

Board Certification for Therapeutic
Massage & Bodywork

CANDIDATE HANDBOOK



NCBTMB Mission: Elevating the massage therapy profession nationwide by establishing and advancing the highest credentials and standards of excellence.

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1 BOARD CERTIFICATION 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. It does this through a nationally recognized certification program—Board Certification. Board Certification represents the highest attainable credential within the profession; it is an advanced credential separate from entry-level massage therapy state licensure.

NCBTMB offers one examination for certification—the Board Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (BCETMB). NCBTMB has included a content outline for the BCETMB within this handbook. The eligibility criteria for Board Certification can be found in Section 3 of this handbook. Please review these criteria carefully before submitting your application to test.

Once you have become Board Certified, you will join thousands of other massage and bodywork professionals who are committed to fostering higher standards of ethical and professional practice in the delivery of therapeutic massage and bodywork services.

NCBTMB contracts with Prometric, an independent testing company, to administer the Board Certification Examination. Experts at Prometric work closely with NCBTMB to develop the exam that is used to evaluate the knowledge of therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals.

Prometric also scores the exam and sends the results to NCBTMB. NCBTMB oversees Prometric's activities to assure that all components of the examination process meet national standards.

2 GENERAL EXAM INFORMATION

The Board Certification exam is a Certification Examination that candidates can take and pass to show they have earned a higher voluntary credential within the profession.

Exam Facts

- The Board Certification exam consists of 140 multiple-choice questions.
- Four choices are provided for each multiple-choice question. Only one choice is the correct answer.
- You will have 140 minutes (2.3 hours) to complete the certification exam.
- A computer scores the exam as either pass or fail.
- You will receive on-screen notification of having either passed or failed the exam as soon as you have completed it.
- NCBTMB has resources to assist you in preparing for the exam. You can check out these resources at: [Requirements & Resources | NCBTMB](#).

3 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

You may sit for NCBTMB's certification exam once you have met the following Board Certification requirements:

If you practice in a state that requires state licensure:

- Maintain a current massage therapy license and provide proof of a valid license.
- Provide a copy of a valid government ID
- Pass a criminal background check (performed by NCBTMB)
- Agree to uphold NCBTMB's Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics
- Provide proof that you are at least 18 years old at the time you sit for the Board Certification examination.

If you practice in a state that does not require state licensure:

- Graduate from a NCBTMB Assigned School¹ and provide verification²
- Provide a copy of a valid government ID
- Pass a criminal background check (performed by NCBTMB)
- Agree to uphold NCBTMB's Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics
- Provide proof that you are at least 18 years old at the time you sit for the Board Certification examination.

¹*Assigned School Verification:* Please ask your school administrator for the required "NCBTMB Assigned School Code." Include your School Code on your application form. Failure to include your school code will delay your application.

²You must be able to prove that you have graduated from a formal training program. This proof must be in the form of an original official school transcript. Be sure to include all other documentation with your online application. NCBTMB reserves the right to request verification if needed.

All education and training courses must have been completed satisfactorily or have a passing grade. If your school did not offer an "Ethics" course, your school will need to explain where in the transcript you received the six clock hours of instruction in ethics. For example, the school might be able to explain that "six clock hours of ethics were taught in the course called Professional Business Practices."

You must have graduated from the program and met all requirements before you will be eligible to sit for the exam. For example, if you are enrolled in an 800-hour program, you must complete ALL 800 hours.

Portfolio Review:

You can apply through the Portfolio Review if you:

- have not completed a program of formal instruction.
- graduated from an international program; or
- did not graduate from a NCBTMB Assigned School

It is important to note that all students who attend a school outside of the United States **MUST** apply through the Portfolio Review process.

The Portfolio Review Process allows you to put a portfolio together of all of your training. The Portfolio Review team reviews your portfolio to see whether the training that you have is equivalent to the

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training you would get in a formal program. An additional \$75 fee is required. Transcripts proving your education are required along with your application.

Should you pursue Portfolio Review, you are still required to demonstrate completion of a minimum 500-hour education. When applying via Portfolio Review, you must demonstrate completion of minimum hours in the following categories (totaling 500):

- 125 hours of Anatomy, Physiology, Kinesiology
- 40 hours of Pathology
- 200 hours of hands-on, Western-based massage therapy lab/clinic
- 4 hours of Business
- 6 hours of Ethics
- 125 hours of massage therapy education that completes the program

Please note: NCBTMB will only accept outlined acceptable core curriculum content that is hands-on and Western-based. For information on acceptable core curriculum content, visit www.ncbtmb.org and access [acceptable course curriculum](#).

Additionally, candidates must have received massage therapy education and meet the minimal criteria. Specifically, the program of study must have included:

- 300 hours or 60% delivered In-Class (face-to-face); must be science-based information
- 200 hours or 40% of hands-on instruction delivered in-class (face-to-face) only

If your original program of study did not contain the above hours or educational components, you may apply external education earned through:

- College or University medical and/or business courses
- CE completed through NCBTMB Approved Providers
- If you are a healthcare professional, or previously completed a related allied healthcare training program (e.g., nursing), you are required to demonstrate the following:
 - Copies of your original allied health transcripts
 - Proof of completion of a minimum 200 hours in a massage therapy school or with an NCBTMB Approved Provider (via CE)

Please Note: Regardless of how you earn the required minimum 500-hours of education, you may be requested to provide the syllabus and/or learning outcomes for completed courses if course content is not obvious. Be prepared to provide this information ahead of time to avoid delays in the processing of your application.

Formal training must be received from a state- licensed/approved/exempt training/education institution.

All documentation must be submitted in English.

If, for any reason, any part of your application is denied, refunds will not be issued.

4 APPLYING FOR THE EXAM

To apply for the Board Certification exam, go to www.ncbtmb.org and complete the following:

- Click register in the upper left and create your account (you will be sent an activation email after submitting)
- Open your email
- Click the activation link in your email
- Log in to your account.
- From the quick link menu of your profile click "Initial Applications"
- Select the "Board Certification Application"

Your application must be completed in full to be reviewed. Additionally, you must complete your application within 30 days of starting it. If you fail to complete and submit your application during this time, you will be required to start the application over. Any documentation that you are having difficulties uploading may be mailed to this address:

NCBTMB
1333 Burr Ridge Parkway, Suite 200
Burr Ridge, IL 60527

You may also email the documentation to info@ncbtmb.org.

Please ensure that your name is on the documentation so NCBTMB employees know into which account to upload the documentation.

Designating Your Portfolio Review Option

Follow the prompts provided by the application. Once you reach the section entitled "School Information," you will designate your chosen pathway to pursue Board Certification. Complete all required information prior to submitting.

If you have not graduated from an NCBTMB Assigned School, and plan to apply via Portfolio Review, you must select the option stating: "Portfolio Review/I did not graduate from an NCBTMB Assigned School" to proceed.

In this section, you will be required to upload copies of your original massage therapy program transcripts, along with any additional college/university transcripts or Certificates of Completion from NCBTMB Approved Providers to demonstrate completion of the minimum 500-hour educational requirement.

Please Note: If it is not obvious, please designate which courses satisfy which educational requirement on your transcripts and/or Certificates of Completion. This will reduce any confusion and avoid lengthy delays in the processing of your application. Please see the Portfolio Review Definitions at the end of this handbook for assistance.

Processing Time

Generally, Board Certification applications are processed within two to four weeks. Criminal background check processing times and results being returned to NCBTMB may cause delays.

Once NCBTMB has processed your application, you will receive an email confirming the application and next steps to scheduling your exam.

Please keep in mind it is your (the applicant's) responsibility to submit all necessary documentation. **All criteria must be met and submitted before the credential can be awarded.**

5 FEES

Fees must be paid by credit or debit card on www.ncbtmb.org upon submission of your desired application. Please contact us at info@ncbtmb.org or by calling 1-800-296-0664 if you prefer to pay by check, as special arrangements will need to be made.

Please note each of the fees entitles you to one examination registration, one copy of your results, and, when you pass the Board Certification Exam and meet the criteria, one copy of your certificate.

Fees:

- **Board Certification Examination Fee:** \$275
- **Non-Refundable Portfolio Review Fee:** \$75
- **Cancellation Processing Fees*:**
 - Processing fee: \$75
 - Non-refundable portfolio review fee: \$75 (if applicable)
- **Non-Sufficient Funds Fee:** \$30

If for any reason, any part of your application is denied, refunds will not be issued.

*Cancellation must be requested and received:

- In writing within 30 days from the date of payment.
- Before a scheduled exam date
 - If you had an exam scheduled, you must first contact Prometric to cancel the exam.
- Before an applicant is deemed ineligible to take the exam

NOTE: Fees are always subject to change.

6 NCBTMB REVIEW OF APPLICATION

NCBTMB performs a criminal background check on all candidates. Each candidate must pass the criminal background check before being made eligible to test.

Candidates have **90 days** from the time they are deemed eligible to take the exam to schedule and sit

for their examination.

When approved, you will receive an automated email “Your Board Certification Exam Instructions” stating your eligibility period and instructions for scheduling your exam. This 90 day period starts as soon as you are made eligible. **It is your (the applicant’s) responsibility to schedule your exam directly with NCBTMB’s testing agency, Prometric, at 1-800-350-7076 or www.prometric.com.**

After scheduling your exam with Prometric, you will receive an email confirming your date, time, and location to the desired testing center.

Candidates who do not take the exam during this time period will forfeit their exam fee in full. You will also have to reapply and pay the full exam fee in order to again be considered eligible to take the exam.

All information submitted by an applicant/ candidate may be provided to law enforcement agencies and state, county and local regulatory agencies at the discretion of NCBTMB and/or the request of such agencies.

7 TEST CENTERS AND DATES

NCBTMB contracts with Prometric to develop, administer, and deliver the Board Certification exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork— BCETMB. Test takers benefit from Prometric’s extensive test delivery network with thousands of testing locations across the country and the opportunity to take the exam five days a week.

Please do not wait until the last week to schedule your exam as appointment times are limited. Extensions will not be given due to lack of availability at the testing center.

Please note you must have a current/valid Government I.D. and that visitors are not allowed in the test center.

Childcare is not provided. Children are not allowed in the testing center.

Any violation of testing policies and procedures may result in dismissal from the testing center, cancellation of exam scores and forfeiture of eligibility for certification and exam fees. Directions to testing centers and videos explaining what to expect may be found on the Prometric website at www.prometric.com.

8 SCHEDULING YOUR EXAM

All eligible candidates will receive an email with the subject line, “Your Board Certification Exam Instructions.” Candidates can schedule appointments by calling Prometric at 1-800-350-7076 or using its online scheduling service at www.prometric.com. If your eligibility includes special ADA accommodations, you **MUST** schedule your exam by calling Prometric directly.

Be sure you plan your exam date well in advance. You should also pick alternate dates and times, just in case your first choice is not available. Exam appointments are subject to change if the test center is closed for some reason.

9 RESCHEDULING OR CANCELING YOUR EXAM

Exam Scheduled

To reschedule an exam by phone, you must notify Prometric, NCBTMB's testing partner, at 1-800-350-7076 or www.prometric.com within one month prior to your scheduled exam.

Please be aware that cancelling your exam appointment instead of rescheduling within your 90-day window, cancels your entire eligibility window. You will not be able to schedule again and will be required to reapply and pay all application fees with NCBTMB. Please note the below cut-off dates and associated fees:

- **30 or more days prior to scheduled appointment:** No additional charges
- **29-5 days prior to scheduled appointment:** Prometric will collect a \$50 fee at the time of rescheduling/cancelling exam appointment
- **4 days or less prior to scheduled appointment:** Full test fee will be retained. No refunds issued.

After you have cancelled your exam with Prometric, you must notify NCBTMB of the cancellation.

Exam NOT Scheduled

If you have not scheduled your exam and wish to receive a partial refund of your application fee, **you must contact NCBTMB at 1-800-296-0664 or via email at info@ncbtmb.org within 30 days of NCBTMB's receipt of your payment.** Your refund, minus a \$75 processing fee along with a \$25 background check fee, will be sent within six weeks of the written request. Once NCBTMB receives your refund request, you will no longer be eligible to take the exam.

If your request to cancel your application is not received by your eligibility expiration date, and you do not sit for the examination, you forfeit your entire application and all examination fees. If you decide to take the examination at a later date, you will need to reapply as a new candidate. You will have to resubmit your application and payment and abide by all current policies, requirements, and applicable fees.

10 MISSING YOUR SCHEDULED EXAM

If on the day you are scheduled to take the exam you do not appear, and you have not rescheduled or canceled your exam as outlined above, you will forfeit the full exam fee.

If you missed your scheduled exam appointment, you will need to complete a "Board Certification Retake Application" along with the application fees. Once this is processed, you will be reset for a new

ninety day eligibility period.

Extenuating Circumstances

In rare circumstances, you may be allowed to reschedule the exam, free of charge, one time only. Documentation will be required in all instances. There are five acceptable reasons for missing a scheduled exam:

- Serious illness—either you or an immediate family member
- Death in the immediate family
- Traffic accident in route to the exam site
- Unexpected military duty call-up
- Natural disaster (hurricane, earthquake, flood, blizzard, etc.) (Note: Not allowable are isolated events including power outages, high winds, icy roads, etc.)

If your reason is accepted, you will be allowed to reschedule your exam, free of charge, one time only. You will need to call NCBTMB at 1-800-296-0664 and state your reason for missing the exam. This must be done no later than **four business days** after the missed exam date. NCBTMB reserves the right to request additional evidence to support your reason for missing the exam.

11 ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

NCBTMB and Prometric pledge to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended (42 USCG Section 12101, et. seq.), and with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000e, et seq.), to the best of their ability. If you need special accommodations because of a disabling condition, you may ask for special testing services. This request must be submitted using the ADA Accommodations form found within your NCBTMB profile. All requests are handled on an individual basis.

If you are requesting special accommodations, you must submit a letter from an appropriate health care professional that is licensed to evaluate the disability. The letter must be written on the healthcare professional's letterhead and include the professional's title, address, telephone number and date.

The letter must also include a diagnosis of the disabling condition and explain why special testing accommodations are necessary. The letter must have an original signature from the professional and be dated no more than five years prior to application. Faxes and photocopies will not be accepted. Where applicable, copies of diagnostic reports should also be submitted.

Official documentation regarding your disability including the required ADA Accommodation Request Form must be submitted to NCBTMB at the time you apply. Special accommodations will be provided at no additional charge.

Policy on non-discrimination

NCBTMB does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin,

religion, creed, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, medical condition, or physical disability.

12 COMPUTER BASED TESTING

You will take your examination using Computer Based Testing (CBT) technology. You do not need extensive computer experience to take the examination. At the beginning of your examination, a tutorial will be provided on how to take the test. You will be instructed on how to provide responses to the items that appear on the examination. Once you begin your test, you will not be able to go back to the tutorial section.

DO NOT click “End Exam” until you have completed the exam and all reviews.

When “End Exam” is selected, the examination will end, and you will not be able to review or change any answers. Staff at the testing center will only be able to answer questions that you might have about CBT—they have no knowledge about the exam content. Your exam will be scored, and you will receive an on-screen notification of having either passed or failed the exam as soon as you have completed it. You will also receive a diagnostic score report via email within 24 hours following completion. This is **not** an official score report.

13 EXAMINATION DAY

Arrival Time

You must arrive at the Test Center thirty (30) minutes before your scheduled appointment to complete the admission process required before testing begins.

What to Bring on Exam Day

Testing centers utilize biometric procedures for validating candidate identification. The candidate’s government issued photo ID will be scanned, the candidate will be photographed, and other security procedures will be enacted.

The candidate must present at least one form of identification, which must include a current, valid (not expired) government issued picture ID and your signature. This could include:

- Driver’s License
- Military ID Card
- Passport
- State ID Card

The primary form of identification listed above **MUST** be issued by the national government in the country where you are testing. If your government issued identification is from a country other than the country in which you are testing, you must present your passport for identification. The passport must be current (not expired).

A Social Security Card, Visa, Work/School ID, etc. are **NOT** acceptable forms of identification.

You do not need to bring your Confirmation Letter to the testing site.

Does your ID match your application name?

NCBTMB and our test vendor, Prometric, will not allow identification (ID) discrepancies. Please make sure that your photo ID and the name on the NCBTMB application do not result in any of the following discrepancies.

- Substitute for either the first or last name are not permitted
 - “Smith” to “Jones”
 - “Mary” to “Margaret”
- Incorrect letters on any documentation
 - “Diller” vs. “Ditter”
- Maiden name as a middle name on one document, while given middle name is used on another document
 - “Mary Elizabeth Smith” vs. “Mary Jones Smith”

Legal name changes must be approved by NCBTMB prior to scheduling an appointment. Name discrepancies are one of the most common reasons why applicants are not allowed to test. If you encounter one of the ID/name discrepancies above, or if the name on your application does not match your current/valid Government I.D., the Prometric testing center has been instructed to not allow you to test. You will forfeit your exam and all associated fees. Please contact NCBTMB to discuss how to resolve these ID/name discrepancies if this relates to you.

Late Arrival

Candidates who arrive late for their exam will lose their reservation. They will be considered absent. Candidates must arrive at the Test Center thirty (30) minutes before their scheduled appointment to complete the admission process required before testing begins.

Inclement Weather

If severe weather or a natural disaster makes the testing center inaccessible or unsafe, the exam will be canceled. Exams that are canceled due to severe weather, will be rescheduled as soon as possible, without additional charge. Candidates should contact Prometric to determine if the center is closed and for rescheduling information.

What to Do if Your Test Center is Closed

Sometimes unforeseen circumstances require a test center to unexpectedly close. Should this happen, Prometric will try contacting you by e-mail and by telephone within 48-72 hours to reschedule your appointment.

Exam Security

When you arrive at the testing center, you will be asked to sign in on a test center log, present your identification, and submit biometric samples (such as fingerprint or palm scan). Failure to comply with any of these requirements may result in your dismissal from the testing center and/or forfeiture of eligibility to test.

No materials, notes, papers and/or electronic devices of any kind, other than a visual aid pre-approved in writing by NCBTMB pursuant to the ADA Accommodation Request Form, are permitted in the examination room or center.

The performance of all candidates is monitored and will be analyzed to detect fraud. No candidate is permitted to give or receive assistance from others during the testing period. In the event that a test proctor observes or is notified that an applicant is behaving unethically during the exam (including such time an applicant is outside the examination room), such applicant's examination results shall be withheld pending further review. **Examples of unethical conduct include, but are not limited to:**

- Unauthorized possession, receipt or disclosure of materials relating to the examination during or after the examination testing period;
- Use of a cell phone or other communication device during the examination testing period;
- Other evidence indicating the security of the examination has been breached;
- Any other assistance that would provide the recipient of such information with an advantage while taking the current or future examination.

Any individual suspected of such a violation will be subject to NCBTMB disciplinary and/or legal action.

Additionally, no test materials, notes, documents or memoranda of any kind are to be taken from the examination room. Any individual who removes or attempts to remove exam materials will be subject to NCBTMB disciplinary and/or legal action.

Candidates in violation of any NCBTMB testing policy are subject to forfeiture of examination fee, cancellation of exam scores, forfeiture of eligibility to test and disciplinary and/or legal action. Sanctions could result in the removal or denial of certification.

All exam materials, including all questions and all forms of the exam, are copyrighted and the property of NCBTMB. Any distribution of these materials through reproduction, or oral or written communication, is strictly prohibited and punishable by law.

Prometric Test Center Regulations

Candidates are required to be professional, civil and respectful always while on the premises of the test center. All exams are continuously monitored by video and audio recording, physical walk-throughs, and through the observation window. The Test Center Administrator (TCA) is authorized to dismiss you from the test session for a violation of any of the Test Center Regulations, including exhibiting abusive behavior towards the TCAs or other candidates. If you are found to have violated any of the regulations during your exam, the TCA is required to notify Prometric and your test sponsor. Prometric, alone or in conjunction with your test sponsor, shall then take any further action necessary to sanction your conduct, up to and including invalidation of your test score and/or pursuit of civil or criminal charges.

Prometric Test Center Check-In Procedures and Breaks

- Original, valid (unexpired), government issued photo & signature bearing identification is required in order to take an exam.
- Validity and the number of acceptable IDs are predetermined by your test sponsor.

- You will be scanned with a metal detector wand prior to every entry into the test room.
- You will be required to raise your pants legs above your ankles, empty and turn all pockets inside-out and raise shirt sleeves above your wrists prior to every entry into the test room.
- If you are wearing eyeglasses you will be required to remove them for visual inspection to ensure they do not contain a recording device. Large jewelry items must be stored in your locker due to concerns over concealed recording devices.
- Exams may have scheduled or unscheduled breaks, as determined by your test sponsor. Each time you leave the test room you must sign-out.
- The TCA will inform you what is permitted during exam breaks, specifically regarding whether access to your locker, and access to cell phones and notes within it, is permitted or not. All candidates must inform the TCA before accessing a stored item during a break, including medicine. Repeated or lengthy departures from the test room will be reported to the test sponsor.
- Upon return from a break, without exception, you must go through all security checks, present valid ID, sign-in and, if required by the test sponsor, provide a fingerprint to be re- admitted to the test room.

Prohibited Items and Examinee Conduct in the Test Center

- Weapons are not allowed in any Prometric Test Center.
- Unauthorized personal items may not be brought into the test room. Such items include, but are not limited to: outerwear, hats, food, drinks, purses, briefcases, notebooks, watches, cell phones, electronic devices, or wearable technology.
- Written notes, published materials and other testing aids are strictly prohibited in the test room, except where allowed by your test sponsor. Test center staff will refer to the applicable Client Practices for allowances.
- Written notes or electronic devices discovered in the test room will be confiscated by the Test Center Administrator.
- Only soft ear plugs (with no wires/cords attached) and center-supplied tissues are permitted in the test room.
- All materials issued by the TCA must be returned at the conclusion of testing. Used scratch paper must be returned before new scratch paper will be issued by the TCA during your exam.
- Light clothing items removed for comfort such as sweaters, suit jackets, scarves, etc., must be hung on the examinee's chair, not placed in laps or on the workstation desktop. Outerwear such as heavy coats, parkas, raincoats, etc., is not permitted in the test room.
- Talking to other candidates in the test room, referring to their screens, testing materials or written notes is strictly prohibited.

Note: Client/test sponsor practice policies shall supersede these regulations if a conflict exists.

Your Privacy

Your exam results will be encrypted and transmitted to Prometric and to the exam sponsor. The testing center does not keep any information other than when and where your exam was taken.

The Prometric Privacy Policy Statement provides additional information regarding this; you can obtain this by visiting prometric.com or by contacting Prometric at 1-800-856-4139.

14 RESULTS & SCORE REPORTS

How Your Exam is Scored

The Exam is graded via a Scale Score. Each question is graded as right or wrong; no partial credit is awarded. The Board approved the panel cut score of the Examination as 64% of items, which translates to a raw (number correct) cut score of 77 and a Scale Score of 410.

See BCETMB Raw to Scale Score Conversion Table at the end of this Handbook for more information.

What to Expect Once You Finish Your Exam

Once you have finished taking the exam, the computer will score your performance on the test. The diagnostic score report will be issued to you via email after you have completed the test. Your performance will be communicated as either 'Pass' or 'No Pass.'

A candidate's performance on examinations shall remain confidential unless otherwise stipulated by the examinee.

If you wish to obtain an official score report, complete the form by clicking on "Score Report Request" found in the quick links menu in your profile. There is a \$25.00 fee per score report.

If you fail the exam, you will be given diagnostic information about your overall performance. The information will identify areas of weakness, should you wish to try again. The diagnostic score report will also provide information on how to apply for a future exam.

Unlike cases of individual candidate misconduct, occasionally testing irregularities occur that affect a group of test takers. Such problems include, but are not limited to administrative errors, defective equipment or materials, improper access to test content and/ or the unauthorized general availability of test content, as well as other disruptions of test administrations (e.g., natural disasters and other emergencies). In such cases an incident report must be filled out before leaving the Prometric test facility.

When group-testing irregularities occur, Prometric will conduct an investigation to provide information to NCBTMB. Based on this information, NCBTMB may direct Prometric either not to score the test or to cancel the test score. When it is appropriate to do so, NCBTMB will arrange with Prometric to give affected test takers the opportunity to take the test again as soon as possible, without charge. Affected test takers will be notified of the reasons for the cancellation and their options for retaking the test. NCBTMB's appeals process does not apply to group testing irregularities.

15 IF YOU FAIL THE EXAM

If you fail the Certification Examination, you may retake it after 45 days from the time you took the original test. You may take the Board Certification exam two times within a six month period.

NCBTMB's Policy on Challenging Results

Candidates who fail the examination and believe this was due to an error in electronic scoring will be directed to the testing vendor for questions. Following completion of the examination and prior to receipt of the examination score, candidates may comment in writing on any question(s) they believe contain errors in content. Comments will be forwarded to the NCBTMB CEO. If the CEO judges that an item(s) should not be scored, all affected candidates will be notified promptly. Candidates whose status changes from "fail" to "pass" will be issued board certification provided they comply with all other requirements.

If you need to challenge the exam results based on the content of the exam, contact NCBTMB directly, in writing, at info@ncbtmb.org.

An applicant shall have thirty (30) days to file a written request for an appeal following receipt of such notice that they were unsuccessful in their attempt on any NCBTMB examination.

Exam Attempt Limits

A candidate can only take the board certification exam a total of five times.

Appeals to the Certification Board

Within 30 days of the date of the denial of a request to take the exam more than five times, an applicant may submit a written notice of appeal of the testing decision to the CEO. The notice of appeal must state the reasons why the applicant believes they should be allowed to take the exam again. The Board will consider the appeal. In all cases, the decision of the Board is final.

16 NCBTMB STUDY GUIDE

Looking for a study guide? NCBTMB offers a free study guide online on our website. Check out the study guide at [BC-Study-Guide](#).

NCBTMB also created a series of webinars that highlight the different exam categories. You can check out these webinars on our [resources and requirements website page](#).

NCBTMB's Online Practice Exam is available for subscription purchase at [Online Practice Exam | NCBTMB](#). The NCBTMB Online Practice Exam provides access to thousands of sample test questions, personalized reports, identifiable reports of your strengths and weaknesses, and much more. One, three, and six-month subscriptions are available.

The use of these resources is voluntary. Use of this product does not guarantee a passing exam score.

17 CERTIFICATION LENGTH

Your Board Certification in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork will remain current for a period of two years from the date you become Board Certified.

During that time, use the designation of "BCTMB" (Board Certified in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork) after your name to identify yourself as being Board Certified. You will receive a frameable certificate and a set of wallet cards.

18 RECORDS RETENTION

Records of candidates who test under the policies and procedures in this handbook will have records retained for six years. These documents shall remain confidential and be deleted after the six-year cycle is complete. NCBTMB will maintain electronic records of all applicants and certificants, subject to the retention policy. Test scores (passing and failing) are maintained indefinitely for all candidates in a secure electronic format.

All applications for renewal, and their supporting documentation, are maintained by NCBTMB for a period of six years (three renewal cycles).

19 RENEWING YOUR CERTIFICATION

You must renew every two years to maintain your certification status.

Renewal is a process whereby the Board Certified practitioner demonstrates ongoing efforts to enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform in a professional and ethical manner. Renewal also helps assure the public that the Board Certified practitioner remains committed to adhering to the NCBTMB Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. You may begin earning credits toward renewal the day after you pass the exam.

Current renewal requirements are the following:

- 24-hours of Continuing Education from NCBTMB Approved Providers* Refer to the directory for [providers](#) and [courses](#).
 - 3 hours must be in Ethics
 - NCBTMB approved scientific, anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, and business courses may also be applied
 - All courses must be completed within your eligible two-year Renewal period
 - CE cannot be used multiple times within or across renewal periods and cannot be carried over. (If you renew late, your CE must be dated after your late renewal approval date.)
 - *Note: Only up to 4 CEs will be accepted in Self-Care. Self-Care is NOT a requirement.
- Pass a criminal background check (performed by NCBTMB)
- Agree to uphold NCBTMB Standards of Practice & Code of Ethics
- Have a valid license if you are practicing in a state that requires state licensure.

Please Note:

- If your Board Certification has been expired for over one year, you must apply for Board Certification and must take the Board Certification exam.
- If you are an NCBTMB Approved Provider, you may not use courses that you are teaching as CE credits. The only exception to this rule is that you may use an ethics course that you taught to fulfill the ethics requirement.

You can review the current renewal requirements at www.ncbtmb.org to learn more about this process and to prepare for your continued education. If you have any additional questions about renewal, please call NCBTMB at 1-800-296-0664 or email info@ncbtmb.org.

20 CERTIFICANTS REGISTRY

NCBTMB may verify the certification status of board certificants at the request of state massage boards and other government entities.

NCBTMB offers a practitioner locator service on its website. This service allows consumers the opportunity to locate Board Certified therapists by name, city, or zip code. You will be included in the Practitioner Locator Program unless you state that you do not wish to be included.

21 WWW.NCBTMB.ORG

The NCBTMB web site is a valuable tool; It answers most questions you have about the examinations, as well as additional NCBTMB product or service offerings. NCBTMB encourages you to visit the website for answers to general questions.

22 CONTACTING STAFF

NCBTMB staff can be reached Monday – Friday between 8:00am and 4:30pm Central Standard Time at 1-800-296-0664. Calls are taken in the order received. Information can be readily obtained at www.NCBTMB.org. You may also send us an e-mail at info@NCBTMB.org.

Moving?

NCBTMB makes every effort to keep the most current mailing and email addresses of its certificants; but we need your help. If you move, change your name or change your mailing or email address please contact NCBTMB at 1-800-296-0664 or go online at www.NCBTMB.org to update your Certificant profile with address changes.

23 YOU ARE IMPORTANT TO US!

Update your personal information online or call if:

- You have moved.

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- You have changed your email address.
- Your phone number has changed.
- You have a name change.

BOARD CERTIFICATION EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

I. Massage Modalities, Techniques, And Manual Forces (20%)

Knowledge

- General massage protocols
- Compression
- Tension/decompression
- Friction/shearing
- Bending
- PNF, MFR, pin and stretch, etc.
- Torsion
- Range of motion
- Muscle Energy Techniques
- Stretching
- Hydrotherapy
- Indications and contraindications
- Vibration (jostling, shaking)
- Tapotement
- Client/patient positioning
- Special population (pregnancy massage, oncology massage, etc.)
- Appropriate tools and appropriate use
- Efficient body mechanics
- Benefits and effects of modalities (forms), and techniques
- Modality literacy

Skills

- Determine applicable massage techniques when working with clients
- Apply massage techniques safely
- Perform massage on special populations (athletes, geriatric, prenatal, etc.)
- Identify contraindications and apply affective techniques
- Identify fundamental characteristics of bodywork modalities
- Perform proper body mechanics while working with different populations
- Position clients for comfort and safety

II. Applied Science: Anatomy, Physiology, Kinesiology, Pathology/Injury, and Pharmacology (25%)

Knowledge

- Anatomy (structure of the human body including joints, tissues, muscles, functions, origins, insertions, and actions, nerve structure, etc.)
- Physiology – systems of the body with:
 - i. in-depth knowledge in muscle, skeletal, and nervous systems
 - ii. intermediate knowledge in integumentary, cardiovascular, lymphatic and digestive

systems

iii. basic knowledge in respiratory, endocrine, reproductive and urinary systems

- Kinesiology (mechanics of body movement including levers, agonists, antagonists, synergist, etc.)
- Pharmacology (contraindications of prescription and non-prescription medication, implications for massage, etc.)
- Standard precautions
- Endangerment sites

Skills

- Identify structures and functions of all body systems
- Identify muscle and joint physiology
- Recognize mechanics of body movement – agonists, antagonists and synergists
- Identify and apply range of motion techniques – passive, active, active assisted and resistive range of motion
- Identify endangerment/cautionary sites
- Recognize muscle and orthopedic testing
- Identify indications and contraindications of common prescription drugs
- Determine proper stretching techniques and “end feels”

III. Professional Communication (15%)

Knowledge

- Medical terminology
- How to communicate with client/patient in understandable terms
- Reporting formats (appropriate language in medical history, treatment plan, SOAP notes, EMR etc.)
- HIPAA
- Communication with clients/patients (asking questions to clarify information)
- Client/patient sensitivity and vulnerabilities (how to make clients comfortable during treatment)
- Verbal and non-verbal cues
- Informed consent

Skills

- Effectively communicate with clients when explaining treatment plans
- Describe techniques, anatomy, physiology and kinesiology in understandable terms
- Identify HIPAA procedures
- Work within client comfort levels
- Adapt to verbal and non-verbal cues when working with clients
- Document sessions appropriate to the work setting – SOAP, EMR, spa etc.
- Uphold all HIPAA confidentiality standards
- Effectively communicate in proper medical terminology when working with other healthcare professionals

IV. Professionalism & Ethics (10%)

Knowledge

- Current standard of care for safe and effective massage
- Professional boundaries
- Draping laws and techniques
- When to refer clients to other health professionals
- When, why and how to refuse treatment
- How to report misconduct and who to report to
- Transference and countertransference

Skills

- Maintain proper physical and emotional boundaries
- Respect client's right to say no
- Identify when to refer out and whom to refer clients with pathologies
- Identify transference and countertransference situations
- Identify when to refuse to treat clients
- Identify correct entities to report client or fellow massage therapist's misconduct

V. Laws & Business Practices (5%)

Knowledge

- Appropriate draping
- Continuing education requirements
- Scope of practice and applicable licensing laws
- Record keeping (business and client/patient)

Skills

- Maintain client confidentiality
- Perform only within the massage therapy scope of practice
- Maintain appropriate draping for client protection and privacy
- Represent educational and professional qualifications honestly
- Demonstrate proper business and client record keeping
- Abide by national organizations' code of conduct and policies
- Comply with all federal state and local laws

VI. Assessment (25%)

Knowledge

- Comprehensive intake
- Interview and data collection techniques
- Observation techniques (posture deviation, etc.)
- Range of motion (normal and abnormal body motions)
- Treatment session planning techniques in collaboration with client/patient and other

healthcare professionals when necessary

- Indications and contraindications
- Functional assessments and reassessments
- Customized treatments
- Pain scale and pain management
- Medical terminology (SOAP charting, etc.)
- Clinical reasoning (analyzing information from client/patient)
- Research associated with massage therapy

Skills

- Conduct an effective and thorough intake interview to gather information
- Interpret client health history information
- Customize treatment plans to fit the needs of each client
- Discuss treatment plan and alternate plans if requested by the client
- Determine common pain scale descriptions
- Utilize palpatory skills to assess soft tissue
- Perform and interpret active and passive range of motion assessments
- Perform and interpret postural analysis
- Perform and interpret gait assessment
- Perform and interpret manual resistance tests
- Perform and interpret special orthopedic tests
- Reassess client movement, strength and range of motion post – treatment
- Document all findings properly pre and post treatment and change treatment plans accordingly
- Collaborate with other healthcare professionals as needed
- Communicate using appropriate medical terminology when speaking with other medical professionals and in official documentation
- Work effectively as part of an integrated healthcare team
- Recognize and analyze research
- Identify different areas of research

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Background

The purpose of the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork, Inc. (NCBTMB) is to foster high standards of ethical and professional practice in the delivery of services through a recognized credible certification program that assures the competency of practitioners of therapeutic massage and bodywork.

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

NCBTMB developed and adopted these Standards of Practice to provide Certificants with a clear statement of the expectations of professional conduct and level of practice afforded the public in, among other things, the following areas: Professionalism, Legal and Ethical Requirements, Confidentiality, Business Practices, Roles and Boundaries, and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Inappropriate Touch. These Standards of Practice were approved and ratified by the NCBTMB Board of Directors, representatives of the Certificant population and key stakeholders of the NCBTMB.

Preamble

These Standards of Practice for the profession of therapeutic massage and bodywork are the guiding principles by which Certificants conduct their professional practice. These principles help to assure that all professional behaviors are conducted in an ethical, compassionate, and responsible manner. Through these 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. These Standards of Practice are enforceable guidelines for professional conduct, and therefore, are stated in observable and measurable terms intended as minimum levels of practice to which Certificants are held accountable. Upon submission of the application for the Board Certification Examination, each applicant for certification must agree to uphold and abide by the NCBTMB Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice and applicable policies. Those Certificants who fail to comply with the Code of Ethics and these Standards of Practice shall be deemed to have engaged in professional misconduct which may result in sanctions, or other appropriate disciplinary actions, including the suspension or revocation of certification.

NCBTMB Certificants are obligated to report unethical behavior and violations of the Code of Ethics and these Standards of Practice they reasonably and in good faith believe have been performed by other NCBTMB Certificants.

These Standards of Practice reflect NCBTMB's clear commitment that Certificants provide an optimal level of service and strive for excellence in their professional practice. This includes remaining in good standing with NCBTMB, committing to continued personal and professional growth through

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continuing education, and understanding and accepting that personal and professional actions reflect on the integrity of the therapeutic massage and bodywork profession and NCBTMB. Certificants are responsible for showing and maintaining professional compliance with these Standards of Practice.

NCBTMB requires Certificants to conduct themselves in a highly professional and dignified manner. NCBTMB will not consider and/or adjudicate complaints against Certificants 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 these Standards of Practice. These 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 Certificant must provide optimal levels of professional therapeutic massage and bodywork services and demonstrate excellence in practice by promoting healing and well-being through responsible, compassionate and respectful touch. In his/her professional role, the Certificant shall:

Standard I(a): adhere to the NCBTMB Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, and Policies and Procedures;

Standard I(b): comply with the peer review process conducted by the NCBTMB Ethics and Standards Committee regarding any alleged violations of the NCBTMB Code of Ethics and these Standards of Practice;

Standard I(c): treat each client with respect, dignity and worth;

Standard I(d): use professional verbal, nonverbal and written communications;

Standard I(e): provide an environment that is safe and comfortable for the client and which, at a minimum, meets all legal requirements for health and safety;

Standard I(f): use standard precautions to insure professional hygienic practices and maintain a level of personal hygiene appropriate for practitioners in the therapeutic setting;

Standard I(g): wear clothing that is clean, modest, and professional;

Standard I(h): obtain voluntary and informed consent from the client prior to initiating the session;

Standard I(i): if applicable, conduct an accurate needs assessment, develop a plan of care with the client, and update the plan as needed;

Standard I(j): use appropriate draping to protect the client's physical and emotional privacy;

Standard I(k): be knowledgeable of his/her scope of practice and practice only within these limitations;

Standard I(l): refer to other professionals when in the best interest of the client and practitioner;

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Standard I(m): seek other professional advice when needed;

Standard I (n): respect the traditions and practices of other professionals and foster collegial relationships;

Standard I(o): not falsely impugn the reputation of any colleague;

Standard I(p): use the initials BCTMB only to designate his/her professional ability and competency to practice therapeutic massage and bodywork;

Standard I(q): remain in good standing with NCBTMB;

Standard I(r): understand that the NCBTMB certificate may be displayed prominently in the Certificant's principal place of practice;

Standard I(s): use the NCBTMB logo and certification number on business cards, brochures, advertisements, and stationery only in a manner that is within established NCBTMB guidelines;

Standard I(t): not duplicate the NCBTMB certificate for purposes other than verification of the practitioner's credentials;

Standard I(u): immediately return the certificate to NCBTMB if certification is revoked; and

Standard I(v): inform NCBTMB of any changes or additions to information included in his/her application for NCBTMB certification or renewal within sixty (60) days of such changes or additions.

Standard II: Legal and Ethical Requirements

The Certificant must comply with all the legal requirements in applicable jurisdictions regulating the profession of therapeutic massage and bodywork. In his/her professional role, the Certificant shall:

Standard II(a): obey all local, state, and federal laws;

Standard II(b): refrain from any behavior that results in illegal, discriminatory, or unethical actions;

Standard II(c): accept responsibility for his/her own actions;

Standard II(d): report to the proper massage therapy regulatory body within thirty (30) days of discovery of, any evidence, such as first-hand knowledge, indicating any unethical, incompetent or illegal act committed by other Certificants;

Standard II(e): maintain accurate and truthful records;

Standard II(f): report to NCBTMB, within thirty (30) days of discovery of, any evidence, such as first-hand knowledge, of violations of the NCBTMB Code of Ethics and these Standards of Practice by himself/herself or by other Certificants;

Standard II(g): report to NCBTMB, within thirty (30) days of discovery of, 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 himself/herself or by other Certificants;

Standard II(h): report to NCBTMB, within thirty (30) days of discovery of, any pending civil litigation and the resulting resolution related to the professional practice of the Certificant and the professional practice of other Certificants;

Standard II(i): report to NCBTMB, within thirty (30) days of discovery of, 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 Certificant, and the resulting resolution of such complaint; and

Standard II(j): respect existing publishing rights and obey copyright and trademark laws, including, but not limited to, those that apply to NCBTMB's copyright-protected examination.

Standard III: Confidentiality

The Certificant shall respect the confidentiality of client information and safeguard all records. In his/her professional role, the Certificant shall:

Standard III(a): protect the confidentiality of the client's identity and information in all conversations, advertisements, and any and all other matters unless disclosure of identifiable information is requested by the client in writing, is medically necessary, or is required by law;

Standard III(b): protect the interests of clients who are minors or clients who are unable to give voluntary and informed consent by obtaining prior written permission from a legal guardian;

Standard III(c): solicit only information that is relevant to the professional client/therapist relationship;

Standard III(d): securely retain client files for a minimum period of four (4) years from the termination of the therapeutic relationship; and

Standard III(e): dispose of client files in a secure manner.

Standard IV: Business Practices

The Certificant shall practice with honesty, integrity, and lawfulness in the business of therapeutic massage and bodywork. In his/her professional role the Certificant shall:

Standard IV(a): provide a physical setting that is safe and meets all applicable legal requirements for health and safety;

Standard IV(b): maintain adequate and customary liability insurance;

Standard IV(c): maintain adequate progress notes for each client session, if applicable;

Standard IV(d): accurately and truthfully inform the public of services provided;

Standard IV(e): honestly represent all professional qualifications and affiliations;

Standard IV(f): promote his/her business with integrity and avoid potential and actual conflicts of

interest;

Standard IV(g): advertise in a manner that is honest, dignified, accurate and representative of services provided and remains consistent with the NCBTMB Code of Ethics and these Standards of Practice;

Standard IV(h): advertise in a manner that is not misleading to the public and shall never use sensational, sexual or provocative language and/or pictures to promote his/her business;

Standard IV(i): comply with all laws regarding sexual harassment;

Standard IV(j): not exploit the trust and dependency of others, including clients and employees/co-workers;

Standard IV(k): disclose a schedule of fees in advance of the session;

Standard IV(l): make financial arrangements in advance which are clearly understood by, and safeguard the best interests of, the client or consumer;

Standard IV(m): follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles;

Standard IV(n): file all applicable municipal, state and federal taxes; and

Standard IV(o): maintain accurate financial records, contracts and legal obligations, appointment records, tax reports and receipts for the most recent three (3) fiscal years.

Standard V: Roles & Boundaries

The Certificant shall adhere to ethical boundaries and perform the professional roles designed to protect both the client and the practitioner and safeguard the therapeutic value of the relationship. In his/her professional role, the Certificant shall:

Standard V(a): recognize his/her personal limitations and practice only within these limitations;

Standard V(b): recognize his/her influential position with the client and not exploit the relationship for personal or other gain;

Standard V(c): recognize and limit the impact of transference and counter-transference between the client and the Certificant;

Standard V(d): avoid dual or multidimensional relationships that could impair professional judgment or result in exploitation of a client, student, employee, supervisee, mentee, trainee, or anyone else with whom a power differential exists;

Standard V(e): acknowledge and respect the client's freedom of choice in the therapeutic session;

Standard V(f): respect the client's right to refuse the therapeutic session or any part of the therapeutic session;

Standard V(g): refrain from practicing 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 Certificant);

Standard V(h): have the right to refuse and/or terminate the service to a client who is abusive or under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any illegal substance; and

Standard V(i): have the right to refuse and/or terminate the service to a client who exhibits language or behavior which the therapist deems as an immediate or potential risk to the safety of the: (i) client; (ii) Certificant; or (iii) therapeutic relationship.

Standard VI: Prevention of Sexual Misconduct

The Certificant shall refrain from any behavior that sexualizes, or appears to sexualize, the client/therapist relationship. The Certificant recognizes the intimacy of the therapeutic relationship may activate practitioner and/or client needs and/or desires that weaken boundaries which may lead to sexualizing the therapeutic relationship. In his/her professional role, the Certificant shall:

Standard VI(a): refrain from participating in a sexual relationship or sexual conduct with the client, whether consensual or otherwise, from the beginning of the client/therapist relationship and for a minimum of six (6) months after the termination of the client/therapist relationship, unless an ongoing current sexual relationship existed prior to the date the therapeutic relationship began. In the case of a pre-existing ongoing sexual relationship, providing therapeutic massage and bodywork on such a person is discouraged, but may be done with informed consent which acknowledges the power differential in a therapeutic relationship and the complexities of dual relationships;

Standard VI(b): in the event the client initiates sexual behavior, interrupt therapy to clarify the purpose of the therapeutic session. Provided that the client's initial sexual behavior ceases, the Certificant may, at his or her discretion, take action to terminate or continue the session. The Certificant shall terminate the session if the sexual conduct continues;

Standard VI(c): with the exception of a pre-existing ongoing sexual relationship, as set forth in Standard VI(a), recognize that sexual activity with clients, students, employees, supervisees, mentees, trainees, or anyone else with whom a power differential exists, is prohibited even if consensual;

Standard VI(d): not touch the genitalia;

Standard VI(e): only perform therapeutic treatments beyond the normal narrowing of the ear canal and normal narrowing of the nasal passages: (i) as indicated in the plan of care; (ii) after receiving informed voluntary written consent; and (iii) only if the Certificant is permitted to do so under state law;

Standard VI(f): only perform therapeutic treatments in the oral cavity: (i) as indicated in the plan of care; (ii) after receiving informed voluntary written consent; and (iii) only if the Certificant is permitted to do so under state law;

Standard VI(g): only perform therapeutic treatments into the anal canal: i) as indicated in the plan of care; (ii) after receiving informed voluntary written consent; and (iii) only if the Certificant is expressly authorized to perform colonic irrigation under state law; and

Standard VI(h): only provide therapeutic breast massage: (i) as indicated in the plan of care; (ii) after receiving informed voluntary written consent; and (iii) only if the Certificant is permitted to do so under state law.

Glossary of Terms

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

Certificant: NCBTMB Certificant or applicant for certification.

Client: An individual who receives the professional services of a Certificant, regardless of how or if those services are compensated. The term client may include a patient.

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 client.

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

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

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles: Rules, conventions, standards and procedures that are widely accepted among financial accountants and otherwise known as GAAP.

Genitalia: Reproductive organs and structures. Genitalia include the penis, scrotum/testis, vulva (labia majora and minora, clitoris, vestibule), hymen and vagina.

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 therapist and client share an alliance, in addition to the therapeutic relationship.

Progress Notes: Notes written and kept in a client file that indicate the date of the session, areas of complaint as stated by client, and observations made and actions taken by the practitioner.

Scope of Practice: The extent and limits necessary for safe and effective practice in the skills, procedures, actions and processes that Certificants with education and professional training are permitted to utilize within the context of their certification. Scope of practice is defined by the profession and limited, when applicable, by regulatory bodies.

Sexual Activity: Any verbal and/or nonverbal behavior for the purpose of soliciting, receiving or giving sexual gratification. Sexual activity may include, but is not limited to: (i) inappropriate touch; (ii) inappropriate hugs; (iii) body language; (iv) verbal dialogue about sexual preferences or fantasies; (v)

verbal or physical flirtatious behavior; (vi) seductive or sexually demeaning gestures; (vii) sexual joking; (viii) failure to ensure client's privacy in disrobing/dressing; (ix) filming the client without his or her permission; (x) therapist's breast or pelvic area touching a client; (xi) kissing or other activity that is sexual in nature.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (i) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment; (ii) submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals; or (iii) 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.

Sexual Misconduct: Unethical and illegal behavior involving sexualization of, or engagement in, sexualized contact with a client/student/mentee/employee/trainee during or after the professional relationship has ended. This is especially critical due to the power differential in which care providers may use or exploit the trust or influence derived from the professional relationship. Sexual misconduct includes a wide range of sexual activity. The behavior does not have to be coercive to be inappropriate.

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

Therapeutic Relationship: The ongoing relationship between a therapist and a client established to support the client's therapeutic goals. Characteristics of a healthy therapeutic relationship include personal awareness and insight, trust, respect, safety, authenticity, acceptance, empathy, collaborative agreement and the maintenance of personal and professional boundaries.

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.).

REVISED: SEPTEMBER 15, 2017

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CODE OF ETHICS

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NCBTMB Certificants shall act in a manner that justifies public trust and confidence, enhances the reputation of the profession, and safeguards the interest of individual clients.

Certificants will:

- I. Have a sincere commitment to provide the highest quality of care to those who seek their professional services;
- II. Represent their qualifications honestly, including education and professional affiliations, and provide only those services that they are qualified to perform;
- III. Accurately inform clients, other health care practitioners, and the public of the scope and limitations of their discipline;
- IV. Acknowledge the limitations of and contraindications for massage and bodywork and refer clients to appropriate health professionals;
- V. Provide treatment only where there is reasonable expectation that it will be advantageous to the client;
- VI. Consistently maintain and improve professional knowledge and competence, striving for professional excellence through regular assessment of personal and professional strengths and weaknesses and through continued education training;
- VII. Conduct their business and professional activities with honesty and integrity, and respect the inherent worth of all persons;
- VIII. Refuse to unjustly discriminate against clients and/or health professionals;
- IX. Safeguard the confidentiality of the client's identity and information in all conversations, advertisements, and any and all other matters unless disclosure of identifiable information is requested by the client in writing, is medically necessary or is required by law;
- X. Respect the client's right to treatment with informed and voluntary consent. The certified practitioner will obtain and record the informed consent of the client, or client's advocate, before providing treatment. This consent may be written or verbal;
- XI. Respect the client's right to refuse, modify or terminate treatment regardless of prior consent given;
- XII. Provide draping and treatment in a way that ensures the safety, comfort and privacy of the client;
- XIII. Exercise the right to refuse to treat any person or part of the body for just and reasonable cause;
- XIV. Refrain, under all circumstances, from participating in a sexual relationship or sexual conduct with

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the client, whether consensual or otherwise, from the beginning of the client/therapist relationship and for a minimum of six (6) months after the termination of to the date the therapeutic relationship began;

- XV. Avoid any interest, activity or influence which might be in conflict with the practitioner's obligation to act in the best interests of the client or the profession;
- XVI. Respect the client's boundaries with regard to privacy, disclosure, exposure, emotional expression, beliefs and the client's reasonable expectations of professional behavior. Practitioners will respect the client's autonomy;
- XVII. Refuse any gifts or benefits that are intended to influence a referral, decision or treatment, or that are purely for personal gain and not for the good of the client; and
- XVIII. Follow the NCBTMB Standards of Practice, this Code of Ethics, and all policies, procedures, guidelines, regulations, codes, and requirements promulgated by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork, Inc.

JOB TASK ANALYSIS EXPLAINED

A job analysis study is conducted on a scheduled cycle to make sure the exams are current. The most recent job analysis for the BCETMB was conducted in 2017. Practitioners from across the country are surveyed to assist in evaluating the level of knowledge and skills expected within the industry.

A job analysis gives a detailed description of job activities. It also shows the different activities that are performed, their significance with regard to public protection, and how important they are for those entering the profession. The exam questions are written based on these findings.

A questionnaire of job tasks was also given to practitioners of touch therapies as part of the job analysis process. The questionnaire included a list of tasks, knowledge statements, and professional standards.

The questionnaire asked practitioners to rate how relevant the job tasks are to their daily practice of touch therapy.

A job analysis helps to ensure the exam content is up-to-date. But that is not the only thing that is needed to make sure the exams are fair. All of the questions on the exams undergo an extensive review process by a group of subject matter experts (SMEs) and experts at Prometric. These experts ensure that the exams are actually measuring a person's level of knowledge. After the SMEs and experts at Prometric review the exam, they make final recommendations for questions to use. Once questions have been selected, they are pre-tested so we know that only questions that measure your knowledge are placed and scored on the exam. Writing, reviewing and pre-testing questions is an on-going process.

NCBTMB's examinations are developed in accordance with Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA and NCME, 1999) and the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (EEOC, 1978).

BOARD CERTIFICATION REFERENCE LIST

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BCETMB RAW TO SCALE SCORE CONVERSION TABLE

Raw to Scale Score Conversion Table							
Raw Score	Scale Score	Raw Score	Scale Score	Raw Score	Scale Score	Raw Score	Scale Score
0	250	31	314	61	377	91	439
1	251	32	316	62	379	92	441
2	253	33	318	63	381	93	443
3	255	34	320	64	383	94	446
4	257	35	322	65	385	95	448
5	259	36	324	66	387	96	450
6	261	37	326	67	389	97	452
7	263	38	328	68	391	98	454
8	266	39	330	69	393	99	456
9	268	40	333	70	395	100	458
10	270	41	335	71	397	101	460
11	272	42	337	72	400	102	462
12	274	43	339	73	402	103	464
13	276	44	341	74	404	104	467
14	278	45	343	75	406	105	469
15	280	46	345	76	408	106	471
16	282	47	347	77	410	107	473
17	284	48	349	78	412	108	475
18	287	49	351	79	414	109	477
19	289	50	353	80	416	110	479
20	291	51	356	81	418	111	481
21	293	52	358	82	420	112	483
22	295	53	360	83	423	113	485
23	297	54	362	84	425	114	487
24	299	55	364	85	427	115	490
25	301	56	366	86	429	116	492
26	303	57	368	87	431	117	494
27	305	58	370	88	433	118	496
28	307	59	372	89	435	119	498
29	310	60	374	90	437	120	500
30	312						

PORTFOLIO REVIEW DEFINITIONS

If you require additional education in any of the outlined educational categories to total the minimum 500-hours, the below definitions are meant to better detail the required learnings and/or course topics you may pursue:

Definitions of Categorical Requirements

Anatomy: The study of the structures of the body (e.g., what is the make-up of tissue, bone, nervous, organs, glands, etc.)

Physiology: The function of the systems and structures of the body (e.g., how do the nervous, endocrine, skeletal, digestive, muscular, integumentary, respiratory, circulatory/cardiovascular, lymphatic, urinary, and reproductive systems work; how do these systems function properly)

Kinesiology: The study of body movement

Pathology: Study of disease. Business: This is a broad category; it encompasses business, management, marketing, communications, accounting, HIPAA, consent, record keeping, or developing skills that would strengthen your ability to work with the public.

Ethics: This topic surrounds critical thinking skills and how to make proper decisions when faced with ethical dilemmas. Sample topics include ethics when working in a massage room; how to react to clients in a public setting; how to speak without causing others unnecessary discomfort; business ethics; social media ethics; privacy; confidentiality; sexual misconduct

In addition, NCBTMB will accept college credits and will translate them as follows:

- 1 credit from a trimester = 10 hours
- 1 credit from a semester = 15 hours

NCBTMB**1333 Burr Ridge Parkway, Suite 200****Burr Ridge, IL 60527****(800) 296-0664 or (630) 627-8000****www.ncbtmb.org**

This handbook contains information on how to become Board Certified in Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork or Nationally Certified in Therapeutic Massage. 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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