



CONCISE EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Summary of Public Comments for chapter 246-830 WAC, Massage Therapists
December 15, 2022

The Board of Massage (board) and the Department of Health (department) are adopting amendments to five existing sections of chapter 246-830 WAC, Massage Therapists.

In general, the adopted revisions:

- Corrects the name of the national examination
- Clarify the training requirements for somatic education and intraoral massage education,
- Clarify and modernizes the language in the equipment and sanitation rule
- Clarify and modernize the language in the hygiene rule

The adopted rules are different from the text of the proposed rules as it was published in the Washington State Register 22-21-123.

Appendix A outlines the clarifying and non-substantive changes made to the proposed rules upon adoption.

Appendix B provides a summary of all comments received since filing the CR-102 and program's responses.

Any person may petition the adoption or amendment of these rules in accordance with RCW 34.05.330.

For more information regarding these adopted rules, contact Megan Maxey, Program Manager by email at massage.therapy@doh.wa.gov or by phone at 360-236-4945.

Appendix A – Changes Made at Hearing to the Proposed Language

Rule as proposed in WSR 22-21-123	Rule as adopted
<p>WAC 246-830-201 Examination</p> <p>(1) An applicant for a massage therapist license must successfully pass one of the following examinations:</p> <p>(a) The federation of state massage therapy boards massage and bodywork licensing examination;</p>	<p>WAC 246-830-201 Examination</p> <p>(1) An applicant for a massage therapist license must successfully pass one of the following examinations:</p> <p>(a) The Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards’ massage and bodywork licensing examination (MBLEx);</p>
<p>WAC 246-830-500 Equipment, linens, and sanitation</p> <p>(2) All cabinets, showers, tubs, basins, massage or steam tables, hydrotherapy equipment, and all other fixed equipment used must be thoroughly cleansed using a bacterial agent in accordance with the manufacturer directions.</p>	<p>WAC 246-830-500 Equipment, linens, and sanitation</p> <p>(2) All cabinets, showers, tubs, basins, massage or steam tables, hydrotherapy equipment, and all other fixed equipment used must be thoroughly cleansed using an antimicrobial agent in accordance with the manufacturer directions.</p>

Appendix B – Summary of Comments Received and the Board / Department Response

WAC Section	Comment Received	Board / Department Response
<p>WAC 246-830-500 Equipment, linens, and sanitation.</p>	<p>1. Under WAC 246-830-500 #5 what exactly "Linens must be stored in a sanitary manner" mean?</p>	<p>No changes were made to the proposed rule at adoption. The board and department did not take any action on this comment because no specific change was requested.</p> <p>Storing linens in a sanitary manner means that the linens are being stored in a method that will provide the public with clean and hygienic linens.</p> <p>Rule as adopted – WAC 246-830-500 Equipment, linens, and sanitation. (5) A massage therapist must provide single service materials or clean linens used in the practice of massage. Linens must be stored in a sanitary manner.</p>
<p>WAC 246-830-500 Equipment, linens, and sanitation.</p>	<p>The wording "linens" have previously been considered by some that it did not include blankets. Then an update put the word "Blanket" in so there would be no confusion about if it was considered "linen". Then I received a proposal which stated that blankets would only need to be washed once a day, due to financial hardships of washing the blankets after every patient. I reacted to that notification with a comment that every time a blanket is used on a patient it gets contaminated and must be washed between every patient, no matter what. Now with this proposal we are back to just saying "linens" which some say does NOT include blankets. I feel like this change in wording leaves the door open to people and companies that do NOT want to wash blankets after every patient. Please put the word "blanket" back in, so there is NO confusion about the issue that a blanket MUST be washed after EVERY patient/client. Even if the patient does not touch the blanket, the massage therapist does, many times during the massage. The massage therapist has massaged</p>	<p>No changes were made to the proposed rule at adoption. The board and department did not take any action on this comment because the proposed language addresses the commenters concerns.</p> <p>The term “blanket” is already included in the definition of “linens”.</p> <p>Rule as adopted - WAC 246-830-500 Equipment, linens, and sanitation. (6) All linens used for one client or patient must be laundered or cleaned before they are used on any other client or patient.</p>

The Department of Health prepares a Concise Explanatory Statement (CES) under RCW 34.05.325 to respond to public comments or questions about a proposed rule. A CES may summarize similar comments by category rather than by individual comment.

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	<p>that person with their hands and forearms. Emollients are used to deliver glide and friction to facilitate proper therapy to the patient during the massage. These emollients are excellent at picking up the patient's dead skin cells, and germs, and bacteria. As the therapist drapes and undrapes the patient during the massage, the therapist's hands are contaminated, which then contaminates the blanket. If they don't wash the blanket after EVERY patient, all the skin cells, germs and bacteria are now on the blanket. Do you want to be the last massage of the day at a place that only washes their blankets once a day? I have worked with a massage therapist that never washed her blanket because she said it wasn't necessary. I washed it every time she had a day off and wasn't there to object. Her blanket got washed about once a week. She massaged 8 patients a day. By the time that blanket was washed, it had been contaminated by about 40 patients. Just put the word "blanket" back into the linen description so there is no confusion to therapists like her. We have a moral obligation to protect the health and safety of all the patients/clients that come to us for treatment.</p>	
<p>WAC 246-830-500 Equipment, linens, and sanitation.</p>	<p>2. Under WAC 246-830-500 #9, what are "industry standards" when it comes to equipment being "clean, in good repair and maintained?" Is there a reference book or website or other general guideline for this information for those who haven't recently either been in massage school or worked with a massage service conglomerate?</p>	<p>No changes were made to the proposed rule at adoption. The board and department did not take any action on this comment because no specific change was requested.</p> <p>Industry standards are an accepted set of best practices used by the majority of people in the same industry. The majority of massage therapists will interpret the rule language to mean that equipment must be maintained in a safe and effective manner for its intended use.</p>

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		<p>Rule as adopted – WAC 246-830-500 Equipment, linens, and sanitation. (9) All equipment must be clean, in good repair, and maintained to industry standards.</p>
<p>WAC 246-830-510 Hygiene</p>	<p>I take exception to the removal of “hot” when referring to sanitation. Please advise reason for removal of the word hot. Thank you.</p>	<p>The board and department did not make any amendments to the rule based on this comment.</p> <p>Per CDC handwashing guidelines, when used with soap, warm and cold water remove the same number of germs from your hands.</p> <p>Rule as adopted - WAC 246-830-510 Hygiene To maintain a professional standard of hygiene in their practice, a massage therapist must: (1) Cleanse any exposed body part used for applying treatment, before and after each treatment, using a sink with water and soap or a chemical germicidal product;</p>

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<p>WAC 246-830-510 Hygiene</p>	<p>3. WAC 246-830-510 #1 could use some cleaning up in terms of language. Clean with soap and water or germicidal product - does a sink have to be involved? It also seems like there would be a better way of communicating that body parts of a massage therapist that directly touch a client must be cleaned before and after a session.</p>	<p>No changes were made to the proposed rule at adoption. The board and department did not take any action on this comment because no specific change was requested.</p> <p>Rule as adopted - WAC 246-830-510 Hygiene To maintain a professional standard of hygiene in their practice, a massage therapist must: (1) Cleanse any exposed body part used for applying treatment, before and after each treatment, using a sink with water and soap or a chemical germicidal product;</p>