



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 4731-1-05 Scope of practice: massage therapy.

Effective: February 28, 2023

(A) Massage therapy is the treatment of disorders of the human body by the manipulation of soft tissue through the systematic external application of massage techniques including touch, stroking, friction, vibration, percussion, kneading, stretching, compression, and joint movements within the normal physiologic range of motion; and adjunctive thereto, the external application of water, heat, cold, topical preparations, and mechanical devices.

(B) A massage therapist shall not diagnose a patient's condition. A massage therapist shall evaluate whether the application of massage therapy is advisable. A massage therapist may provide information or education consistent with that evaluation, including referral to an appropriate licensed health care professional, provided that any form of treatment advised by a massage therapist falls within the scope of practice of, and relates directly to a condition that is amenable to treatment by, a massage therapist. In determining whether the application of massage therapy is advisable, a massage therapist shall be limited to taking a written or verbal inquiry, visual inspection including observation of range of motion, touch, and the taking of a pulse, temperature and blood pressure.

(C) No person shall use the words or letters "massage therapist," "licensed massage therapist," "L.M.T." or any other letters, words, abbreviations, or insignia, indicating or implying that the person is a licensed massage therapist without a valid license under Chapter 4731. of the Revised Code.

(D) A massage therapist may perform the following services in compliance with the following:

(1) A massage therapist may treat temporomandibular joint dysfunction provided that the patient has been directly referred in writing for such treatment to the massage therapist by a physician currently licensed pursuant to Chapter 4731. of the Revised Code, by a chiropractor currently licensed pursuant to Chapter 4734. of the Revised Code, or a dentist currently licensed pursuant to Chapter 4715. of the Revised Code.



(2) A massage therapist may apply ultrasound, diathermy, electrical neuromuscular stimulation, or substantially similar modalities provided that the patient has been directly referred in writing for such treatment to the massage therapist by a physician or podiatric physician licensed under Chapter 4731. of the Revised Code, physician assistant licensed under Chapter 4730. of the Revised Code, chiropractor licensed under Chapter 4734. of the Revised Code, advanced practice registered nurse licensed under Chapter 4723. of the Revised Code, or physical therapist licensed under Chapter 4755. of the Revised Code, who is acting within the scope of their professional license.

(a) The massage therapist must perform the modality within the minimal standards of care.

(b) If the food and drug administration classifies the device as a prescription device, as that term is defined in 21 CFR 801.109 amended as of June 15, 2016, or a restricted device that can only be sold, distributed, or used upon the order of an authorized healthcare provider, the massage therapists application of the device must be done under the on-site supervision of the referring practitioner.

(c) If the food and drug administration classifies the device as an over-the-counter device, the massage therapist may apply the device without the on-site supervision of the referring practitioner.

(E) All persons who hold a license to practice massage therapy issued pursuant to section 4731.17 of the Revised Code shall prominently display that license in the office or place where a major portion of the license holder's practice is conducted. If a license holder does not have a primary practice location, the license holder shall at all times when practicing keep either the wall certificate on the holder's person or provide verification of licensure status from the board's internet web site upon request.

(F) Massage therapy does not include:

(1) Colonic irrigation;

(2) The practice of chiropractic, including the application of a high velocity-low amplitude thrusting force to any articulation of the human body;



- (3) The use of graded force applied across specific joint surfaces for the purpose of breaking capsular adhesions;
 - (4) The prescription of therapeutic exercise for the purpose of rehabilitation or remediation of a disorder of the human body;
 - (5) The treatment of infectious, contagious or venereal diseases;
 - (6) The prescription, dispensing, personally furnishing or administration of drugs; and
 - (7) The performance of surgery or practice of medicine in any other form.
- (G) As used within this rule:
- (1) "External" does not prohibit a massage therapist from performing massage therapy inside the mouth or oral cavity; and
 - (2) "Mechanical devices" means any tool or device which mimics or enhances the actions possible by the hands that is within the scope of practice as defined in section 4731.04 of the Revised Code and this rule.