



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development

Board of Massage Therapists
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February 2, 2021

Dear licensees:

As professionals, we are considered examples and leaders in our communities. Let's ensure we fully live up to this expectation by continuing to actively and conscientiously practice in substantial compliance on guidance of the management of COVID-19.

Licensed massage therapists are required under 12 AAC 79.900 to provide a setting that is safe and meets all applicable legal requirements for health, safety, sanitation, hygiene, universal and standard precautions, in accordance with local, state and federal regulatory bodies including guidelines set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institute of Health (NIH), and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Current CDC guidelines for health care workers as of January 25th, 2021 currently includes health care providers to adhere to screening, masking and environmental mitigation protocols.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

A disciplinary matrix is in place for code of ethics and standards of practice violations in the event that an investigation and the procedures of due process result in board determination that a violation has occurred.

You are welcome to submit written concerns and questions to: boardofmassagetherapists@alaska.gov

As therapists, we have all faced a challenging year. COVID-19 has been an unexpected and ever-changing situation, one the Board has tried to navigate in good faith and with frequent effort. While the pandemic is ongoing, there is renewed hope and an end in sight. As professionals we have become well aware of best practices for combatting COVID-19 in our places of work. Science has given us many of the answers to questions we had in the early days of this pandemic and this Board seeks to grow more flexible with guidance offered to licensees.

There remains a need to practice safely and in accordance with our regulations. However, we recognize that one of the ways to best accomplish ongoing compliance with evolving information without having to change board guidance every few weeks, is to return the responsibility for keeping abreast of state, federal and CDC requirements to licensees.

As such, we continue to recommend prescreening, environmental mitigation factors and universal masking for therapists and patients. We urge licensees to keep themselves well informed, make decisions based on the most current science and recommendations available from the CDC.

Respectfully,

Alaska Board of Massage Therapists