

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Enrolled - Revised

House Bill 1598

(Delegate Krebs)

Health and Government Operations

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Massage Therapists - Licenses and Registrations - Education and Display
Requirements

This bill defines “contact hour” and “credit hour” and clarifies education requirements to become a licensed massage therapist or a registered massage practitioner. The bill also requires each licensee or registrant to display their license or registration conspicuously where the holder practices.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: There is no material fiscal or operational impact on the State Board of Massage Therapy Examiners.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Since the bill is largely clarifying in nature, any impact on small businesses is anticipated to be minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary/Current Law: Generally, a person must be licensed by the State Board of Massage Therapy Examiners as a massage therapist to practice massage therapy in the State or registered as a massage practitioner to practice massage therapy in a nonhealth care setting.

Definitions

The bill defines “contact hour” as 50 minutes of actual instructional time per each 60-minute hour. “Credit hour” means a minimum of (1) 15 contact hours, during which the instructional time was provided through actual class time, exclusive of registration, study days, and holidays; (2) 30 contact hours, during which the instructional time was

provided through supervised laboratory or studio time, exclusive of registration, study days, and holidays; or (3) 45 contact hours, during which the instructional time was provided through supervised practica, internships, and cooperative education placements, when learning was documented.

Education Requirements for Licensure as a Massage Therapist

Under current law, an applicant must satisfactorily complete either (1) at least 60 credit hours of education, including a minimum of 24 credit hours in basic and applied science courses related to health care, from an institution of higher education approved by the board and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) or (2) at least 60 credit hours of education from an institution of higher education approved by the board and MHEC *and* 24 hours of advanced massage therapy continuing education as approved by the board in basic and applied science courses related to health care.

The bill alters the education requirements for licensure by requiring that an applicant have *graduated with* either (1) at least 60 credit hours of education from an institution of higher education approved by the board and MHEC, including a minimum of 24 credit hours in basic and applied science courses related to health care accredited by an accrediting agency or organization that accredits both institutions of higher education and programs offering instruction in massage therapy, or (2) at least 60 credit hours of education at an institution of higher education approved by the board and MHEC and 24 *credit* hours *or* 360 *contact* hours of advanced massage therapy continuing education as approved by the board in basic and applied science courses related to health care.

The bill also specifies that the number of hours of required education in specified courses is 600 *contact* hours and adds pathology and research to the required areas of content that a licensee must complete as part of the required educational experience.

Education Requirements for Registration as a Massage Practitioner

Under current law, an applicant for registration must complete 600 hours of education in a board-approved program for the study of massage therapy that includes specified areas of content. Under the bill, an applicant must *graduate from* a program for the study of massage therapy that has been approved by (1) MHEC and accredited by an accrediting agency or organization that accredits both institutions of higher education and programs offering instruction in massage therapy and (2) the board and that requires at least 600 contact hours of classroom instruction that includes specified areas of educational content, including pathology and research.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Kathleen P. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510