



# State Board of Massage Therapy Examiners

METRO EXECUTIVE BUILDING  
4201 PATTERSON AVENUE • SUITE 301  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21215

## OPEN SESSION MINUTES **TELECONFERENCE STAKEHOLDERS FORUM**

April 27, 2020  
10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. EST

### Members Present

Paula K. Jilani, LMT, Board Chair  
Caitlin M. Thompson, LMT, Vice Chair  
Gwenda Harrison, LMT, Board Member  
Diane Jones Richards, Consumer Member

### Non-Members Present

Sharon J. Oliver, MBA, Executive Director  
Grant Gerber, AAG, Board Counsel  
Amelia Mitchell, LMT, AMTA-MD  
Christine Hoober, AMTA  
Laura Embleton, AMTA  
Tara McManaway, LMT  
Lorena Haynes, FSMTB

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Call to Order at 10:00 a.m. Caitlin Thompson, Chair, Advisory Committee.

Introductions of participants.

Reviewed the goals, procedures, and policy for the Definition of Massage Forum.

Discussion:

- a. Agreed upon issues by our panel of experts, either unanimously or by majority:
  - i. The removal of the terminology “electromagnetic” or “energy field” or any derivation of those concepts. Logic: The way we view massage has changed and these terms are no longer prevalent. Also, it is impossible to regulate non-physical energy work or an energetic field and this language only serves to create more loopholes within our definition.
  - ii. Our definition of massage therapy will be most effective if we frame it as “the application” of massage, as opposed to the “explanation” of massage. The definition should move away from philosophies and instead focus on the very literal physical application of massage, which includes: compression, gliding, stroking, kneading, vibration, friction, pressure. Logic: Defining massage based on the actions occurring during massage would allow for modalities such as reflexology, “Thai Yoga”, and Rolfing to be firmly identifiable as massage therapy. It would also exclude modalities that don’t fit within those actions, such as Reiki.
  - iii. The traditional Asian “bodywork” practices that have been excluded from our scope of practice since massage’s inception in MD are absolutely massage therapy and need to be included in our scope. Logic: Not only do these modalities squarely fit within the



- definition of massage based on application of techniques, they are the modalities often used as loopholes to avoid licensure.
- iv. References to clothing should be omitted from our ideal definition of massage. Logic: Referencing clothing only serves as a loophole.
- b. Topics the panel of expert stakeholders would like to see at our next Forum:
- i. The tiered system.
  - ii. Educational requirements for LMTs vs. RMPs.
  - iii. Differences in what is being taught in the proprietary schools vs. community colleges.
  - iv. Guidance to how many hours it should require to educate someone to the level of RMP vs. LMT.

Closing: Gratitude for our invited participants and everyone who was on the call. Next Forum will be held May 18, 2020, Monday at 10:00 am EST.