Submit Complaints.

A complaint against a BCTMB® certificant or applicant may be submitted by:

- any party claiming to have been harmed by the unethical conduct of a BCTMB® certificant or applicant;
- a BCTMB® certificant or applicant self-reporting unethical conduct;
- any BCTMB® certificant or applicant who, in good faith, believes that another BCTMB® certificant or applicant engaged in unprofessional conduct in violation of the Code and/or Standards;

- any national, regional, state, or local professional association of massage therapists and bodyworkers of which the BCTMB® certificant or applicant is a member;
- any licensing or certifying authority; or
- the committee.
- Anonymous Complaint. NCBTMB may not act solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint or a complaint by a complainant who does not want his or her name to be disclosed to the BCTMB® certificant or applicant who is the subject of the complaint.

To file a complaint, the complainant must send NCBTMB a formal letter containing the following information:

- Name, address, phone number and email address of the person filing the complaint;
- The name, address, and phone number of the NCBTMB certified massage therapist/bodyworker against whom they are filing a complaint;
- A detailed description of the facts supporting the complaint;
- A description of any steps that have been taken to address the situation in the complaint, and the results of any such steps;
- A list of specific sections of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice you believe have been violated;
- Approval for the Ethics and Standards Committee to disclose all information in the complaint to the massage therapist/bodyworker named in the complaint, the members of NCBTMB's Ethics & Standards Committee and Investigative Team, NCBTMB staff, NCBTMB legal counsel and experts involved in handling the complaint;
- Signature of complainant.

Please Note: NCBTMB will not review healthcare information without the express written authorization of the relevant client or patient. This is because of the possible risk of HIPAA violations, as well as NCBTMB's position that client confidentiality should be protected.

Receipt of Complaint

Upon receipt of a complaint, a notice will be sent to the complainant informing them that the complaint has been received and that it will be processed according to the rules and procedures of the Ethics and Standards Committee.

Initial Evaluation of Complaint

Within forty-five (45) days of receiving a legitimate complaint in compliance, the committee shall evaluate the complaint and determine whether the allegations, if true, would constitute unethical conduct. If the committee determines that the allegations, if true, would constitute unethical conduct, it shall investigate the complaint. No committee member shall consider, evaluate or help determine the validity or disposition of a complaint if such committee member sufficiently knows any material party to the complaint, is in direct competition with the complainant, BCTMB® certificant or applicant, or otherwise should be recused due to an existing or potential conflict of interest.

For details of the NCBTMB Ethics and Standards Complaint Process, please access the NCBTMB's Rules and Procedures Regarding Ethical and Professional Discipline Complaints.

CERTIFICANTS REGISTRY

NCBTMB may verify the certification status of board certificants at the request of state massage boards and other government entities.

NCBTMB offers a practitioner locator service on its website. This service allows consumers the opportunity to

locate Board Certified therapists by name, city, or zip code. You will be included in the NCBTMB Board Certificant Directory unless you state that you do not wish to be included.

WWW.NCBTMB.ORG

The NCBTMB web site is a valuable tool; It answers most questions you have about the examinations, as well as additional NCBTMB product or service offerings. NCBTMB encourages you to visit the website for answers to general questions.

CONTACTING STAFF

NCBTMB staff can be reached Monday – Friday between 8:00am and 4:30pm CST at 1-800-296-0664. Calls are taken in the order received. You can find information at www.ncbtmb.org. You may also send us an e-mail at info@ncbtmb.org.

Due to an increase in abusive phone and email encounters, we must inform inquirers of NCBTMB's policies in this area. Please consider the following:

Abusive language, including but not limited to demeaning language, profanity, and threats, will not be tolerated. Such interactions will be terminated immediately.

Threats regarding lawsuits or legal action require that all interactions be in writing.

We strive to offer excellent service and understand that frustrations occur. We will do our best to work through these issues and find a satisfactory solution. We will not, however, accept abuse, bullying and/ or threats directed at our staff and/or volunteers.

Moving?

NCBTMB makes every effort to keep the most current mailing and email addresses of its certificants, but we need your help. If you move, change your name, or change your mailing or email address, please contact NCBTMB at 1-800-296-0664 or visit www.ncbtmb.org to update your profile with address changes.

YOU ARE IMPORTANT TO US!

Update your personal information online or call if:

- You have moved.
- You have changed your email address.
- Your phone number has changed.
- You have a name change.

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Background
The purpose of the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork, Inc. (NCBTMB) is to foster high standards of ethical and professional practice in the delivery of services through a recognized credible certification program that assures the competency of practitioners of therapeutic massage and bodywork.

These Standards of Practice ensure that Certificants are aware of, and committed to, upholding high standards of practice for the profession. Also, the Standards of Practice are meant to assist members of the general public, including consumers, other health care professionals, and state and municipal regulatory agencies or boards with understanding the duties and responsibilities of NCBTMB Certificants.

NCBTMB developed and adopted these Standards of Practice to provide Certificants with a clear statement of the expectations of professional conduct and level of practice afforded the public in, among other things, the following areas: Professionalism, Legal and Ethical Requirements, Confidentiality, Business Practices, Roles and Boundaries, and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Inappropriate Touch. These Standards of Practice were approved and ratified by the NCBTMB Board of Directors, representatives of the Certificant population and key stakeholders of the NCBTMB.

Preamble
These Standards of Practice for the profession of therapeutic massage and bodywork are the guiding principles by which Certificants conduct their professional practice. These principles help to assure that all professional behaviors are conducted in an ethical, compassionate, and responsible manner. Through these Standards of Practice, NCBTMB seeks to establish and uphold high standards, traditions, and principles of the practices that constitute the profession of therapeutic massage and bodywork. These Standards of Practice are enforceable guidelines for professional conduct, and therefore, are stated in observable and measurable terms intended as minimum levels of practice to which Certificants are held accountable. Upon submission of the application for the Board Certification Examination, each applicant for certification must agree to uphold and abide by the NCBTMB Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice and applicable policies. Those Certificants who fail to comply with the Code of Ethics and these Standards of Practice shall be deemed to have engaged in professional misconduct which may result in sanctions, or other appropriate disciplinary actions, including the suspension or revocation of certification.

NCBTMB Certificants are obligated to report unethical behavior and violations of the Code of Ethics and these Standards of Practice they reasonably and in good faith believe have been performed by other NCBTMB Certificants.

These Standards of Practice reflect NCBTMB's clear commitment that Certificants provide an optimal level of service and strive for excellence in their professional practice. This includes remaining in good standing with NCBTMB, committing to continued personal and professional growth through continuing education, and understanding and accepting that personal and professional actions reflect on the integrity of the therapeutic massage and bodywork profession and NCBTMB. Certificants are responsible for showing and maintaining professional compliance with these Standards of Practice.

NCBTMB requires Certificants to conduct themselves in a highly professional and dignified manner. NCBTMB will not consider and/or adjudicate complaints against Certificants that are based solely on consumer related issues or are based on competitive marketplace issues.

As the therapeutic massage and bodywork profession evolves, so, too, will these Standards of Practice. These Standards of Practice are, therefore, a live and dynamic document and subject to revision in keeping with the changing demands and expectations of the therapeutic massage and bodywork profession.

Standard I: Professionalism

The Certificant must provide optimal levels of professional therapeutic massage and bodywork services and demonstrate excellence in practice by promoting healing and well-being through responsible, compassionate and respectful touch. In his/her professional role, the Certificant shall:

Standard I(a): adhere to the NCBTMB Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, and Policies and Procedures;

Standard I(b): comply with the peer review process conducted by the NCBTMB Ethics and Standards Committee regarding any alleged violations of the NCBTMB Code of Ethics and these Standards of Practice;

Standard I(c): treat each client with respect, dignity and worth;

Standard I(d): use professional verbal, nonverbal and written communications;

Standard I(e): provide an environment that is safe and comfortable for the client and which, at a minimum, meets all legal requirements for health and safety;

Standard I(f): use standard precautions to insure professional hygienic practices and maintain a level of personal hygiene appropriate for practitioners in the therapeutic setting;

Standard I(g): wear clothing that is clean, modest, and professional;

Standard I(h): obtain voluntary and informed consent from the client prior to initiating the session;

Standard I(i): if applicable, conduct an accurate needs assessment, develop a plan of care with the client, and update the plan as needed;

Standard I(j): use appropriate draping to protect the client's physical and emotional privacy;

Standard I(k): be knowledgeable of his/her scope of practice and practice only within these limitations;

Standard I(l): refer to other professionals when in the best interest of the client and practitioner;

Standard I(m): seek other professional advice when needed;

Standard I (n): respect the traditions and practices of other professionals and foster collegial relationships;

Standard I(o): not falsely impugn the reputation of any colleague;

Standard I(p): use the initials BCTMB only to designate his/her professional ability and competency to practice therapeutic massage and bodywork;

Standard I(q): remain in good standing with NCBTMB;

Standard I(r): understand that the NCBTMB certificate may be displayed prominently in the Certificant's principal place of practice;

Standard I(s): use the NCBTMB logo and certification number on business cards, brochures, advertisements, and stationery only in a manner that is within established NCBTMB guidelines;

Standard I(t): not duplicate the NCBTMB certificate for purposes other than verification of the practitioner's credentials;

Standard I(u): immediately return the certificate to NCBTMB if certification is revoked; and

Standard I(v): inform NCBTMB of any changes or additions to information included in his/her application for NCBTMB certification or renewal within sixty (60) days of such changes or additions.

Standard II: Legal and Ethical Requirements

The Certificant must comply with all the legal requirements in applicable jurisdictions regulating the profession of therapeutic massage and bodywork. In his/her professional role, the Certificant shall:

Standard II(a): obey all local, state, and federal laws;

Standard II(b): refrain from any behavior that results in illegal, discriminatory, or unethical actions; Standard II(c):

accept responsibility for his/her own actions;

Standard II(d): report to the proper massage therapy regulatory body within thirty (30) days of discovery of, any evidence, such as first-hand knowledge, indicating any unethical, incompetent or illegal act committed by other Certificants;

Standard II(e): maintain accurate and truthful records;

Standard II(f): report to NCBTMB, within thirty (30) days of discovery of, any evidence, such as first-hand knowledge, of violations of the NCBTMB Code of Ethics and these Standards of Practice by himself/herself or by other Certificants;

Standard II(g): report to NCBTMB, within thirty (30) days of discovery of, any criminal conviction of, or plea of guilty, nolo contendere, or no contest to, a crime in any jurisdiction (other than a minor traffic offense) by himself/herself or by other Certificants;

Standard II(h): report to NCBTMB, within thirty (30) days of discovery of, any pending civil litigation and the resulting resolution related to the professional practice of the Certificant and the professional practice of other Certificants;

Standard II(i): report to NCBTMB, within thirty (30) days of discovery of, any pending complaints in any state or local government or quasi-government board or agency against his/her professional conduct or competence, or that of another Certificant, and the resulting resolution of such complaint; and

Standard II(j): respect existing publishing rights and obey copyright and trademark laws, including, but not limited to, those that apply to NCBTMB's copyright-protected examination.

Standard III: Confidentiality

The Certificant shall respect the confidentiality of client information and safeguard all records. In his/her professional role, the Certificant shall:

Standard III(a): protect the confidentiality of the client's identity and information in all conversations, advertisements, and any and all other matters unless disclosure of identifiable information is requested by the client in writing, is medically necessary, or is required by law;

Standard III(b): protect the interests of clients who are minors or clients who are unable to give voluntary and informed consent by obtaining prior written permission from a legal guardian;

Standard III(c): solicit only information that is relevant to the professional client/therapist relationship;

Standard III(d): securely retain client files for a minimum period of four (4) years from the termination of the therapeutic relationship; and

Standard III(e): dispose of client files in a secure manner.

Standard IV: Business Practices

The Certificant shall practice with honesty, integrity, and lawfulness in the business of therapeutic massage and bodywork. In his/her professional role the Certificant shall:

Standard IV(a): provide a physical setting that is safe and meets all applicable legal requirements for health and safety;

Standard IV(b): maintain adequate and customary liability insurance;

Standard IV(c): maintain adequate progress notes for each client session, if applicable; Standard IV(d): accurately and truthfully inform the public of services provided; Standard IV(e): honestly represent all professional qualifications and affiliations;

Standard IV(f): promote his/her business with integrity and avoid potential and actual conflicts of interest;

Standard IV(g): advertise in a manner that is honest, dignified, accurate and representative of services provided and remains consistent with the NCBTMB Code of Ethics and these Standards of Practice;

Standard IV(h): advertise in a manner that is not misleading to the public and shall never use sensational, sexual or provocative language and/or pictures to promote his/her business;

Standard IV(i): comply with all laws regarding sexual harassment;

Standard IV(j): not exploit the trust and dependency of others, including clients and employees/co- workers;

Standard IV(k): disclose a schedule of fees in advance of the session;

Standard IV(l): make financial arrangements in advance which are clearly understood by, and safeguard the best interests of, the client or consumer;

Standard IV(m): follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles; Standard IV(n): file all applicable municipal, state and federal taxes; and

Standard IV(o): maintain accurate financial records, contracts and legal obligations, appointment records, tax reports and receipts for the most recent three (3) fiscal years.

Standard V: Roles & Boundaries

The Certificant shall adhere to ethical boundaries and perform the professional roles designed to protect both the client and the practitioner and safeguard the therapeutic value of the relationship. In his/her professional role, the Certificant shall:

Standard V(a): recognize his/her personal limitations and practice only within these limitations;

Standard V(b): recognize his/her influential position with the client and not exploit the relationship for personal or other gain;

Standard V(c): recognize and limit the impact of transference and counter-transference between the client and the Certificant;

Standard V(d): avoid dual or multidimensional relationships that could impair professional judgment or result in exploitation of a client, student, employee, supervisee, mentee, trainee, or anyone else with whom a power differential exists;

Standard V(e): acknowledge and respect the client's freedom of choice in the therapeutic session;

Standard V(f): respect the client's right to refuse the therapeutic session or any part of the therapeutic session;

Standard V(g): refrain from practicing under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any illegal substances (with the exception of a prescribed dosage of prescription medication which does not impair the Certificant);

Standard V(h): have the right to refuse and/or terminate the service to a client who is abusive or under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any illegal substance; and

Standard V(i): have the right to refuse and/or terminate the service to a client who exhibits language or behavior which the therapist deems as an immediate or potential risk to the safety of the: (i) client;(ii) Certificant; or (iii) therapeutic relationship.

Standard VI: Prevention of Sexual Misconduct

The Certificant shall refrain from any behavior that sexualizes, or appears to sexualize, the client/therapist relationship. The Certificant recognizes the intimacy of the therapeutic relationship may activate practitioner and/or client needs and/or desires that weaken boundaries which may lead to sexualizing the therapeutic relationship. In his/her professional role, the Certificant shall:

Standard VI(a): refrain from participating in a sexual relationship or sexual conduct with the client, whether consensual or otherwise, from the beginning of the client/therapist relationship and for a minimum of six (6) months after the termination of the client/therapist relationship, unless an ongoing current sexual relationship existed prior to the date the therapeutic relationship began. In the case of a pre-existing ongoing sexual relationship, providing therapeutic massage and bodywork on such a person is discouraged, but may be done

with informed consent which acknowledges the power differential in a therapeutic relationship and the complexities of dual relationships;

Standard VI(b): in the event the client initiates sexual behavior, interrupt therapy to clarify the purpose of the therapeutic session. Provided that the client's initial sexual behavior ceases, the Certificant may, at his or her discretion, take action to terminate or continue the session. The Certificant shall terminate the session if the sexual conduct continues;

Standard VI(c): with the exception of a pre-existing ongoing sexual relationship, as set forth in Standard VI(a), recognize that sexual activity with clients, students, employees, supervisees, mentees, trainees, or anyone else with whom a power differential exists, is prohibited even if consensual;

Standard VI(d): not touch the genitalia;

Standard VI(e): only perform therapeutic treatments beyond the normal narrowing of the ear canal and normal narrowing of the nasal passages: (i) as indicated in the plan of care; (ii) after receiving informed voluntary written consent; and (iii) only if the Certificant is permitted to do so under state law;

Standard VI(f): only perform therapeutic treatments in the oral cavity: (i) as indicated in the plan of care; (ii) after receiving informed voluntary written consent; and (iii) only if the Certificant is permitted to do so under state law;

Standard VI(g): only perform therapeutic treatments into the anal canal: i) as indicated in the plan of care; (ii) after receiving informed voluntary written consent; and (iii) only if the Certificant is expressly authorized to perform colonic irrigation under state law; and

Standard VI(h): only provide therapeutic breast massage: (i) as indicated in the plan of care; (ii) after receiving informed voluntary written consent; and (iii) only if the Certificant is permitted to do so under state law.

Glossary of Terms

Boundary: A limit that separates one person from another. Its function is to protect the integrity of each person.

Certificant: NCBTMB Certificant or applicant for certification.

Client: An individual who receives the professional services of a Certificant, regardless of how or if those services are compensated. The term client may include a patient.

Competency: Study and development of a particular professional knowledge base and skills associated with and applied in practice within that knowledge base.

Counter-Transference: A practitioner's unresolved feelings and issues which are unconsciously transferred to the client.

Dignity: The quality or state of being worthy, honored or esteemed.

Dual Relationships: An alliance in addition to the client/therapist relationship, such as social, familial, business or any other relationship that is outside the therapeutic relationship.

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles: Rules, conventions, standards and procedures that are widely accepted among financial accountants and otherwise known as GAAP.

Genitalia: Reproductive organs and structures. Genitalia include the penis, scrotum/testis, vulva (labia majora and minora, clitoris, vestibule), hymen and vagina.

Impugn: To assail by words or arguments, oppose or attack as false.

Integrity: Honesty. Firm adherence to a code of values.

Multidimensional Relationships: Overlapping relationships in which the therapist and client share an alliance, in addition to the therapeutic relationship.

Progress Notes: Notes written and kept in a client file that indicate the date of the session, areas of complaint as stated by client, and observations made and actions taken by the practitioner.

Scope of Practice: The extent and limits necessary for safe and effective practice in the skills, procedures, actions and processes that Certificants with education and professional training are permitted to utilize within the context of their certification. Scope of practice is defined by the profession and limited, when applicable, by regulatory bodies.

Sexual Activity: Any verbal and/or nonverbal behavior for the purpose of soliciting, receiving or giving sexual gratification. Sexual activity may include, but is not limited to: (i) inappropriate touch; (ii) inappropriate hugs; (iii) body language; (iv) verbal dialogue about sexual preferences or fantasies; (v) verbal or physical flirtatious behavior; (vi) seductive or sexually demeaning gestures; (vii) sexual joking; (viii) failure to ensure client's privacy in disrobing/dressing; (ix) filming the client without his or her permission; (x) therapist's breast or pelvic area touching a client; (xi) kissing or other activity that is sexual in nature.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (i) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment; (ii) submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals; or (iii) such conduct has the purpose or

effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual Misconduct: Unethical and illegal behavior involving sexualization of, or engagement in, sexualized contact with a client/student/mentee/employee/trainee during or after the professional relationship has ended. This is especially critical due to the power differential in which care providers may use or exploit the trust or influence derived from the professional relationship. Sexual misconduct includes a wide range of sexual activity. The behavior does not have to be coercive to be inappropriate.

Therapeutic Breast Massage: Manipulation of the non-muscular soft tissue structure of the breast up to and including the areola and nipple.

Therapeutic Relationship: The ongoing relationship between a therapist and a client established to support the client's therapeutic goals. Characteristics of a healthy therapeutic relationship include personal awareness and insight, trust, respect, safety, authenticity, acceptance, empathy, collaborative agreement and the maintenance of personal and professional boundaries.

Transference: The displacement or transfer of feelings, thoughts, and behaviors originally related to a significant person, such as a parent, onto someone else, such as a massage therapist (or doctor, psychotherapist, teacher, spiritual advisor, etc.).

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CODE OF ETHICS

Revised September 2017 | Copyright 2017: NCBTMB: National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork, Inc. Code of Ethics. All Rights Reserved.

NCBTMB Certificants shall act in a manner that justifies public trust and confidence, enhances the reputation of the profession, and safeguards the interest of individual clients.

Certificants will:

Have a sincere commitment to provide the highest quality of care to those who seek their professional services;

Represent their qualifications honestly, including education and professional affiliations, and provide only those services that they are qualified to perform;

Accurately inform clients, other health care practitioners, and the public of the scope and limitations of their discipline;

Acknowledge the limitations of and contraindications for massage and bodywork and refer clients to appropriate health professionals;

Provide treatment only where there is reasonable expectation that it will be advantageous to the client;

Consistently maintain and improve professional knowledge and competence, striving for professional excellence through regular assessment of personal and professional strengths and weaknesses and through continued education training;

Conduct their business and professional activities with honesty and integrity, and respect the inherent worth of all persons;

Refuse to unjustly discriminate against clients and/or health professionals;

Safeguard the confidentiality of the client's identity and information in all conversations, advertisements, and any and all other matters unless disclosure of identifiable information is requested by the client in writing, is medically necessary or is required by law;

Respect the client's right to treatment with informed and voluntary consent. The certified practitioner will obtain and record the informed consent of the client, or client's advocate, before providing treatment. This consent may be written or verbal;

Respect the client's right to refuse, modify or terminate treatment regardless of prior consent given;

Provide draping and treatment in a way that ensures the safety, comfort and privacy of the client;

Exercise the right to refuse to treat any person or part of the body for just and reasonable cause;

Refrain, under all circumstances, from participating in a sexual relationship or sexual conduct with the client, whether consensual or otherwise, from the beginning of the client/therapist relationship and for a minimum of six (6) months after the termination of to the date the therapeutic relationship began;

Avoid any interest, activity or influence which might be in conflict with the practitioner's obligation to act in the best interests of the client or the profession;

Respect the client's boundaries with regard to privacy, disclosure, exposure, emotional expression, beliefs and the client's reasonable expectations of professional behavior. Practitioners will respect the client's autonomy;

Refuse any gifts or benefits that are intended to influence a referral, decision or treatment, or that are purely for personal gain and not for the good of the client; and

Follow the NCBTMB Standards of Practice, this Code of Ethics, and all policies, procedures, guidelines, regulations, codes, and requirements promulgated by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork, Inc.

JOB TASK ANALYSIS EXPLAINED

A job analysis study is conducted on a scheduled cycle to make sure the exams are current. The most recent job analysis study refers to procedures designed to obtain descriptive information about the tasks performed on a job and the knowledge, skills, or abilities required to perform those tasks. The specific type of information collected during a job analysis study is determined by the purpose for which the information will be used.

For purposes of developing credentialing examinations, a job analysis study should identify important tasks, knowledge, skills, or abilities deemed important by massage therapy professionals.

The use of a job analysis study (also known as practice analysis, role and function study, or role delineation) to define the content domain(s) is a critical component in establishing the content validity of the certification. Content validity refers to the extent to which the content covered by an examination is representative of the task and knowledge of a job (tasks, knowledge, skills, or abilities).

A well-designed job analysis study should include the participation of a representative group of subject matter experts who reflect the diversity within the profession. Diversity refers to regional or job context factors and to factors such as experience, gender, and race/ethnicity. Demonstration of content validity is accomplished through the judgments of subject matter experts. The process is enhanced by the inclusion of large numbers of experts who represent the diversity of the relevant areas of expertise.

The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing3 (2014) (The Standards) is a comprehensive technical guide that provides criteria for the evaluation of tests, testing practices, and the effects of test use. It was developed jointly by the American Psychological Association (APA), the American Educational Research Association (AERA), and the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME). The guidelines presented in The Standards, by professional consensus, have come to define the necessary components of quality testing. As a consequence, a testing program that adheres to The Standards is more likely to be judged to be valid and defensible than one that does not.

As stated in Standard 11.13,

> *"The content domain to be covered by a credentialing test should be defined clearly and justified in terms of the importance of the content for credential-worthy performance in an occupation or profession. A rationale and evidence should be provided to support the claim that the knowledge or skills being assessed are required for credential-worthy performance in that occupation and are consistent with the purpose for which the credentialing program was instituted…. Typically, some form of job or practice analysis provides the primary basis for defining the content domain…" (pp 181-182)*

The job analysis study for NCBTMB was designed to follow the guidelines presented in The Standards and to adhere to accepted professional practice.

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PORTFOLIO REVIEW DEFINITIONS

If you require additional education in any of the outlined educational categories to total the minimum 500-hours, the below definitions are meant to better detail the required learnings and/or course topics you may pursue:

Definitions of Categoric Requirements

Anatomy: The study of the structures of the body (e.g., what is the make-up of tissue, bone, nervous, organs, glands, etc.)

Physiology: The function of the systems and structures of the body (e.g., how do the nervous, endocrine, skeletal, digestive, muscular, integumentary, respiratory, circulatory/cardiovascular, lymphatic, urinary, and reproductive systems work; how do these systems function properly)

Kinesiology: The study of body movement

Pathology: Study of disease. Business: This is a broad category; it encompasses business, management, marketing, communications, communications, accounting, HIPAA, consent, record keeping, or developing skills that would strengthen your ability to work with the public.

Ethics: This topic surrounds critical thinking skills and how to make proper decisions when faced with ethical dilemmas. Sample topics include ethics when working in a massage room; how to react to clients in a public setting; how to speak without causing others unnecessary discomfort; business ethics; social media ethics; privacy; confidentiality; sexual misconduct.

In addition, NCBTMB will accept college credits and will translate them as follows:
1 credit from a trimester = 10 hours
1 credit from a semester = 15 hours

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This handbook contains information on how to become Board Certified in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork or Nationally Certified in Therapeutic Massage. To avoid problems in processing your application, it is important that you follow the guidelines outlined in this handbook and comply with the deadlines detailed herein. If you have any questions about the policies, procedures or processing of your application, please contact the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork (NCBTMB) online at www.ncbtmb.org or by phone at 1-800-296-0664. Additional copies of the handbook may be obtained from our web site free of charge.

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