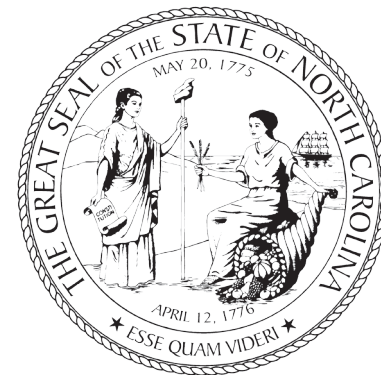


NORTH CAROLINA BOARD of MASSAGE & BODYWORK THERAPY



Regulating the practice of massage and bodywork therapy and its educational institutions, for the protection of the public.

2024 NEWSLETTER

Message from the Board Chair, Robert Reeves, LMBT

Greetings to all,

It is with great pleasure that I extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to Laura Ford and Nancy Harrell, who joined the Board in 2024. Their expertise in massage and bodywork will undoubtedly serve as valuable assets as we continue to advance the profession, ensuring it remains both a safe and enriching experience for everyone involved.

This year we achieved a significant milestone by successfully increasing the required education hours to 650. Together, we have also developed a comprehensive rubric to guide institutions in preparing therapists who meet the high standards set by the Board.

As a reminder, please note that it is a requirement for license renewal to complete a minimum of 12 hours of in-classroom continuing education (CE). A live webinar is online and not considered in-classroom. When selecting a CE provider, ensure they are approved by the NCBTMB, FSMTB, NCCAOM or IASI, and keep a digital copy of your certificate of documentation.

Effective communication is essential. Not only in educating your clients but also in deepening your own understanding of why you chose this meaningful profession. I encourage you to familiarize yourselves with the Practice Act and Rules and Regulations of the Board to better serve your clients and enhance the integrity of the field.

Lastly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all our Board members and staff for their unwavering commitment and service. The impact of your decision and actions in safeguarding the public is immeasurable, and I want to ensure that your dedication does not go unnoticed. Your contributions are truly valued.

In Light and Love,

Robert Reeves
LMBT 14425, Chair
NC Board of Massage and Bodywork Therapy

Top Reminders

1. Keep the Board informed of any changes to your mailing address and email address so you will receive all Board correspondence.
2. All Board meetings are open to the public and are held every other month. The current meeting schedule is on the website under 'Board Information'.
3. Complaints can be filed online at the File A Complaint tab on the Board's website.
4. The online renewal is on the Board's website under the Renew Your License tab. Online renewals end on December 31 at midnight. Renewals after December 31 must include a \$75 late fee and be mailed with a letter stating whether or not you have been practicing massage and bodywork therapy in NC since your license expired.
5. The late renewal fee was removed for renewals submitted after November 1 and on or before December 31.
6. LMBTs must complete 24 hours of continuing education, including a minimum of 3 hours of ethics. A minimum of 12 hours must be completed in-classroom. Live webinars are not considered in-classroom. A maximum of 8 hours of business management may be completed, should you choose to do so.
7. LMBTs can enter their CE into the online system anytime throughout the year by going to the Therapist tab and click on Renew Your License and Continuing Education Requirements. If you have issues uploading your documentation, contact the Board office.
8. LMBTs and establishment owners can verify a license is valid in NC on the Board's website under the Verify A License tab and searching by their last name or license number.
9. LMBTs and establishment owners are required to notify the Board if they know a person is: (1) practicing without a license, (2) violating the Practice Act/Rules and Regulations, (3) charged with certain criminal offenses, or (4) a defendant in a civil lawsuit related to the practice of massage and bodywork therapy.
10. LMBTs are required to display their Board-issued original license at their primary place of practice. Licensees providing massage and bodywork therapy outside of their primary place of practice must have a Board-issued original license or wallet card available for inspection. A new licensee must receive their original license prior to practicing in NC.
11. Establishment owners are required to display their Board-issued original license and licenses of all LMBTs to be visible by the public. All persons who provide massage and bodywork therapy services at an establishment shall be currently licensed by the Board.
12. Each LMBT shall work at a location that has an establishment license or at a location that is exempt from the establishment licensing requirement.
13. Information regarding establishment licensure is provided on the Board's website under the Establishment tab.

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NEW BOARD MEMBER

The Honorable Tim Moore, Speaker of the House, appointed Laura Ford of Wake County to the LMBT position previously held by Rachael Crawford. Her term began on July 1, 2024 and will end June 30, 2027. The Honorable Phil Berger, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, appointed Nancy Harrell of Chatham County to the LMBT position previously held by Valory Hicks. Her term began on November 20, 2024 and will end June 30, 2026.

Laura Ford:

Laura Ford is the co-owner of Hands On Health LLC, a massage therapy practice located in Cary NC. She has been a certified massage therapist since 1996 and licensed since NC LMBT inception in 2000. In 2008, she became a provider of approved continuing education with the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork. In 2013, her professional background and experience qualified her to teach 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year students in a bachelor's program at the New Zealand College Of Massage as a visiting educator. This opportunity gave her a global view of the profession and an experience that she will forever cherish.

She has been a massage and bodywork business owner since 1999 and joined with a business partner in 2004. Together, they have built a NC licensed establishment in west Cary that currently supports 13-15 massage therapist employees. Their mission directly addresses a desire to represent the profession positively: *Hands On Health aims to represent that massage therapy can stand on its own as a contributory profession that helps people in our neighborhood feel better and stay well.*

She wishes to continue to show up as one of her profession's passionate leaders and she is eagerly anticipating an opportunity to serve on the Board Of Massage and Bodywork Therapy.

Nancy Harrell:

Nancy Harrell, LMBT, is happy to be back, serving on the Board. A proud North Carolina native, she grew up in Durham before living and working in Wake County for many years and more recently moving to Chatham County.

After graduating from massage therapy school in 2003, Nancy started working as a massage therapist and soon learned that her true passion in the field was in educating future therapists. Nancy was an instructor and the Massage Therapy Program Director at Miller-Motte College in Cary for 10 years and is currently the Director of the massage program at Wake Tech Community College. Through her interest in curriculum development, she has also assisted several other community colleges around the state start their Massage Therapy programs as well.

From 2015-2021, Nancy served on the Board, participating in numerous committees and fulfilling various roles. In addition, she also volunteered with the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB) as an MBLEx item writer and in assisting with content development of the exam.

In her spare time, you can find her reading, working out at the gym, or learning something new.

Nancy currently lives in Pittsboro with her cat and dog fur babies.

NEW BOARD OFFICERS

The Board, at its December 2024 meeting, elected the following officers:

Chair – Amy Swink

Vice Chair – Robert Reeves

Treasurer – Kay Warren

KEEP INFORMATION UP TO DATE

To optimize communications between the Board and licensees, please update your current email address at the Update Your Record tab on the Board's website www.bmbt.org.

2025 BOARD MEETING DATES

February 13, 2025

April 17, 2025

June 12, 2025

August 21, 2025

October 16, 2025

December 11, 2025

Board meetings are currently being conducted via Webex and in person in the large conference room on the 4th floor of the GlenLake One building at 4140 ParkLake Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27612. Meetings begin at 10:00 a.m. and are open to the public. The Webex meeting information is posted on the Board's website under Board Information & Board Meetings page. There is a 15 minute period of Public Comment at the end of each meeting. Those interested in addressing the Board during Public Comment must sign up before or during the meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

LMBT licenses currently active 9,547

Total LMBT licenses issued through 12/31/2024.....22,371

Total Establishment licenses issued through 12/31/2024.....647

Licensure of Establishments

The Board began the process of licensing establishments in August 2021. More than 1,500 persons have requested applications, more than 750 applications have been submitted and more than 640 licenses have been issued as of December 31, 2024.

Please be aware:

The Establishment License is for the location (site or premises) where the massage and bodywork therapy services are provided.

All persons who provide massage and bodywork therapy services at the location of the Establishment are required to be currently licensed by the Board and in good standing.

Every LMBT is required to either work at a location that has an Establishment License, or at a location that is exempt from the licensing requirement.

If an LMBT is working at an Establishment that is not licensed by the Board or exempt, the LMBT is in violation of the Practice Act and subject to disciplinary action.

If an Establishment allows non-LMBTs to provide massage and bodywork therapy services, the Establishment owners and operators are in violation of the Practice Act and subject to disciplinary action.

Every LMBT should make sure the Establishment where they work has an Establishment License issued by the Board.

If the Establishment does not have a license issued by the Board, the LMBT shall not provide massage and bodywork therapy services at the Establishment and shall report the Establishment to the Board.

If an LMBT or Establishment Owner believes an Establishment is operating without a license, please email admin@bmbt.org with the name, address, website and owner's name, if available, so Board staff can contact the Establishment.

Practice Act and Rules and Regulations

The Board's Practice Act was signed into law by Governor James B. Hunt on November 6, 1998. The Board's authority is derived from the NC Legislature and the Practice Act. Only the Legislature can change the Practice Act.

The Board is authorized by the Practice Act to create Rules and Regulations to implement the requirements of the Practice Act. The Rules and Regulations can be amended by the Board through the rule-making process. All Rules must be reviewed and approved by the North Carolina Rules Review Commission.

In July 2024, the NC Legislature amended the Practice Act to increase the massage and bodywork therapy education hours from 500 to 650. At its August meeting, the Board considered changes to its Rules and Regulations to implement the change in educational hours and to amend the late renewal process for establishments. The amendments to Rules .0201, .0204, .0620, .0623, .0627 and .1012 were approved by the Rules Review Commission in January for an effective date of February 1, 2025.

The amendments to the Practice Act and Rules and Regulations can be found on the Board's website under the Document Center and Practice Act/Rules tabs.

Most recent changes included:

- Increase from 500 to 650 classroom hours of supervised instruction
- Curriculum breakdown in Rule .0620(2)
- Amending the late renewal process for an establishment license

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE BOARD FROM JANUARY 1, 2024 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2024

The Board is authorized to investigate complaints and institute disciplinary actions, as set forth in Section .0900 of the Rules.

HEARINGS BEFORE THE BOARD:

Casey Bitz - Following a hearing on February 15, 2024, regarding failing to ensure the client's safety, comfort and privacy and failing to maintain the confidentiality of the client's protected health information, the Board Ordered that Mr. Bitz's license be revoked and he pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$1000.

Chad McCarter - Following a hearing on April 18, 2024, regarding failing to ensure the client's safety, comfort and privacy, engaging in improper and draping and inappropriate contact with a client during a massage and bodywork therapy session, the Board Ordered that Mr. McCarter's license be placed on probation for one year, complete additional CE and he pay a civil penalty of \$250 and costs of \$500.

Arashdeep Bains - Following a hearing on August 15, 2024, regarding failing to ensure the client's safety, comfort and privacy during a massage and bodywork therapy session, the Board Ordered that Mr. Bains' license be placed on probation for one year, complete additional CE and he pay costs of \$750.

Justin Whisonant - Following a hearing on August 15, 2024, regarding failing to ensure the client's safety, comfort and privacy during a massage and bodywork therapy session, the Board Ordered that Mr. Whisonant be placed on probation for three months, complete additional CE and he pay costs of \$750.

Christopher O'Malley - Following a hearing on December 12, 2024, regarding inappropriate sexual contact with a client during a massage and bodywork therapy session, the Board Ordered that Mr. O'Malley's license be revoked and he pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$1000.

Chongmei Wei - Following a hearing on December 12, 2024, regarding failing to disclose that she owned/operated massage businesses in NC, failing to inform the Board of pending felony charges for continuing criminal enterprise and profiting from promoting prostitution and violating the conditions of her Conditional License requiring that she not violate any criminal law in NC or any other state, the Board Ordered that Ms. Wei's license be revoked and she pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$1000.

CONSENT ORDERS:

Terry Ayers - Prior to a hearing scheduled for February 15, 2024, Mr. Ayers entered into a Consent Order for inappropriate sexual contact with a client wherein his license was revoked and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

William Gross - Prior to a hearing scheduled for February 15, 2024, Mr. Gross entered into a Consent Order for inappropriate sexual contact with a client wherein his license was surrendered.

Lismary Martinez - Prior to a hearing scheduled for February 15, 2024, Ms. Martinez entered into a Consent Order for practicing with an expired license wherein her license was placed on probation for one year and she agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Ioan Meszaros - Prior to a hearing scheduled for February 15, 2024, Mr. Meszaros entered into a Consent Order for improper draping and inappropriate contact with a client wherein his license was placed on probation for two years and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$500 and costs of \$500.

Sugelis Neria - Prior to a hearing scheduled for February 15, 2024, Ms. Neria entered into a Consent Order for practicing with an expired license wherein her license was placed on probation for one year and she agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Gregg Policari - Prior to a hearing scheduled for February 15, 2024, Mr. Policari entered into a Consent Order for failing to ensure the safety, comfort and privacy, engaging in improper draping and failing to receive informed consent for a client during a massage and bodywork therapy session wherein his license was placed on probation for one year and he agreed to pay costs of \$500.

Brad Virgil - Prior to a hearing scheduled for February 15, 2025, Mr. Virgil entered into a Consent Order for improper draping and inappropriate conversation with a client wherein his license was suspended for three months, placed on probation for two years and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$750.

Austin Allen - Prior to a hearing scheduled for August 15, 2024, Mr. Allen entered into a Consent Order for engaging in inappropriate sexual contact with a client during a massage and bodywork therapy session wherein his license was surrendered and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Laure Ayling - Prior to a hearing scheduled for August 15, 2024, Ms. Ayling entered into a Consent Order for practicing with an expired license wherein her license was placed on probation for one year and she agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$500 and costs of \$200.

Haifeng Lin - Prior to a hearing scheduled for August 15, 2024, Mr. Lin entered into a Consent Order for aiding and abetting unlicensed practice at his business wherein his license was revoked and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Jordy Lopez - Prior to a hearing scheduled for August 15, 2024, Mr. Lopez entered into a Consent Order for inappropriate sexual contact with clients during massage and bodywork therapy sessions wherein his license was surrendered until a subsequent Order is issued.

Miriah Robinson - Prior to a hearing scheduled for August 15, 2024, Ms. Robinson entered into a Consent Order for practicing with an expired license wherein her license was placed on probation for one year and she agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Jason Smith - Prior to a hearing scheduled for August 15, 2024, Mr. Smith entered into a Consent Order for failing to ensure the safety, comfort and privacy of a client during a massage and bodywork therapy session wherein his license was placed on probation for one year and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$350 and costs of \$350.

Jonathan Woolard - Prior to a hearing scheduled for August 15, 2024, Mr. Woolard entered into a Consent Order for inappropriate sexual contact with a client while his license was suspended wherein his license was surrendered and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Juan Araoz - Prior to a hearing scheduled for October 17, 2024, Mr. Araoz entered into a Consent Order for engaging in inappropriate sexual contact with clients during massage and bodywork therapy sessions wherein his license was surrendered and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Zachary Campbell - Prior to a hearing scheduled for October 17, 2024, Mr. Campbell entered into a Consent Order for engaging in unprofessional and inappropriate conversation and used his license to engage in a personal relationship with a client wherein his license was placed on probation for two years and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$350 and costs of \$350.

Daniel Chase - Prior to a hearing scheduled for October 17, 2024, Mr. Chase entered into a Consent Order for engaging in inappropriate sexual contact with clients during massage and bodywork therapy sessions wherein his license was revoked and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

John Gale - Prior to a hearing scheduled for October 17, 2024, Mr. Gale entered into a Consent Order for failing to ensure the safety, comfort and privacy of a client during a massage and bodywork therapy session wherein his license was placed on probation for one year and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$350 and costs of \$350.

Jordy Lopez - Prior to a hearing scheduled for October 17, 2024, Mr. Lopez entered into a Consent Order for engaging in inappropriate sexual contact with clients during massage and bodywork therapy sessions wherein his license was surrendered and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Jacob Miller - Prior to a hearing scheduled for October 17, 2024, Mr. Miller entered into a Consent Order for failing to ensure the safety, comfort and privacy of a client, causing internal bruising and practicing without a license wherein his license was placed on probation for two years and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Xiaomei Wan - Prior to a hearing scheduled for October 17, 2024 Ms. Wan entered into a Consent Order for aiding and abetting unlicensed practice, not completing health history and improper draping at her place of business wherein she was placed on probation for one year and she agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Jessica Lavender - Prior to a hearing scheduled for December 12, 2024, Ms. Lavender entered into a Consent Order for practicing with an expired license wherein she was placed on probation for one year and she agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$1000 and costs of \$500.

Brenton Roberson - Prior to a hearing scheduled for December 12, 2024, Mr. Roberson entered into a Consent Order for engaging in inappropriate contact with clients wherein his license was surrendered and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$500 and costs of \$500.

Julius Smith - Prior to a hearing scheduled for December 12, 2024, Mr. Smith entered into a Consent Order for engaging in inappropriate sexual contact with a client during a massage and bodywork therapy session wherein his license was surrendered and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$500 and costs of \$250.

Daniel Talavera - Prior to a hearing scheduled for December 12, 2024, Mr. Talavera entered into a Consent Order for engaging in inappropriate contact with a client during a massage and bodywork therapy session wherein his license surrendered and he agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$500 and costs of \$250.

CONDITIONAL LICENSES:

The License Standards Committee of the Board issued twenty-four (24) Conditional Licenses to persons whose applications showed evidence of past minor criminal behavior, possibility of practicing without a license, education deficiency or other minor improper conduct.

NOTICE OF POTENTIAL VIOLATION:

There were eight (8) Notices served on persons for allegedly practicing without a license or aiding and abetting unlicensed practice and twenty-three (23) Notices served on businesses upon information they were allowing a person to practice massage and bodywork therapy without a North Carolina license.

INDIVIDUALS:

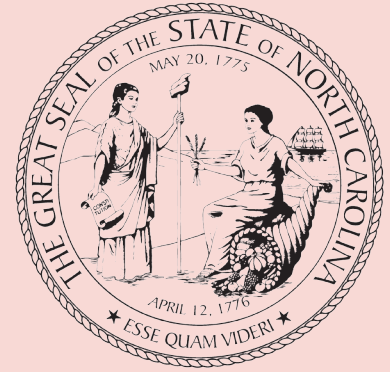
Kayla McKenzie.....Charlotte
Sheree Jenson.....Zebulon
Diana Da Lupo.....Asheville
Kendra Ramirez.....Asheville
John Michaels.....Wilson
Derlis Brito.....Charlotte
Tammy Drummon-Rowland.....Rutherfordton
Jerome Ikard.....Statesville

BUSINESSES:

Asian Relaxation.....Wilmington
Sunshine Spa.....Concord
Eastern Massage.....Fayetteville
Harmony Foot Massage.....Fayetteville
Healing Massage Spa.....Fayetteville
Skin Care and Body Treatment.....Fayetteville
Sunshine Health Spa.....Raleigh
Wellness Self Help Spa.....Fayetteville
Lotus Day Spa.....Fayetteville
Gin Spa.....Greenville
HF Spa.....Burlington
Le's Foot Massage.....Mebane
Mystic Massage and Reflexology.....Wilmington
Sunshine East Foot Spa.....Raleigh
Eden Massage.....Fayetteville
Lin's Massage/Echo Spa.....Fayetteville
Relax Wellness Spa.....Concord
Ran Spa.....Cary
Heaven Aroma Massage.....Apex
Relax Tuina Spa.....Raleigh
Green Spa.....Chapel Hill
H&H Nail Spa.....Sneads Ferry
Oasis Spa.....Winston Salem

DENIAL OF LICENSE:

The Board denied licenses to fourteen (14) applicants. Four (4) applicants were denied a license because the curriculum of the massage school they attended did not meet the Board's minimum requirements: Nonye Agbasi, Chunhua Dickey, Peixin Dun, Trinity Franklin. Eight (8) applicants were denied a license due to lack of moral character and/or not meeting the standards to be licensed as a LMBT: Dan Cui, Kacey Foster, Jai Jin Ko, Kooi Lew, Xiu Li, William Thompson, Robert Wooten, Haihong Yang. One (1) applicant was denied due to not appearing for an interview: In Bok Lee. One (1) applicant was denied for proficiency in English: Zongxian Zhang.



Official Newsletter
NORTH CAROLINA BOARD of
MASSAGE & BODYWORK
THERAPY

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Website: www.bmbt.org

Offices are located in the
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Members of the Board

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Laura Ford, LMBT
Christopher Grubb, MD
Nancy Harrell LMBT
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Charles P. Wilkins
Legal Counsel
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Legal Counsel
Elizabeth Kirk
Administrative Director
Anna Pace
Assistant Administrative Director
Elizabeth Kirk
Newsletter Editor

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE!

www.bmbt.org

The Board Website is your
Online Source for Information

The website provides an easily accessible source for information on the licensing program and activities of the Board. There are individual pages which give you information about:

- Applying for LMBT Licensure
- Applying for Establishment Licensure
- License Renewals
- Online License Verification
- Update your Personal Profile
- How to Contact the Board
- Board Members and Professional Staff
- Board Meeting Schedule
- Board Approved Schools
- How to File a Complaint
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Links to Other Agencies and Organizations
- News and Announcements

A feature, called the DOCUMENT CENTER, is a popular page on the site. From this location, you can view and/or download many of the important documents which are part of the licensing program. These include:

Practice Act and Rules
Modalities Requiring Licensure in North Carolina
Advertising Requirements for LMBTs and Establishments
License Information and Application
License Renewal
Massage Therapy Schools
Name Change Form
Fee Schedule
Formal Complaint Form