

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2025 REGULAR SESSION**

**Introduced**

### **Senate Bill 496**

BY SENATORS THORNE AND RUCKER

[Introduced February 14, 2025; referred  
to the Committee on Government Organization]



1 A BILL to amend and reenact §30-37-2 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
2 to massage therapists; and clarifying the definition of "massage therapy".

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

## **ARTICLE 37. MASSAGE THERAPISTS.**

### **§30-37-2. Definitions.**

1 (a) "Board" means the West Virginia Massage Therapy Licensure Board.

2 (b) "Massage therapist" means a person licensed to practice the health care service of  
3 massage therapy under this article who practices or administers massage therapy to a client of  
4 either gender for compensation. No person licensed by the massage therapy licensure board may  
5 be referred to as a primary care provider nor be permitted to use such designation.

6 (c) "Massage therapy" means a health care service which is a scientific and skillful  
7 manipulation of soft tissue for therapeutic or remedial purposes, specifically for improving muscle  
8 tone, circulation, promoting health and physical well-being. Massage therapy includes massage,  
9 myotherapy, massotherapy, bodywork, bodywork therapy, or therapeutic massage including  
10 hydrotherapy, superficial hot and cold applications, vibration and topical applications or other  
11 therapies which involve manipulation of the muscle and connective tissue of the body, for the  
12 purpose of enhancing health, reducing stress, improving circulation, aiding muscle relaxation,  
13 increasing range of motion, or relieving neuro-muscular pain. Massage therapy does not include  
14 diagnosis or service which requires a license to practice medicine or surgery, osteopathic  
15 medicine, chiropractic, or podiatry, and does not include service performed by nurses,  
16 occupational therapists, ~~or~~ physical therapists, or energy work practitioners (including  
17 acupuncture, reiki, reflexology, qigong, sound healing, healing touch) who act under their own  
18 professional license, certificate, or registration.

19 (d) "Massage establishment" means a place of business wherein massage therapy is  
20 practiced, with a physical site or premise, including mobile sites, licensed as required by this

21 article, in which licensed massage therapists are employees or contractors practicing massage  
22 therapy on clients.

23 (e) "Sole practitioner" means a licensed massage therapist who is licensed pursuant to  
24 this article, who is not an employee or contractor of the sole practitioner or an establishment, and  
25 who provides massage therapy to clients at a specific location including, but not limited to, a rental  
26 space, home office space, offsite, or onsite space.