

**Concise Explanatory Statement for
Department of Health and Board of Massage
Chapter 246-830 WAC
Massage Practitioners**

REASONS FOR ADOPTING THESE RULES:

Chapter 246-830 WAC—Massage Practitioner was opened to adopt amendments to clarify, streamline, and modernize the regulations of licensed massage practitioners in Washington State.

Public health safety concerns have escalated in recent years due to an increasing number of complaints that have been reported to the Department of Health (department). As a result, the Board of Massage (board) and the department determined that rules are needed to address the public's concerns on controversial issues such as breast massage, draping, recordkeeping and standards of practice limitations.

The adopted rules are also in response to:

- RCW 18.108.028, enacted in 2016, which directs the board to adopt rules to allow board-approved massage programs the ability to establish transfer programs to accept credits from a non-board-approved program.
- Substitute House Bill 2425 (Chapter 41, Laws of 2016), which changes the term massage practitioner to massage therapist effective July 1, 2017.
- RCW 43.70.041, enacted in 2013, which requires the department to review all of its existing rules every five years to identify ways to clarify or simplify existing rules.

Finally, a comprehensive review of chapter 246-830 WAC has not been conducted since its adoption in the early 1990s. Given the number of disciplinary actions incurred by this profession in the last several years, and the need to update regulations to meet current standard of care in the massage industry, the adopted amendments are needed to ensure the health and safety of the public and establish clearer standards of practice and conduct among massage practitioners.

LANGUAGE CHANGES MADE IN THE ADOPTED RULES:

Attachment A outlines the changes from the proposed rules that were published in WSR 17-07-113 to the adopted rules and the reasons for the changes.

SUMMARY OF ALL COMMENTS RECEIVED AND THE BOARD'S AND DEPARTMENT'S DECISIONS:

Attachment B provides a summary of all comments received since filing the CR-102 regarding the proposed rule, program's responses, and how the final rules reflect the board's and agency's consideration of those comments.