

**HEALTH REGULATION AND LICENSING ADMINISTRATION
&
HEALTH LICENSING BOARDS**

BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPY
AUTHORITY FOR GUIDANCE

March 17, 2016
DATE OF POLICY

16-001
POLICY NO.

POLICY STATEMENT

REVISED GUIDANCE ON CONTINUING EDUCATION

This policy statement was previously issued on September 19, 2013 to provide guidance on the Board's approval of continuing education (CE) programs as approved by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB) until such time as the relevant regulation has been promulgated to address the matter. This policy statement supersedes the September 19, 2013 policy statement.

NCBTMB is an independent, private, nonprofit organization offering a certification program for professionals as well as reviewing and approving CE programs and providers. The District of Columbia has long relied on the National Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCETMB), administered by NCBTMB, as a qualifying national examination for licensure.

Accordingly, the Board previously resolved to accept and grant credit for CE courses and programs offered by providers with current NCBTMB approval or certification, granted on or after October 1, 2013, provided further that both the provider and the course have received NCBTMB approval or certification after that date. However, due to a number of specific regulatory provisions and policy consideration for the District, the Board now issues a revised guidance and clarification to facilitate licensees' compliance as follows:

- 17 DCMR § 7506.4 requires each renewing licensee to complete – during the two (2) years prior to the expiration of the license – twelve (12) hours of CE, three (3) of which must be in ethics and nine (9) of which must be massage-related and six (6) of the nine (9) massage-related hours must be hands-on, massage-technique course(s) completed in a live classroom setting taught by an appropriate instructor.
- The CE rule noted above was revised as of December 11, 2015 to clarify that the required six (6) hours of live CE must be “hands-on, massage-technique course(s).” Licensees

seeking renewal in 2017 and beyond should ensure that they have acquired the necessary CE hours.

- While a licensee may have completed an NCBTMB-approved course taught by an NCBTMB-approved provider, **THE COURSE MAY NOT BE GRANTED CE CREDIT BY THE BOARD.** A licensee seeking to gain CE credit in the District must ensure that an NCBTMB-approved course also meets all the regulatory and policy requirements set by this Board. To ensure that a course will receive credit from this Board, a licensee should fully review this policy statement and the massage therapy regulation, to be found at Chapter 75 of Title 17 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulation (DCMR), which is accessible at the Board's web page as well as the D.C. Register (www.deregs.dc.gov).
- "Massage-related" continuing education may be interpreted broadly to include courses that may support and enhance a massage therapist's practice such as "Dealing with Difficult Personalities," as well as courses that are considered "self-care" courses such as yoga, tai-chi, and meditation. NCBTMB describes "self-care" courses as those "designed to reduce, prevent, or help a practitioner with the physical, mental, and emotional demands of their work." Licensees should note that while they may receive "massage-related" credit for such courses, the maximum number of the credit granted to such courses is limited to three (3) hours, in light of the requirement for "hands-on, massage-technique" hours, as required by 17 DCMR § 7506.4(b).
- Licensees should note further that while the Board's policy is to grant CE credit for NCBTMB-approved courses, the Board may decline to grant CE credit where the Board has not been able to review and ensure that a particular course meets all the regulatory and policy requirements for the District. As an example, the Board has determined that, due to the lack of full review of courses offered by Benjamin Cato, NCBTMB-approved Provider #451904-12, **NO CREDITS SHALL BE GRANTED FOR THE COURSES OFFERED AND TAUGHT BY THIS PROVIDER.** Benjamin Cato may also offer his classes under the name "Benoni Spa."
- NCBTMB-approved providers wishing to ensure that their CE offerings may be granted the required credit in the District may submit information about their course offerings to the Board for review.

All inquiries pertaining to the practice of massage therapy, including the CE requirements, may be directed to the Board's Health Licensing Specialist, Ms. Thelma Ofosu-Mensah, at 202-478-5791 or Thelma.ofosu-mensah@dc.gov.