



DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR

GREGORY BIALECKI
SECRETARY OF HOUSING
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Professional Licensure
1000 Washington Street • Boston • Massachusetts • 02118

BARBARA ANTHONY
UNDERSECRETARY OF OFFICE
OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND
BUSINESS REGULATION

MARK R. KMETZ
DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

**NOTICE: Statutory Changes Governing the Provision of Massage Therapy at Certain
Events and Advertising Practices by Unlicensed Individuals**

January 6, 2015

On January 6, 2015, Governor Deval Patrick signed into law H. 4551, *An Act further regulating the licensing requirements for massage therapists*. The legislation amends the law governing the practice of massage therapy by unlicensed individuals at sporting, health, or other events, and expands the types of advertising methods subject to regulation by the Board of Registration of Massage Therapy to include those made by “electronic means.” The new law will take effect on April, 6, 2015.

Massage Therapy at Events: The first change expands and clarifies an existing licensing exemption that allows unlicensed individuals to provide massage therapy services at sporting, health, or other events, without pay and under the supervision of a licensed massage therapist ([G.L. c. 112, § 228](#)). The new law makes clear that the event may last for a single day or for multiple, consecutive days. This change is intended to ensure that unlicensed individuals may provide massage therapy services at sporting, health or other events lasting more than one day, an issue not previously addressed by statute. Unlicensed individuals providing services at these events are still required to follow the Board’s [Policy #09-001](#), adopted in 2009, which prohibits unlicensed individuals providing these services from holding themselves to the public as being licensed, and allows them to provide services only to event participants.

Advertising by Electronic Means: The second change made by the law is an expansion of the definition of the term “advertise” in [G.L. c. 112, §235](#), which governs the use of the term “massage” in advertisements. Specifically, the new law expands the definition to include advertisements made by “electronic means,” in addition to currently recognized advertising mediums such as newspapers, magazines, or television. The change was made to combat inappropriate advertisements made on internet websites, through which unlicensed individuals may offer massage therapy services as a cover for criminal activity. As a result of this amendment to the law, investigators and prosecutors at the Division of Professional Licensure, in conjunction with law enforcement authorities, now will be able to more aggressively pursue individuals engaged in these illegal activities.

###

