



Legislative Update & Washington State Reflexology Certification Requirements by Liz Pyle, NBCR

March 15, 2013

Status of the Rules

Another draft of the rules for the new reflexology law (ESSB6103) was issued by the Department of Health (DOH) after the 2/19/13 stakeholder's meeting in Tumwater. The Department of Health is in the process of evaluating comments and feedback on this draft, and as the clock ticks toward July 1 (the date the new reflexology law takes effect), we're waiting to receive a final copy of the rules.

The DOH will make the changes they believe are appropriate. Once they have the final draft of the rules, they will file a "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking" and a copy of the rules will be filed with the Code Reviser and published in the Register. A notice will be sent out to all interested parties and a public meeting will be scheduled (sign up on the DOH LISTSERV if you haven't already). The meeting or hearing will be open to everyone and anyone can speak. After the hearing, the DOH will determine if any additional changes are necessary. If so, it starts again, changes are made, notices filed and another meeting may be scheduled if the changes are substantial enough to warrant it. Luckily, we feel that one hearing should be enough!

Once the DOH rules have been declared final, they will be adopted, and a notification will be sent out to all stakeholders. Typically a rule becomes effective 31 days after it is filed.

Approved Schools

Once the rules are final, the process for schools to apply to become approved by the DOH Secretary will be open. School programs must comply with the rules set by the law. The curriculum hours must break down to meet the following minimum requirements:

- 30 hours of reflexology theory, history, zones, reflex points, relaxation response and contraindications;
- 40 hours of study of body systems as related to reflexology; the study of the leg, feet, hands and outer ears as structures; hands-on palpation of landmarks with sensory identification of palpated areas, a map of reflexes as they are anatomically reflected

on the feet, hands and outer ears; and how the reflexes are affected by stimulation to the feet, hands and outer ears through hands-on experience;

- 30 hours of anatomy and physiology;
- 5 hours of business practice involving ethics, business standards and local/ state laws and ordinances pertaining to the practice of reflexology;
- 25 hours or more of supervised practicum or clinical work;
- 70 hours of additional homework that can include giving and documenting client sessions as well as other written work.

Reflexology Practitioner Certification

The next step in the process is to open up registration for individual reflexologists to apply for certification. To become a Certified Reflexologist, an applicant must:

1. Provide a completed application on forms provided by the DOH Secretary (*not available yet*);
2. Pay applicable fees as defined in WAC 246-831-990;
 - Initial Certification Credential \$50 (*includes background check*)
 - Annual Certification Renewal \$40
 - *Credentials must be renewed every year on the practitioner's birthday as provided in chapter 246-12 WAC, Part 2.*
3. Be eighteen years of age or older; and
4. Provide evidence of:
 - a. completion of a reflexology education program approved by the Secretary;
 - b. completion of an examination approved by the Secretary (*ARCB written exam is approved and likely to be used - approx. cost \$250*);
 - c. completion of a jurisprudence examination (*an open book test about the law regarding reflexology - cost is included as part of initial certification fee*)
 - d. four hours of AIDS education and training as set in chapter 246-12 WAC, Part 8 (*fees range from \$15-90, see info elsewhere in this newsletter*), and
 - e. any additional documents or information requested by the Secretary.

Certification will not be issued to any person who is or has been convicted of violating RCW 9A.88.030, 9A.88.070, 9A.88.080, or 9A.88.090 or equivalent local ordinances.

After July 1, 2013, "Reflexologist" is a protected title in the State of WA. This means that reflexologists and LMPs who have not fulfilled the above requirements (or been grandfathered in) by July 1 cannot legally practice reflexology in WA until they receive their State Reflexology Certification. Other licensed professionals, such as estheticians, cosmetologists, nail techs, doctors, nurses, ministers, etc. must also acquire State Certification in order to practice reflexology after July 1.

Grandfathering Clause

Before stressing about how much this is going to cost you, know this: reflexologists may apply to grandfather in (i.e. waive the \$250 written exam requirement) if they complete all required educational training *prior* to July 1, 2013 *and* apply for State certification between July 1, 2013 - July 1, 2104 (or earlier if the application is available from DOH before July 1). Grandfathering is also open to licensed massage practitioners who have practiced reflexology for at least 5 years prior to July 1, 2013. *You can begin to apply for grandfathering as soon as the application is available, which will happen after the rules are finalized.*

Washington State Certification Exam

Currently the certification examination approved by the State is the written portion of the ARCB exam. The ARCB is an independent testing agency and since their test is psychometrically developed, it meets the guidelines for approval by the Secretary. To date, the ARCB is the only agency who has completed the process to become an approved test.

The State's written exam will be administered by ARCB, in order to maintain the integrity of the test. ARCB has agreed to provide testing to WA reflexologists more often than once / year when there are 8 or more reflexologists requesting an alternate testing date (*if you meet the requirements to be grandfathered in, you will not have to take the written test to become a WA State Certified Reflexologist*). It's important to note that although an applicant may pass the written portion of the ARCB exam as part of the WA State Reflexology Certification process, this does not fully qualify the applicant for ARCB certification. You must also complete the practical and oral portions of the ARCB test to be Nationally Certified.

Almost There

That covers the broad strokes. We're close but not done yet. The cost of legislation has been steep. The WRA retains a lobbyist but the majority of the legwork has been done by our member volunteers - volunteers who are invested in educating the public on the benefits of reflexology, and on the need to eradicate the human trafficking element from our profession. We could not have done this without their help.

Our Legislative Committee volunteers have attended every meeting in Olympia, representing legitimate reflexologists across Washington State (both members and non-members). This has resulted in measurable improvements in reflexology standards within the new law. We've refined our scope of practice to be in line with national standards and in July 2013, the law will have the teeth to eliminate illicit practices. We have a lot to be proud of. But we're not done yet. We encourage everyone to stay vigilant and consider the

plight of the victims of human trafficking and do your best to educate yourself on what you can do to help. How to stay informed:

Washington Enagage - <http://waengage.com>
Information & tools to combat human trafficking.

DOH Reflexology Page

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/ProfessionsNewReneworUpdate/Reflexologist.aspx>

DOH Listserv - <http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?A0=REFLEXOLOGIST>

Receive notice of public meetings and email updates on the new reflexology law.

WRA Membership

Membership dues fund our lobbying efforts in Olympia. Keep reflexology safe and legal in WA by renewing your membership today and encouraging other reflexologists to join WRA. Visit <http://www.washingtonreflexology.org/membership> for details.

WRA Legislative Committee

WRA is grateful to our Legislative Committee volunteers who have contributed countless hours to understand the changes in the reflexology law and to represent our interests in Olympia. We still need additional help during this transition process. Contact Liz Pyle, lizpyle@gmail.com to volunteer for this Committee.

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