National Certification Board for
Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork

APPROVED PROVIDER 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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1 APPROVED PROVIDER OVERVIEW

The National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork (NCBTMB) is a nationally-accredited credentialing organization, formed to set higher standards for those who practice therapeutic massage and bodywork.

Board Certification represents the highest attainable credential within the massage therapy profession. Board Certification is an advanced credential separate from entry-level massage therapy state licensure.

NCBTMB Approved Providers (AP) have met the highest standards for continuing education instruction throughout the profession.

Board Certificants must renew their certification every two years and are required to earn 24 CEs from a NCBTMB Approved Provider within that two-year period. The Approved Provider program ensures that Board Certificants and the massage profession have access to reliable, credible, high-quality massage therapy continuing education throughout their careers.

2 FEES

Fees must be paid by credit or with debit card on www.ncbtmb.org upon submission of your application. Please contact us at info@ncbtmb.org or by calling 1-800-296-0664 to pay by check.

Fees:

- **Individual Approved Provider Fee:** $225
- **Organization Approved Provider Fee:** $450
- **Course Fee:** $35 per course

- **Conference Fee:**
  - **1-50 courses:** $50
  - **51-100 courses:** $100
  - **101-150 courses:** $150
  - **151-200 courses:** $200

- **Existing Course Update Fee:** $35 per course
- **NY Sponsorship Fee:** $450
- **Non-Sufficient Funds Fee:** $30

NOTE: **All fees are nonrefundable and subject to change.**

3 INSTRUCTOR REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should be experienced providers of continuing education courses to meet all of the criteria that the NCBTMB sets for approved providers of continuing education.

The following applies to all instructors:

- Holds a minimum of a bachelor's degree from a college or university accredited by a regional accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, or a substantially equivalent accrediting body of a foreign sovereign state, with a major in a subject directly related to the content of the program to be offered; **OR**
- Has completed at least five years of professional experience in the practice of massage therapy of; **OR**
- Has a minimum of two years of teaching experience; **OR**
- Has completed an NCBTMB approved teacher training program in the area of interest; **OR**
- Has completed at least 100 hours of non-entry level education in the subject matter to be offered and has a minimum of two years of professional experience in practice related to the subject.

Other Requirements:
A license or certification in massage therapy, massage therapy instruction or other related profession is required for those teaching massage technique if it is required by the state of residence.

NCBTMB can require proof of 100 hours of non-entry level education for courses submitted for topics which are not represented on an Approved Provider's resume and/or fall in specific categories including but not limited to: pregnancy/prenatal, manual lymph drainage, oncology, etc.

All instructors teaching for approved provider organizations must meet the instructor qualifications and must be approved separately.

4 COURSE REQUIREMENTS

NCBTMB requires that an initial applicant submits one course for approval with their application. The course must:

- Have been taught at least one time in the last year to a group of five or more participants.
- Have completed evaluation forms from five or more participants
- Meet all course requirements (listed below).
- If applicant is a membership organization, non-profit association, or accreditation organization with annual conferences, symposia or other one- time only events, courses are not required to have been taught in the past year.

Adding New Courses
Each new course to be offered by an Approved Provider must be submitted for approval.

5 NEW YORK SPONSORSHIP

The New York State Education Department, Office of the Professions only recognizes continuing education from providers who are sponsored by an approved entity. As a New York state approved sponsor, NCBTMB is pleased to offer continuing education providers the option of applying for New York state sponsorship as a convenience. If you wish to be sponsored by NCBTMB, complete the "NY Sponsorship Application" only AFTER your Approved Provider application has been approved.

Additional Information on requirements can be found here by downloading the New York Agreement and Sponsorship form (this is not the application).

6 NCBTMB'S REVIEW OF APPLICATION

Application Submission Process:

- Requirement Review
  - All requested information is included
  - Education, experience and expertise
  - Experience matches content of courses submitted
  - Agree to Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics

- Course Information
  - Course description
  - Learning outcomes/objectives
  - Course breakdown
  - Course adheres to the NCBTMB acceptable content list
  - Course information aligns with course title, outcomes and description
  - Course has been taught at least once in the last year to five or more participants
  - Course includes proper citations and does not contain more than 30% of its content from outside sources
  - Confirmation that post course evaluations are distributed and collected from attendees
  - Confirmation that instructor/ organization contact information (email address and/or phone) is included with every course for participant use from the time a course is purchased

- New York approval (optional separate application)

Reasons for Denial:

- Incomplete information
- Instructor/organization is determined not qualified.
- Course contains unacceptable content

- NCBTMB may deny any instructor/organization and/or course at its discretion

Note: **Refunds will not be issued for denied applications.**

7 COURSE FORMATS

Continuing education hours (CEs)

NCBTMB uses the terms CE hours or Continuing Education Hours rather than CEUs.

All CE hours must be clearly stated prior to purchasing courses. CE hours must be awarded in whole or half hour increments only.

Courses should not be advertised as approved by NCBTMB until after approval is received by Approved Provider. Submission of a course does NOT guarantee approval.

Upon approval, Approved Providers are permitted to retroactively grant CEs for courses for up to one year prior to course approval submission.

Course elements:
It is expected that Approved Providers have knowledge of the basic instructional design elements mandatory for course approval. Below is a list of the course elements that are required when submitting a course for approval. It is advised that you organize this information prior to starting a course approval submission.

Several free, online resources are available to guide Approved Providers in developing the following course elements required on the course approval form. Search terms such as: "instructional design resources" or "adult learning course design" may be helpful in locating these resources.

Approved Providers must indicate in course materials when Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been used to create educational content.

Course Description
- Description of course content and purpose of class.

Course Title
- Titles must accurately reflect course content and make it clear what is being taught.
- Use of the term Certification may only be used in conjunction with programs that are accredited by a third-party agency recognized by NCBTMB.

Learning Outcomes
- Statements of the overall goal from participation in an educational activity.
- Outcomes should be measurable.
- Outcomes should describe what the learner will be able to do upon successful completion of the course.
- As a guideline, courses should include approximately one objective per CE.

Course outline

- Enter each course lesson, length of lesson and format of the lesson (i.e. presentation, video, etc)
- CE calculator will assign CEs based on information added. The CE calculator is based on formulas used by a variety of professional and certification organizations.

Course Categories

Advanced Science
NCBTMB accepts courses in the advanced sciences category to further advance practitioner skills and competencies, strengthen business skills, strengthen inter-professional collaboration, enhance modality knowledge and professional ethics, and develop a greater depth of advanced knowledge to demonstrate higher standards and skills.

Advanced science courses must meet these criteria:

- Health care or business courses which are part of an associates' or higher degree program. Health care is defined as: activities and practices that enhance, maintain, or rehabilitate the condition of being sound in body, especially freedom from physical disease or pain. **These classes are accepted at the discretion of NCBTMB.**
- Advanced anatomy, physiology, kinesiology and pathology/injury courses offered by an Approved Provider. Courses must demonstrate how the course relates to the practice of massage therapy and include the advanced science disclaimer (see below). In addition to NCBTMB's instructor

qualifications, instructors must have received an advanced degree or at least 100 hours of advanced training on the topic of the course. Courses must be approved by NCBTMB in advance.

- Psychology courses offered by an Approved Provider that provide general information on topics in psychology. Content on psychological counseling such as patient screening, assessment, intervention and all other aspects of the clinical relationship is not permitted. Courses must demonstrate how the course relates to the practice of massage therapy. In addition to NCBTMB's instructor qualifications, instructors must have received an advanced degree or at least 100 hours of advanced training on the topic of the course. Courses must be approved by NCBTMB in advance.

Advanced Science Disclaimer**:**
NCBTMB Approved Providers must add a disclaimer on course material and in course description stating the following:

- This class is approved by NCBTMB for massage therapists to enhance awareness of the topic. Massage therapists may not diagnose, prescribe, or suggest the use of any digestible materials or exercise programs without additional education and graduation from an approved program in the specific field/topic. It is the responsibility of the massage therapist to know and follow the Scope of Practice of the massage licensing board in their state/jurisdiction.

Ethics
NCBTMB and several state boards of massage require that ethics classes only be categorized in the ethics category. No other category selection will be permitted.

Self-Care
NCBTMB and several state boards of massage require that self-care classes only be categorized in the self-care category. No other category selection will be permitted. NCBTMB only accepts four (4) CEs per renewal period in Self-Care. Self-Care is NOT a requirement.

All self-care courses MUST include a statement that NCBTMB only accepts four (4) CEs per renewal period when promoting the courses.

Evaluations
All students should be given an evaluation after a course is completed. Approved Providers should review course evaluations to identify the strengths and weaknesses of courses with the goal of continuous improvement. Sample evaluation can be found as follows for reference.:

- Live course
- Home study course

If any of these elements are missing, the course will be rejected. In addition, NCBTMB staff will provide guidance on areas that need additional information or clarification. Staff is unable to provide assistance with instructional design or in completing submissions for Approved Providers.

Live Course

- A live course is primarily made up of a synchronous education experience in which the learner and instructor are in the same location.

- A live course may include homework outside of the common learning environment in advance of, during or after the course for CE credit. Homework does not count for continuing education hours.

CEs for live education experiences should match the number of hours of instruction based on a 50-minute hour. Meal breaks are excluded from instruction time.

Distance Learning/Webinars

A distance learning/webinar is defined as a synchronous education experience in which learners are in a location remote (or separate) from the instructor who is teaching in real time.

- The criteria for distance learning/webinar classes are the same as for live classes.
- Rebroadcast/recorded webinars should be classified as home study.

Home study course

- A home study course is defined as an asynchronous education experience in which learners are in a location remote (or separate) from the instructor. Courses can be distributed via website, email or as written material by the Approved Provider to the participant.
- Unsupervised practical assignments will not count for continuing education hours. Written assignments associated with the practical assignments may earn CEs if they are returned to the instructor for grading. Only up to 30% of CEs can derive from acceptable assignments.
- All course participants must take a final exam and submit the exam to provider for grading. Requirements of the final exam are:
    - Final exams must contain a minimum of five multiple-choice questions, (containing at least four possible choices), per hour of class. Essay questions may also be used in a written final exam.
    - Exams must be evidence based.
    - Participant must receive a score of 70% or higher on the exam prior to receiving a Certificate of Achievement.
    - Approved Provider must inform participants of the required passing exam score prior to administering the exam.

Approved Providers may also work with an instructional designer to determine CE hours. Instructional designer must provide documentation of assignment of CE hours and demonstrate educational qualifications to serve in that capacity. Contact NCBTMB staff for additional information.

8 ACCEPTABLE COURSE CONTENT

Massage Techniques and Modalities

- Massage and bodywork therapy applications for specific needs, conditions, or client populations
- The use of massage therapy tools and their specific needs
- Working with the muscles within the oral cavity for specific treatments
- Use of external agents such as water, heat, cold, or topicals
- Energy work that includes "professional therapeutic hands-on applications"

Applied Sciences (Anatomy, Physiology, Kinesiology, Pathology/Injury and Pharmacology)

- Anatomy, physiology and kinesiology beyond core massage therapy school curriculum
- Pathology beyond core massage therapy school curriculum
- Pharmacology related to the effects, indications and contraindications as it relates to massage
- Body-centered or somatic psychology
- Psychophysiology
- Theory or practice of ergonomic science as applied to therapist or client
- Advanced science courses that contain content which goes beyond the massage therapist's scope of practice (as defined by state and/or local legislation) and is instructive in understanding systems of the body more in depth. Refer to the Approved Provider Handbook for course criteria and instructor qualifications for courses in this category.
- Hygiene, methods of infectious disease control, organization and management of the treatment environment

Assessment and Documentation

- Client assessment protocols
- Documentation formats (e.g., Subjective, Objective, Assessment/
- Application, Plan [SOAP], Focus, Data, Action, Response [FDAR])

Professional Communications

- Strategies for communicating and collaborating with care providers

Professional Practice

- Information and research literacy
- Financial principles
- Marketing for massage and bodywork therapy practices
- Hygiene, methods of infectious disease control, organization and management of the treatment environment
- Self-care*:
  - Courses concentrating on nutrition and/or diet, but only as it enhances the learner's knowledge about the practice of massage therapy
  - Perform yoga/yoga teacher training programs (acceptable for therapist's self-care only)
  - Active strengthening/physical training (acceptable for therapist's self-care only)
- Emergency preparedness

Law and Ethics

- Standards of practice and professional ethics
- Interpersonal skills which may include communication skills, boundary functions, phenomena of

transference, countertransference and projection
- Cultural sensitivity
- State laws

***Please note*: *NCBTMB only accepts four (4) CEs per renewal period in Self-Care. Self-Care is NOT a requirement. All self-care courses MUST include a statement that NCBTMB only accepts four (4) CEs per renewal period when promoting the courses.**

9 UNACCEPTABLE COURSE CONTENT

- Core curriculum content including basic anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, pathology, and Swedish massage applications
- Diagnoses (allopathic-based) of clinical conditions
- Implementation of allopathic medical/surgical procedures
- Physically invasive modalities, e.g., ear candles, intra-anal, intra-vaginal modalities, etc.
- Incorporation of chiropractic/osteopathic, e.g., ballistic, thrust oriented or other services and procedures which require additional licensure or certification, i.e., Yoga or Pilates Instructor Certification, Physical Therapy, Personal Training, Weight Training
- Prescription of herbs, nutritional supplements, and /or pharmaceuticals
- Performing hypnosis
- Performing an aesthetician facial or exfoliation of cells from the body
- Performing electrical stimulation, using electrical devices on clients or ultrasound of any kind
- Light therapy in any form
- Psychological counseling
- Psychic, clairvoyance, telepathic, astrology, religious practices
- Dry needling and acupuncture
- Breaking or removing tissue from the body
- Courses based on use of specific products
- Energy work that does not include "professional therapeutic hands-on applications"
- Techniques relying on limited hands-on contact and/or the use of guided meditations, clearing of energy blockages, spiritual guidance or other energy healing approaches such as (but not limited to): Holy Fire Reiki, Integrated Energy Therapy, Access Bars and Healing Touch.
- Aura techniques
- Crystal healing
- Qi Gong or Tai Chi
- Fire cupping or any procedure that works with fire
- Breast massage classes are accepted as part of medical procedures, as prescribed by a physician, when they meet state licensing board requirements for practicing breast massage, or when learning about oncology (specifically, breast cancer procedures).
- Moxibustion
- Tongue Reading
- Erroneous, misleading titles of modalities; a description of the course must be added to the title if the modality/topic cannot be easily deciphered by the title.
- CPR/First Aid

Exceptions: Courses that will be allowed only when the course is designed/outlined and titled as strictly for the therapist's personal self-care and not to be taught to others or performed on clients, such as:

- Performing active strengthening/physical training to others (acceptable for the therapist's self-care only).
- Perform yoga/yoga teacher training programs (acceptable for therapist's self-care only).

Please Note: Basic/fundamental course content represented in the initial massage therapist training, does not qualify for CEs as it is not continued education. Continuing education must be of an advanced nature, with more specific approaches.

NCBTMB reserves the right to reject any course content that does not adhere to federal laws and regulation, risks participant or instructor safety, and/or is not sufficiently backed up by research.

As with all continuing education, it is understood that the massage therapist is responsible for verifying that information provided in courses is within the therapist's state and/or local scope of practice as defined by law. In addition, course participants should be advised that additional training and education is required to be truly proficient in any topic. Once courses are completed, Approved Providers provide Certificates of Achievement or Certificates of Completion. After taking Approved Provider's course, a participant is not certified in a topic. Approved Providers are encouraged to include this information in course materials for participants.

Please be sure to review the NCBTMB website as content is subject to change.

For additional information about course categories, download the Continuing Education Course Categories

10 CERTIFICATE AND TRANSCRIPT GUIDELINES

Attendance:

- Students must attend the full class to get credit. If a student misses no more than 15 minutes of class (not including scheduled breaks), they may receive full credit.
- Certificates can only be given for the number of CEs approved by NCBTMB. *
- Approved Providers may use a sign-in sheet, roll call or other method to ensure attendance at in-person classes.
- Approved Providers may use the engagement feature with popular webinar/meeting platforms like Zoom, Go To Meetings or Google Meet to ensure attendance. In addition, regular polling, roll calls and questioning students may assist in monitoring attendance.
- Approved Provider and education hosts (i.e., AMTA chapters or other conference hosts), must clearly list refund, cancellation and attendance policies. These policies should support full attendance in class and should not offer partial credit under any circumstances.
- Approved Providers must retain attendance records for six years.

Certificates must display the following:

- Participant's name
- Course title exactly as it appears in the NCBTMB directory*
- Course completion date
- Course type (Live, Home Study or Webinar). Recorded webinars are considered home study courses.
- Provider's address or email address

- NCBTMB Approved Provider number
- Number of Continuing Education hours for which course is approved. Note that the education hours must be listed as CEs or hours but may not be listed as CEUs. **Certificates with hours that differ from those approved will be rejected by NCBTMB and by state boards. ***
- Approved Provider name as listed on the Approved Provider's account and the signature of the Approved Provider. Approved Provider organizations must include the signature of the instructor who taught the course or the organization's representative.

***NCBTMB will only accept certificates with course title and corresponding CE hours as NCBTMB approved. This is a requirement of both NCBTMB's accreditation with NCCA and NCBTMB's agreement with several state boards to serve as a resource for their audit processes.**

Template certificates are sent with the welcome email once the Approved Provider application is approved. Please contact CE@ncbtmb.org if you need a template certificate.

Types of Certificates:

- *Certificates of Completion:* A Certificate of Completion is given when participants attend a live course or distance learning/webinar course.
- *Certificates of Achievement:* A Certificate of Achievement is given for home study and asynchronous distance learning courses for which participants are required to pass a test (written or practical) at the end of a course.

Transcripts:

- Participant transcripts must be made available for all participants upon request. Transcripts are a cumulative record of all courses taken by a specific participant. Transcripts should display at least six years of course information. For schools, the administration and maintenance of continuing education participant transcripts and other education records are stored separately from the transcripts/educational records of core curriculum students.
- All participant records are confidential and can only be reproduced by written permission of the participant. All transcript or record requests by participants must be handled in a timely manner.
- Sign-in sheets do not satisfy the requirements for a participant's transcripts or records.

If you have questions, email ce@ncbtmb.org.

11 APPROVAL STATUS

Approved Providers are approved for a period of three years from the date of approval.

While approved, use the designation of Approved Provider with your AP number. All Approved Providers will receive a frameable certificate. Approval does not confer endorsement by NCBTMB. APs may not use any terminology that implies endorsement.

12 RENEWAL

Approved Providers must renew every three years to maintain Approved Provider status.

- Submit updated instructor names (must meet NCBTMB's AP Instructor Qualifications)
- Confirm course offerings
- Submit renewal fees
- Reaffirm commitment to uphold NCBTMB's Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics
  Note: As a courtesy, NCBTMB will allow an Approved Provider to renew for up to one year after the account expiration date. If renewed within one year of expiration, there will be no lapse in approval. After one year, the Approved Provider will be required to re-apply.

13 MARKETING YOUR COURSES

AP Directory

NCBTMB offers an Approved Provider and Course Directory locator on its website. This service allows consumers the opportunity to locate Approved Providers or courses by name, city, zip code, etc. Be sure to keep your information updated to ensure that students can reach you.

Mailing and Email Marketing Lists

Board Certificants must complete 24 CEs every two (2) years from an Approved Provider. The NCBTMB mailing and email marketing lists offer an affordable way to reach your target audience. Click here for more information.

Digital Badges

NCBTMB has partnered with Credly to provide a digital version of NCBTMB credentials to Approved Providers. The badge is the Approved Provider seal and that can be used in email signatures or digital resumes and on social media sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. The digital image contains verified metadata that describes the Approved Provider qualifications.

14 CONTACT US

The NCBTMB office is open from 8am - 4:30 pm Central Time, Monday-Friday. You can call us at 1-800-296-0664 or email at: ce@ncbtmb.org

Or visit the NCBTMB website at www.ncbtmb.org to review and update your account, find current information on programs and access the Directory of Approved Providers.

Due to an increase in abusive encounters with phone and email communication, it is necessary to 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 must 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.

15 POLICIES

Click on the links below to access pertinent policies:

NCBTMB Privacy Policy
NCBTMB Refund Policy
Use of Approved Provider Logo
Other NCBTMB Policies

16 TIPS TO GET STARTED

Below are helpful tips to get through the application process for Initial and Renewal applications.

- Review instructor requirements to ensure instructor(s) are eligible for approval.
- Review course requirements to ensure course(s) are eligible for approval.
- Gather required documentation to submit with application.
- Organize course content to include a description, learning objectives and learning outcomes

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

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

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

The NCBTMB developed and adopted the Approved Provider Standards of Practice to provide Approved Providers and applicants for Approved Provider status with a clear statement of the expectations of professional conduct and level of practice afforded the profession in, among other things, the following areas: Professionalism, Legal and Ethical Requirements, Confidentiality, Business Practices, Roles and Boundaries, and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct. These Approved Provider Standards of Practice were approved and ratified by the NCBTMB Board of Directors, representatives of the Approved Provider population and key stakeholders of the NCBTMB.

Preamble
These Approved Provider Standards of Practice for the profession of therapeutic massage and bodywork are the guiding principles by which Approved Providers and applicants for Approved Provider status conduct their day-to-day responsibilities within their scope of practice. These principles help to assure that all professional behaviors are conducted in the most ethical, compassionate, and responsible manner. Through these Approved Provider 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 and continuing education. The Standards are enforceable guidelines for professional conduct, and therefore, are stated in observable and measurable terms intended as minimum levels of practice to which Approved Providers and applicants for Approved Provider status are held accountable. Upon submission of the application to become an Approved Provider, each applicant for Approved Provider status must agree to uphold and abide by the NCBTMB Approved Provider Code of Ethics, Approved Provider Standards of Practice and applicable policies. Approved Providers or applicants for Approved Provider status failure to comply with the Approved Provider Code of Ethics and the Approved Provider Standards of Practice as provided herein constitutes professional misconduct and may result in sanctions, or other appropriate disciplinary actions, including the suspension or revocation of Approved Provider status.

NCBTMB certificants, Approved Providers and applicants for Approved Provider status are obligated to report unethical behavior and violations of the Approved Provider Code of Ethics and/or the Approved

Provider Standards of Practice they reasonably and in good faith believe have been performed by other NCBTMB Approved Providers and applicants for Approved Provider status to NCBTMB.

These Approved Provider Standards of Practice reflect NCBTMB's clear commitment that Approved Provides and applicants for Approved Provider status provide an optimal level of service and strive for excellence in their businesses. 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. Approved Providers and applicants for Approved Provider status are responsible for showing and maintaining professional compliance with the Approved Provider Standards of Practice.

NCBTMB requires Approved Providers and applicants for Approved Provider status to conduct themselves in a highly professional and dignified manner. NCBTMB will not consider and/or adjudicate complaints against Approved Providers and applicants for Approved Provider status 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 the Approved Provider Standards of Practice. The Approved Provider 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 Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status must provide optimal levels of professional therapeutic massage and bodywork continuing education and demonstrate expert knowledge in specific modalities taught by seeking continuous education of each subject taught. Massage therapy and bodywork modalities must always be within the massage therapist's/bodyworker's scope of practice and taught ethically and non-judgmentally to other professionals in the field. In his/her professional role the Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status shall:

a. adhere to the NCBTMB Approved Provider Code of Ethics, Approved Provider Standards of Practice, policies and procedures
b. comply with the peer review process conducted by the NCBTMB Approved Provider Committee regarding any alleged violations of the NCBTMB Approved Provider Standards of Practice
c. comply with the peer review process conducted by the NCBTMB Ethics & Standards Committee regarding any alleged violations of the NCBTMB Approved Provider Code of Ethics
d. treat each student with respect, dignity and worth
e. use professional verbal, nonverbal and written communications
f. provide an environment that is safe and comfortable for the student and which, at a minimum, meets all legal requirements for health and safety
g. use standard precautions to insure professional hygienic practices and maintain a level of personal hygiene appropriate for continuing education providers in the therapeutic setting
h. wear clothing that is clean, modest, and professional
i. obtain voluntary and informed consent from students prior to initiating the lab/clinical portions of the class

j. if applicable, conduct an accurate needs assessment, develop a curriculum, and update the curriculum as needed
k. require that students use appropriate draping techniques to protect other students' physical and emotional privacy while in the classroom, lab/clinical setting
l. be knowledgeable of the subject being taught and teach within the massage therapist's scope of practice
m. respect the traditions and practices of other Approved Providers
n. not falsely impugn the reputation of any other Approved Provider
o. use the initials NCBTMB only to designate his/her status as an Approved Provider
p. remain in good standing with NCBTMB
q. understand that the NCBTMB Approved Provider certificate may be displayed prominently in the Approved Provider's business
r. use the NCBTMB Approved Provider logo and approval number on business cards, brochures, advertisements, and stationery only in a manner that is within established NCBTMB guidelines
s. not duplicate the NCBTMB Approved Provider certificate for purposes other than verification of the Approved Provider's status
t. immediately return the certificate to NCBTMB if Approved Provider status is revoked
u. inform NCBTMB of any changes or additions to information included in his/her application for NCBTMB Approved Provider status or renewal of status

Standard II: Legal and Ethical Requirements

The Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status must comply with all the legal requirements in applicable jurisdictions regulating the profession of therapeutic massage and bodywork. In his/her professional role the Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status shall:

a. obey all applicable local, state, and federal laws
b. refrain from any behavior that results in illegal, discriminatory, or unethical actions
c. accept responsibility for his/her own actions
d. report to the proper authorities any alleged violations of the law by other Approved Providers, certificants or applicants for Approved Provider status
e. maintain accurate and truthful records
f. report to NCBTMB 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 him/herself and by other Approved Providers, certificants or applicants for Approved Provider status
g. report to NCBTMB any pending litigation and resulting resolution related to the Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider's status professional practice and the professional practice of other Approved Providers, certificants or applicants for Approved Provider status
h. report to NCBTMB 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 Approved Provider, and the resulting resolution of such complaint

Standard III: Confidentiality

The Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status shall respect the confidentiality of student information and safeguard all records. In his/her professional role the Approved Provider or

applicant for Approved Provider status shall:

a. protect the confidentiality of the student's identity in conversations, all advertisements, and any and all other matters unless disclosure of identifiable information is requested by the student inwriting, is medically necessary, is required by law or for purposes of public protection
b. solicit only information that is relevant to the professional student/Approved Provider relationship
c. share pertinent information about the student with third parties when required by law or for purposes of public protection
d. maintain the student files for a minimum period of four years
e. store and dispose of student files in a secure manner

Standard IV: Business Practices

The Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status shall teach with honesty, integrity, and lawfulness in the business of therapeutic massage and bodywork continuing education. In his/her professional role the Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status shall:

a. provide a physical setting that is safe and meets all applicable legal requirements for health and safety
b. maintain adequate and customary liability insurance
c. maintain adequate records and required documentation for each student
d. accurately and truthfully inform the profession of courses provided
e. honestly represent all professional qualifications and affiliations
f. promote his/her business with integrity and avoid potential and actual conflicts of interest
g. advertise in a manner that is honest, dignified, accurate and representative of services that can be delivered and remains consistent with the NCBTMB Approved Provider Code of Ethics and Approved Provider Standards of Practice
h. advertise in a manner that is not misleading to the profession and shall not use sensational, sexual or provocative language and/or pictures to promote business or in the learning environment
i. comply with all laws regarding sexual harassment
j. not exploit the trust and dependency of others, including students and employees/co-workers
k. display/discuss a schedule of fees in advance of the session that is clearly understood by the student or potential student
l. make financial arrangements in advance that are clearly understood by and safeguard the best interests of the student
m. have clearly defined cancelation and refund policies
n. follow acceptable accounting practices
o. file all applicable municipal, state and federal taxes
p. maintain accurate financial records, contracts and legal obligations, tax reports, copies of certificates, transcripts and receipts for at least four years. Continuing education course records must be kept for six years.

Standard V: Roles and Boundaries

The Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status shall adhere to ethical boundaries and perform the professional roles designed to protect both the student and the Approved Provider and safeguard the professional relationship between the student and Approved Provider. In his/her

professional role the Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status shall:

a. recognize his/her personal limitations and teach course only within these limitations
b. recognize his/her influential position with students and not exploit the relationship for personal or other gain
c. recognize and limit the impact of transference and counter-transference between the Approved Provider and students
d. avoid dual or multidimensional relationships that could impair professional judgment or result in exploitation of students or employees and/or coworkers
e. not engage in any sexual activity with any student
f. refrain from teaching 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 Approved Provider)
g. have the right to refuse and/or terminate a class with a student who is abusive or under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any illegal substance

Standard VI: Prevention of Sexual Misconduct

The Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status shall refrain from any behavior that sexualizes, or appears to sexualize, the student/Approved Provider relationship. The Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status recognizes the intimacy of the student/Approved Provider or student/student relationship may activate needs and/or desires that weaken objectivity and may lead to sexualizing the therapeutic relationship. In his/her professional role the Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status shall:

a. refrain from participating in a sexual relationship or sexual conduct with the student, whether consensual or otherwise, from the beginning of the student/Approved Provider relationship and for a minimum of six months after the course end date unless a pre-existing relationship exists between the Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status and student prior to the Approved Provider or applicant for Approved Provider status applying for Approved Provider status by NCBTMB
b. in the event that the student initiates sexual behavior, clarify the purpose of the continuing education course, and, if such conduct does not cease, terminate or refuse the student for further courses
c. recognize that sexual activity with students, employees, supervisors, or trainees is prohibited even if consensual
d. not touch the genitalia
e. only teach therapeutic treatments within the massage therapy scope of practice

Glossary of Terms

Acceptable Accounting Procedures: Rules, conventions, standards, and procedures that are widely accepted among financial accountants.

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

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 student or client.

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

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

Genitalia, Female: Labia majora, labia minora, clitoris and vaginal orifice.

Genitalia, Male: Testes, penis and scrotum.

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 Approved Provider and student share an alliance, in addition to the instructor/student relationship.

Sexual Activity: Any verbal and/or nonverbal behavior for the purpose of soliciting, receiving or giving sexual gratification.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: 1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; 2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals; or 3. 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.

Scope of Practice: The minimum standards necessary for safe and effective practice and the parameters of practice determined by the Approved Provider's/student's professional training and education, and, when applicable, regulatory bodies.

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

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.)

CODE OF ETHICS

NCBTMB Approved Providers and applicants for Approved Provider status shall act in a manner that justifies professional trust and confidence, enhances the education of continuing education student, and safeguards the interest of each individual in the classroom. Approved Providers and applicants for Approved Provider will:

I. Have a sincere commitment to provide the highest quality of education to those who seek their professional services.

II. Represent their qualifications honestly, including education and professional affiliations, and provide instruction for only those courses that they are qualified to teach.

III. Accurately inform students and the profession of the scope and limitations of their continuing education courses.

IV. Acknowledge the limitations of and contraindications for massage and bodywork in each specific modality.

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

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

VII. Refuse to unjustly discriminate against students.

VIII. Safeguard the confidentiality of all student information, unless disclosure is requested by the student in writing, is medically necessary, is required by law, or necessary for the protection of the public.

IX. Provide draping and treatment in a way that ensures the safety, comfort and privacy of all students.

X. Refrain, under all circumstances, from initiating or engaging in any sexual conduct, sexual activities, or sexualizing behavior involving a student, even if the student attempts to sexualize the relationship unless a pre-existing relationship exists between an Approved Provider and the student prior to the student's class attendance.

XI. Avoid any interest, activity or influence which might be in conflict with the Approved Provider's obligation to act in the best interests of students or the profession.

XII. Respect the student's boundaries with regard to privacy, disclosure, exposure, emotional expression, beliefs and the student's reasonable expectations of professional behavior. Approved Providers will respect the student's autonomy.

XIII. Refuse any gifts or benefits that are intended to influence grades, decisions or attendance, or that are purely for personal gain.

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

CODE OF CONDUCT

As an Approved Provider applicant, I/our organization agree(s) to:

I. Provide accurate information to the NCBTMB in all transactions to the best of our knowledge.

II. Assure that course credits are awarded only to certificants who successfully complete the course according to the published requirements.

III. Conduct the operations and programs in an ethical manner that respects the rights and worth of the clients we serve.

IV. Use and display the provider statement and logo according to the NCBTMB requirements.

V. Furnish requested information, work cooperatively with the NCBTMB, and pay fees in a timely manner.

VI. Accept that the NCBTMB audits courses for purposes of compliance with the criteria.

VII. After due review and comment period, abide by any revisions of the criteria or inform the NCBTMB any intention to withdraw provider ship.

VIII. Maintain compliance with the NCBTMB's Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, and policies and procedures.

IX. Adhere to the NCBTMB criteria/standards or relinquish the NCBTMB approval status after due process.

X. Report to the NCBTMB within thirty (30) days any major organizational or program change that impacts the operation of the administrative unit on which provider approval is based.

XI. Keep participant records in a locked file cabinet and/or a password protected computer for at least six years from the date of the course.

XII. Adhere to NCBTMB policy to keep participants' personal and business information private and not give out or sell to another party.

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This handbook contains information on how to become an Approved Provider for Continuing Education. 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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