

### Comment #1

Hello WV Massage Board:

The present wording of the rules reads like this:

194CSR1

4.1.t. Refrain from massaging, touching or otherwise exposing the genitalia of the client;

The Board is proposing that the rule read like this:

4.1.t. Refrain from massaging, touching or otherwise exposing the genitalia of the client; including a licensee may not perform pelvic floor therapy or any touching of the genitalia of the client, and such treatments are not within the scope of practice of the profession

I have benefited greatly from therapeutic bodywork and massage and would not like to see it limited in this way. I agree with protecting people from abuse. I also believe that abusers find their way around rules, so that this change may only hurt legitimate providers, chasing clients out of state or leaving clients like myself out of reach of the care we need.

Thanks,

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Eric Fitts  
572 Bethlehem Farm Lane,  
Alderson, WV 24910

### Comment #2

In regard to a proposal that will forbid pelvic floor work, this must be rejected. There is only danger of lewd activity if both client and therapist are willing, at which point they will follow through with it anyway. No need to cripple people who need pelvic floor work for no apparent benefit. Anyone who's needed and had work done on their pelvic floor can attest it is a critical part of their therapy. Please don't force us to seek help out of state because the board puts unnecessary restrictions on their licensed professionals.

Thank you, Steven Lilly

### Comment #3

Hi Linda,

I am writing on behalf of Anukah Touch and the fact that the board is threatening the licensure for pelvic floor work in WV. Please see attached document. I am appalled that WV wouldn't recognize or value this work!!! Typical WV healthcare.

Please advise,  
AW

The significance of pelvic floor work is often overlooked in the realm of therapeutic bodywork. The pelvic floor plays a crucial role in maintaining overall well-being and health, serving as a foundation for bodily movement and supporting essential internal organs.

First and foremost, understanding the anatomy and function of the pelvic floor is essential. The pelvic floor consists of a group of muscles located at the base of the pelvis, supporting the bladder, uterus, and rectum. These muscles play a vital role in various bodily functions, including bowel and bladder control, sexual function, and providing stability to the pelvis and spine. By incorporating pelvic floor work into their practice, massage therapists can help improve muscle tone, flexibility, and overall function in this often-neglected area of the body.

Moreover, focusing on the pelvic floor can have a significant impact on addressing common issues such as incontinence, pelvic pain, and sexual dysfunction. Many clients may be unaware of the connection between these issues and the health of their pelvic floor muscles. Through targeted massage techniques and exercises, massage therapists can help clients strengthen and restore proper function to their pelvic floor, ultimately improving their quality of life and well-being. This is an essential scope of practice for bodywork massage therapists.

I have experienced first hand the results of pelvic floor work in regard to bladder control and providing stability to the pelvis and spine. Without this body-work, I would still be suffering with incontinence.

Adrienne Wilson

#### Comment # 4

Dear Members of the Massage Board,

I am writing to express my strong concerns and complete disagreement with the recent changes to the regulations regarding the prohibition of pelvic floor work in West Virginia. As you may be aware, all surrounding states allow this scope of work, recognizing the significant benefits it offers to hundreds of individuals.

Pelvic floor work is a vital practice that has been shown to improve the quality of life for many people, addressing issues that are often left untreated or inadequately managed. By prohibiting this practice, we are not only hindering the professional capabilities of skilled therapists but also denying our citizens access to essential health services.

It is crucial that we, as a state, stop allowing fear and misconceptions to dictate our policies, especially when these policies negatively impact the well-being of our residents. Instead, we should be encouraging practices that have been proven to help, ensuring that our citizens receive the best possible care.

Furthermore, it is imperative that we do not allow the concerns of other marketplace participants to restrict the free exercise of business within our state. This not only stifles professional growth and innovation but also limits the options available to those seeking care.

I implore you to reconsider the language of the current regulations. If a complete reversal of the prohibition is not feasible, I urge you to consider establishing a separate massage license specifically for pelvic floor work. This would ensure that practitioners are appropriately trained and certified, while still allowing this important work to continue.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. I look forward to your response and hope to see a positive change that prioritizes the health and well-being of our community.

Sincerely,

Becoming Human,  
Chad Pullins

"Coaching Leaders Everywhere Into Personal Breakthrough"

#### Comment # 5

I am writing to express my strong support for the creation of a separate license for bodywork practices in West Virginia. These practices have been crucial in managing my pain as well as my daughters, my partner Dave and his daughter (age 17). My daughter is a runner and these techniques allow her to continue her journey. The 17 year old has scoliosis and again the treatment allows her to continue in her passion of dance in the Beckley Academy. My issues have been ongoing for 27 years and in just a few visits 6 months ago I was able to do activities that were not possible before. I continue treatments for other issues as well. Please this practice is so helpful and the only thing I would change is that it was covered under medical insurance because it could help so many more people.

I urge you if you are not familiar with the practice schedule an appointment with Arukah in Beaver, WV phone number is 681-207-1617 and I know you will see the importance of these treatments.

By establishing a specific license for bodywork, rest assured that the practitioners are appropriately trained and certified.

I urge you to consider this request seriously and take the necessary steps to advocate for a separate license for bodywork practices. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerest Blessings,

Karen N Mitchell

453 Cherry Creek Circle

Shady Spring, WV 25918

Part 2

Dear Members of the Massage Board,

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Karen Mitchell

453 Cherry Creek Circle

Shady Spring, WV 25918

## Comment #6

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Sincerely,

Lise Griffith

## Comment # 7

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Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. I look forward to your response and hope to see a positive change that prioritizes the health and well-being of our community.

Sincerely,

Ruby Bennett

PO Box 57

Meadow Bridge WV 25876

Free people should decide what is best for them. West Virginians deserve the best care available.

Comment # 8

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If I may also share my own personal experience.

I had suffered with sciatica issues for 6 months and not improving much. I was unable to sit down at work. The only relief I could get was to constantly walk. Even the drive back and forth to work was just so painful. And heaven forbid you had to wait in traffic. I had been receiving chiropractic adjustments, acupuncture and cupping. Each session would move the needle ever so slightly. However when you are in extreme pain, you are looking for something to help you more and to get you out of the pain as quick as possible. After my first visit with Lee, I was able to do a squat. After about 4 or 5 visits, I was pain free. I had tightness, but I was pain free. Such a blessing! Fast forward to today, my mom had been in such EXTREME pain, maybe getting 2 hours of sleep at night, if she was lucky. She had been going to the chiropractor but not having any success. She had a total of 4 steroid injections. The first gave a little relief, but NOTHING after that. Went to see an orthopedic surgeon to see if she was a candidate for surgery, but she was not. So I finally convinced her to try Lee at Arukah Touch since he had helped me so much. After her first visit, she was able to lift her feet up a few inches and so much less pain. She has continued to see him and WILL continue to see him. She had made the comment to me that if she didn't Improve any more, she could at least live her

life. But now today she tells me that she sees improvements every week and doing so much better.

I beg of you to create a separate licensure in order to allow him to continue his practice in West Virginia and be given the opportunity to teach other massage therapists how to help others. Let's not fail our people even more and only offer opioids for pain relief. Let's get to the CAUSE of the pain and fix it.

Thank you for consideration.

Colene Dickerson  
346 E Whitby Rd  
Shady Spring, WV

WV MASSAGE THERAPY LICENSURE BOARD

179 Summers Street, Suite 711

Charleston, WV 25301

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

This Board is clarifying in the rule (194 CSR 1, 4.1.t.) that Pelvic Floor Therapy is not within the professional standards relating to the practice of massage therapy.

This Board response addresses all of the comments submitted in response to the proposed rule change, since they are all very similar in nature.

The current board rule regarding the professional standards of massage therapy states that a licensee shall refrain from massaging, touching or otherwise exposing the genitalia of the client. Performing Pelvic Floor Therapy requires the authorized practitioner to touch, if not expose, the clients' genitalia.

Pelvic Floor Therapy may be performed in this state by various other licensed medical professionals who have substantially more education and training than what massage therapists are required to obtain for licensure. The Board believes that the required education and training of 625 hours to become a licensed massage therapist in WV is not sufficient for massage therapists to perform Pelvic Floor Therapy.

Research on persons authorized to perform Pelvic Floor Therapy shows they are licensed medical providers who have the authority to diagnose

conditions and prescribe treatments. Licensed massage therapists in WV, by statute, do not have the authority to diagnose conditions.

Some of the medical professionals who are authorized to perform Pelvic Floor Therapy include physical therapists, occupational therapists, medical doctors, nurses, and midwives. Physical therapists tend to be the most prominent professionals performing this method of treatment.

The Board supports Pelvic Floor Therapy performed by authorized practitioners and recognizes the potential benefits that can be achieved. The Board's position is this recognized health care option needs to be performed by the licensed medical professionals that are trained, permitted and regulated by the law to do so. It is also worthy to note that when a gynecological exam is conducted, a nurse or assistant is also present in the room when touching or exposing the genitalia due to the intimate nature of that form of treatment.

It is absolutely necessary to clarify the Board rules regarding prohibiting massage therapists from performing Pelvic Floor Therapy in this state, because Pelvic Floor Therapy violates the professional standards specified in the existing Board rules, and persons authorized to perform Pelvic Floor Therapy are required to obtain substantially more training than what is required for licensure as a massage therapist in this state.

Therefore, the Board, by rule, is clarifying that Pelvic Floor Therapy is prohibited and is not within the professional standards of massage therapy based on the current law and rules.

Chart of licensed persons that can perform pelvic floor therapy:

<https://hermanwallace.com/how-to-become-a-pelvic-floor-therapist>

