

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Budget Committee

BILL: CS/SB 584

INTRODUCER: Health Regulation Committee and Senator Flores

SUBJECT: Massage Therapy

DATE: April 21, 2011                      REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	O'Callaghan	Stovall	HR	<b>Fav/CS</b>
2.	Bradford	Hansen	BHA	<b>Favorable</b>
3.	Bradford	Meyer, C.	BC	<b>Pre-meeting</b>
4.				
5.				
6.				

<b>Please see Section VIII. for Additional Information:</b>	
A. COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Statement of Substantial Changes
B. AMENDMENTS.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical amendments were recommended
	<input type="checkbox"/> Amendments were recommended
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant amendments were recommended

**I. Summary:**

This committee substitute (CS) of SB 584 authorizes a person, who meets certain licensure requirements and graduates from a massage therapy school that is accredited and approved by the Board of Massage Therapy (board), to obtain a temporary permit from the board to practice massage therapy. The temporary permit is valid for 6 months after its issuance by the board, until the applicant fails the massage licensure examination, or until the applicant receives a massage therapist license, whichever occurs first. The CS allows those with a temporary permit to practice massage only under the supervision of a licensed massage therapist, who has an active and unencumbered license.

The CS requires an applicant seeking a temporary permit to practice massage therapy to pay a one-time fee of \$50. The estimated revenue the DOH expects to generate from the temporary permit fees is \$130,300 annually. Any costs associated with this new regulatory function will be covered by the fees generated.

The CS provides an effective date of January 3, 2012.

This CS substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 480.041 and 480.044.

## II. Present Situation:

### Background

The American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA)<sup>1</sup> estimated that in 2010, massage therapy was a \$12-17 billion industry. The AMTA also estimated that there are approximately 280,000 to 320,000 massage therapists and massage school students in the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Labor in 2010, employment for massage therapists is expected to increase 19 percent from 2008 to 2018, faster than the average for all occupations.<sup>2</sup>

In May 2008, median hourly wages of massage therapists, including gratuities, were \$16.78. The middle 50 percent earned between \$11.36 and \$25.14. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$8.01, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$33.47. Because many therapists work part time, yearly earnings can vary considerably, depending on the therapist's schedule. Generally, massage therapists earn some portion of their income as gratuities. For those who work in a hospital or other clinical setting, however, tipping is not common.<sup>3</sup>

Currently, 43 states and the District of Columbia regulate massage therapists or provide voluntary state certification.<sup>4</sup> In states that regulate massage therapy, massage therapists must meet the legal requirements to practice, which may include minimum hours of initial training and passing an exam. In states that do not regulate massage therapy, this task may fall to local municipalities. Most states that license massage therapists require a passing grade on the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Exam (MBLEx) or one of two exams provided by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork.<sup>5</sup>

### Florida Regulation of Massage Therapists and Massage Establishments

Massage therapists and massage establishments in Florida are regulated by the board, within the DOH, under the Massage Practice Act, ch. 480, F.S., and Chapter 64B7, Florida Administrative Code. A person must be licensed as a massage therapist to practice massage for compensation, unless otherwise specifically exempted under the Massage Practice Act.<sup>6</sup> In order to be licensed as a massage therapist, an applicant must:

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<sup>1</sup> AMTA is the largest non-profit, professional association serving more than 56,000 massage therapists, massage students, and massage schools. See AMTA, *2011 Massage Therapy Industry Fact Sheet*, available at: <http://www.amtamassage.org/articles/2/PressRelease/detail/2320> (Last visited on March 4, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-11 Edition: Massage Therapists*; available at [http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos295.htm#projections\\_data](http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos295.htm#projections_data) (Last visited on March 1, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> AMTA, *2011 Massage Therapy Industry Fact Sheet*, available at: <http://www.amtamassage.org/articles/2/PressRelease/detail/2320> (Last visited on March 4, 2011). A list of states and a summary of their massage regulations is available at: [http://www.massagetherapy.com/\\_content/careers/MTreg.pdf](http://www.massagetherapy.com/_content/careers/MTreg.pdf) (Last visited on March 4, 2011). Currently, Alaska, Idaho, Kansas, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Vermont, and Wyoming do not regulate massage therapy.

<sup>5</sup> AMTA, *2011 Massage Therapy Industry Fact Sheet*, available at: <http://www.amtamassage.org/articles/2/PressRelease/detail/2320> (Last visited on March 4, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Section 480.047(1)(a), F.S. See also s. 480.033(4), F.S.

- Be at least 18 years old or have received a high school diploma or graduate equivalency diploma;
- Complete a course of study at a board-approved massage school<sup>7</sup> or apprenticeship program; and
- Pass an examination,<sup>8</sup> which is currently offered in English and in Spanish.<sup>9</sup>

Licensed massage therapists may practice in a licensed massage establishment, at a client's residence or office, or at a sports event, convention or trade show.<sup>10</sup> Sexual misconduct, defined as a violation of the professional relationship through the use of such relationship to engage or attempt to engage in sexual activity outside the scope of the profession, is strictly prohibited.<sup>11</sup>

A person may be approved by the board to become an apprentice to study massage under the instruction of a licensed massage therapist, if the person meets the qualifications stated in Rule 64B7-29.002, Florida Administrative Code. To qualify for an apprenticeship, the applicant must have secured the sponsorship of a sponsoring massage therapist, complete a DOH application, pay a \$100 fee, and must not be enrolled simultaneously as a student in a board-approved massage school.<sup>12</sup>

Section 480.43, F.S., provides that a massage establishment license is required at any facility where massage therapy services are offered by a licensed massage therapist and directs the board to adopt application criteria. It also provides that massage establishment licenses may not be transferred to a new owner, but may be transferred to a new location if the new location is inspected and approved by the board and an application and inspection fee has been paid. A license may be transferred from one business name to another if approved by the board and if an application fee has been paid.

The board's rules include insurance requirements, compliance with building codes, and safety and sanitary requirements, and require a licensed massage therapist to be onsite any time a client is receiving massage services.<sup>13</sup> Upon receiving an application, the DOH inspects the establishment to ensure it meets the licensure requirements.<sup>14</sup> Once licensed, the DOH inspects the establishment at least annually.<sup>15</sup>

An application for a massage establishment license may be denied for an applicant's conviction of crimes related to the practice of massage, and must be denied for convictions of enumerated crimes within 15 years of application<sup>16</sup> and for past sexual misconduct.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> A list of board-approved massage schools is available at: [http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/massage/lst\\_ma-school.pdf](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/massage/lst_ma-school.pdf) (Last visited on March 4, 2011).

<sup>8</sup> Section 480.042, F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Rule 64B7-25.001(3), F.A.C.

<sup>10</sup> Section 480.046(1)(n), F.S.

<sup>11</sup> Section 480.0485, F.S. *See also* Rule 64B7-26.010, F.A.C.

<sup>12</sup> *See* rule 64B7-27.005, for the apprentice fee amount.

<sup>13</sup> Rule 64B7-26.003, F.A.C.

<sup>14</sup> Rule 64B7-26.004, F.A.C.

<sup>15</sup> Rule 64B7-26.005, F.A.C.

<sup>16</sup> Section 456.0635, F.S.

<sup>17</sup> Section 456.063, F.S.

It is a misdemeanor of the first degree to operate an unlicensed massage establishment.<sup>18</sup> Currently, upon receiving a complaint that unlicensed activity is occurring, the DOH's Medical Quality Assurance inspectors coordinate with local law enforcement. Unlicensed practice of massage therapy is punishable as a third-degree felony.<sup>19</sup> The DOH may issue cease and desist notices, enforceable by filing for an injunction or writ of mandamus and seek civil penalties against the unlicensed party in circuit court.<sup>20</sup> The DOH may also impose, by citation, an administrative penalty up to \$5,000. While the DOH has investigative authority, it does not have arrest authority or sworn law enforcement personnel.

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

**Section 1** amends s. 480.041, F.S., to authorize the board to issue a temporary permit to practice massage therapy to an applicant who graduates from a massage therapy school that is board-approved and accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

An applicant only qualifies to apply for a temporary permit if he or she is at least 18 years of age or has received a high school diploma or graduate equivalency diploma, has completed a course of study at an accredited and board-approved massage school, and has not yet taken the examination required for licensure. An applicant must apply to the DOH in writing upon forms prepared and furnished by the DOH. Applicant's who receive a temporary permit are subject to the provisions in s. 480.046, F.S., which specifies circumstances under which the DOH can deny a license or conduct a disciplinary action.

This section specifically exempts applicants for temporary permits from the:

- Licensure requirements that require a passing grade on an examination administered by the DOH;
- Board's rules that require education, examination, and certification for the practice of colonic irrigation;
- Board's rules relating to licensing procedures for those desiring to be licensed in Florida and who hold an active license in, and have practiced in, another state, territory, or jurisdiction of the U.S. or any foreign national jurisdiction which has licensing standards substantially similar to, equivalent to, or more stringent than the standards in Florida for licensure.

The temporary permit is only valid for 6 months after issuance by the board, until the applicant fails the massage licensure examination, or receives a massage therapist license, whichever occurs first. A person practicing massage therapy under a temporary permit must be supervised by a licensed massage therapist who has a full, active, and unencumbered license.

**Section 2** amends s. 480.044, F.S., to require the board to set a \$50 fee for temporary permits for providing massage therapy services.

**Section 3** provides an effective date of January 3, 2012.

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<sup>18</sup> Section 480.047, F.S.

<sup>19</sup> Section 456.065, F.S.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

**IV. Constitutional Issues:****A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

The provisions of this CS have no impact on municipalities and the counties under the requirements of Article VII, Section 18 of the Florida Constitution.

**B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

The provisions of this CS have no impact on public records or open meetings issues under the requirements of Article I, Section 24(a) and (b) of the Florida Constitution.

**C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

The provisions of this CS have no impact on the trust fund restrictions under the requirements of Article III, Subsection 19(f) of the Florida Constitution.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:****A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

Applicants seeking a temporary permit to perform massage therapy services will be required to pay a fee of \$50.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

Businesses offering massage therapy services may be able to offer services to the public for less money if persons with temporary permits, while supervised, are able to provide such services at a reduced rate.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

The DOH has estimated that approximately 2,606 applicants would have requested a temporary permit if 75 percent of the 3,475 applicants for massage therapy licensure in fiscal year 2009-10 requested a temporary permit. The DOH has reported that it will not require additional resources to implement the provisions of this bill and will absorb the costs associated with rulemaking responsibilities and the changes that will be needed for the DOH's application forms and database. The estimated revenue the DOH expects to generate from the temporary permit fees is \$130,300.<sup>21</sup>

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

The bill in lines 61-64 requires applicants seeking a temporary permit to meet all of the qualifications for licensure under s. 480.041, F.S., except for a provision under paragraph (1)(b) pertaining to the completion of an apprenticeship program and paragraphs (1)(c), (4)(b), and (4)(c). Paragraphs (4)(b) and (4)(c) require the *board to adopt rules* concerning the practice of

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<sup>21</sup> Department of Health, *Bill Analysis, Economic Statement, and Fiscal Note for SB 584*, dated February 8, 2011. A copy of this analysis is on file with the Senate Health Regulation Committee.

colonic irrigation and licensing procedures for practitioners licensed in other states. Therefore, it may be more appropriate to say in lines 61-64 that an applicant must meet all of the licensure requirements except for a provision under paragraph (1)(b) pertaining to the completion of an apprenticeship program, paragraph (1)(c), and any rules adopted under paragraphs (4)(b) and (4)(c).

## VII. Related Issues:

In lines 75-78, it is unclear whether the intent is to require a licensed massage therapist to provide “direct supervision” of a person practicing massage therapy under a temporary permit. Furthermore, the term “supervision” is not defined in ch. 480, F.S., the Massage Practice Act.

On January 28, 2011, during a board meeting, the board voted unanimously to oppose this bill. The board gave the following reasons:

- Temporary permits do not serve the public health and safety;
- Temporary permit holders do not meet basic entry level requirements with regards to practicing with reasonable skill and safety because they have not proven competency by passing the entry level examinations. The examinations are provided daily via computer based testing and may be taken prior to or immediately after graduation from an approved program.
- Supervision required is not sufficiently defined without rulemaking authority by the board.
- The bill will increase regulatory costs.<sup>22</sup>

## VIII. Additional Information:

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**  
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

### **CS by the Health Regulation Committee on March 9, 2011:**

The CS differs from the bill in that it:

- Authorizes the Department of Health to prepare and furnish the appropriate application forms to applicants seeking temporary permits to practice massage therapy.
- Sets the temporary permit fee at \$50 to avoid rulemaking procedures to determine a fee.
- Extends the effective date to January 3, 2012, to allow the Department of Health time to implement provisions of the bill.
- Clarifies that the board may only issue a temporary permit to an applicant who graduates from a massage school that is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Clarifies that an applicant may not complete an apprentice program in lieu of completing a course of study at a board-approved massage school in order to be eligible to apply for a temporary permit.

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<sup>22</sup> *Supra* fn. 21.

- Specifies that an applicant may apply for a temporary permit if the applicant has completed a course of study at a massage school that has been board-approved and accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

**B. Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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