

# Massage, Bodywork & Somatic Therapy Examining Committee

consumer *brief*

The Massage, Bodywork and Somatic Therapy Examining Committee, regulated by the New Jersey Board of Nursing, certifies massage, bodywork and somatic therapists. The Committee consists of six members appointed by the Governor.

## **THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE IS:**

- to protect the health, safety and welfare of the people of New Jersey;
- to regulate the practice of massage, bodywork and somatic therapy; and
- to ensure that these therapies are performed in compliance with State law.

## **HOW DOES THE COMMITTEE ACCOMPLISH ITS PURPOSE?**

The Committee protects the public by:

- evaluating the qualifications of applicants;
- granting certification to those who are qualified; and
- investigating complaints of unprofessional or unethical conduct.

## **WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AS A CONSUMER IF I HAVE A COMPLAINT AGAINST A MASSAGE, BODYWORK OR SOMATIC THERAPIST?**

If you feel a massage, bodywork or somatic therapist is violating State regulations, you may file a complaint against that individual. You may obtain a complaint form by writing to the:

Massage, Bodywork and Somatic Therapy Committee  
c/o The New Jersey Board of Nursing  
P.O. Box 45010  
Newark, NJ 07101

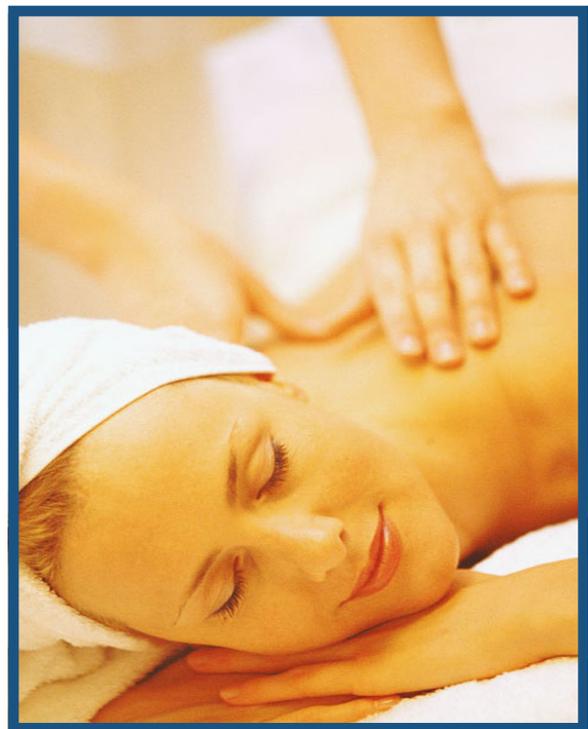
calling the Committee at: **973-504-6430**,  
or by visiting: [www.njconsumeraffairs.gov](http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov), then clicking on  
**Boards & Committees, Massage and Bodywork.**

## **HOW ARE COMPLAINTS RESOLVED?**

If the complaint is within the Committee's jurisdiction:

- the complaint may be referred to an investigator who may contact you for additional information;

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- the therapist will be asked to respond to your complaint; and
- the Committee will evaluate the complaint and the response from the therapist and determine if the complaint involves a violation of law.

### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- If a violation did occur, the Committee may revoke, suspend or fail to renew the individual's certification. The Committee may also impose monetary penalties or take other appropriate action.
- During disciplinary proceedings, certified therapists may be represented by an attorney and are given the right to demonstrate their compliance with the law. Once the Committee has taken action against an individual, he/she has the right to appeal that action to the Appellate Division of Superior Court.
- You will be notified of the outcome, in writing, when the investigation of the complaint is concluded.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### *What is massage, bodywork and somatic therapy?*

*Massage* is the application of soft-tissue manipulation techniques to the body, generally intended to reduce stress and fatigue while improving circulation.

*Bodywork* involves a variety of touch therapies that may use manipulation, movement, and/or repatterning to affect structural changes to the body.

*Somatic* means "of the body." The term refers to a body/mind or whole-body approach instead of a physiology-only perspective.

There are more than 200 variations of massage, bodywork and somatic therapies and many practitioners utilize multiple techniques.

#### *What are some of the techniques used?*

Some of the techniques utilized may include, but are not limited to: stroking, kneading, tapping, compression, vibration, rocking, friction and pressure to the muscular structure or soft tissues of the human body. The use of oils, lotions and powders may also be used to reduce friction on the skin.

#### *Do I need a prescription to see a massage therapist?*

No. While your doctor may recommend massage, a prescription is not required.

#### *What are the benefits of therapeutic massage/bodywork?*

Therapeutic massage and bodywork can improve circulation, help to loosen contracted muscles and stimulate weakened muscles. They also aid relaxation, help to reduce stress, improve flexibility and relieve pain from injuries and muscle spasms.

**Note:** Massage, bodywork and somatic therapy practices are designed to affect the energetic system of the body for the purpose of promoting and maintaining the health and well-being of the client. They do not include the diagnosis or treatment of illness, disease, impairment or disability.

### New Jersey Office of the Attorney General DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS



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