



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Commerce,
Community
and Economic Development

BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPISTS

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Therapists,

What a year it's been! This time a year ago, vaccinations were new, COVID - 19 variants were emerging frequently and there were so many unknowns in our daily personal and professional lives. As a board, we have tried to do our duty as a public safety entity as well as advocate for the safety and wellbeing of therapists. Change has been the theme for the last two years for sure!

Things have also changed regarding masking over the last year. As you know, Alaska Massage Therapists are deeply connected to the recommendations of the CDC when it comes to health and safety. Several months ago, the CDC made changes to masking requirements for the general public, much of it linked to data about community transmission and vaccination rates. At the time, the board recommended no changes to its masking guidance because the CDC had not changed its recommendations for healthcare providers.

However, as we enter the summer of 2022, we feel that it is time for board guidance to evolve along with new data. As a result, the board is shifting its official guidance that requires continued masking back to our "pre-COVID" status- returning decisions on how best to comply with CDC standards and recommendations to therapists.

As a profession, Massage Therapy is one of very few that spends an hour or more in close quarters with our clients and patients. We are unique in this way, the privilege of sharing space with people is one of the cornerstones of our work. It is for this reason we continue to encourage, but not require, masking as a first line of defense for the health and safety of therapists and the public, especially when working with vulnerable populations and unvaccinated people.

With gratitude for our shared journey and patience as we grow together,

Jill Motz, Chairperson
Board of Massage Therapists