



Legislative Update

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Legislative Committee Chair

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Effective July 1, 2013, you must be certified by the State of Washington in order to practice reflexology legally.

Who is considered a Certified Reflexologist?

Up until this point, a reflexologist who completed a comprehensive training program commonly referred to themselves as a “certified reflexologist.” The new law in Washington changes this definition. *After July 1, to be able to refer to yourself as a certified reflexologist (and to practice), you must apply for and be granted official certification by the State of Washington.*

In order to be certified, you must prove that you have completed a reflexology education program which is approved by the DOH, complete and pass the online jurisprudence exam, complete 4 hours of AIDS training, pay a fee, and pass the written exam. You can request a “waiver of examination” (grandfathering) if you have completed your educational requirements prior to July 1, 2013 *and* you apply for certification before July 1, 2014.

What does “waiver of examination” mean?

First, the examination which was approved by the State of Washington is the written portion of the ARCB exam. The law required an exam that was prepared or administered, or both, by a private testing agency or association of licensing boards. The DOH was given the responsibility and authority to choose an exam or develop their own. The law did *not* allow the DOH to delegate the exam preparation and testing of applicants to the reflexology schools.

ARCB was approached by the DOH because, as an independent testing agency with no affiliation with any school or educational program, they had a psychometrically-challenged exam which was legally defensible. The DOH and ARCB reached an agreement to use only

the written portion of the exam, thus eliminating any subjective issues of tactile and technique differences on the test.

The waiver of examination is the closest thing that we, as reflexologists, have to a “grandfathering clause” in the law. This option is available to reflexologists who have completed all of the above application requirements prior to July 1, 2013 and apply for certification prior to July 1, 2014. This does not mean that a reflexologist can wait until 2014 to apply if they want to practice. *It just gives a period of time for a person currently practicing reflexology to bypass the state-approved written exam as part of the application process.* After July 1, 2013, you cannot legally practice reflexology if/ until you receive your WA State Certification.

Which school / programs are approved?

As of June 14, 2013, one of Seattle Reflexology & Massage Center’s education programs has officially been approved by the DOH. This is the first approved program in WA State. If your school or program has a website, check to see if they have updated information or contact the administrator to inquire about their application/ approval status.

Should I apply for certification now if my school has not yet been approved?

The short answer is YES. The school approvals and the reflexologist certifications are two separate processes. When a reflexologist applies, they must also forward the Reflexology School Verification form in the application packet to their school, and the school must complete it then return it to the DOH.

If a school does not respond or if the school is not approved, the reflexologist will receive a letter of deficiency from the DOH credentialing office letting them know that their school either hasn’t applied yet or has not received approval. Waiting until the school has received approval will delay your application further and this will keep you from practicing legally since the expected time for processing a reflexologist’s application is around four weeks. If your school has not submitted an application, encourage them to do so right away! Applications for both reflexology schools and practitioners are available on the DOH website (link provided at end of this article).

What if my school / program does not apply to be approved in the State of Washington?

If a reflexology school does not apply and/or fails to be approved, the student has the option to have their transcripts from the “unapproved” program sent to an “approved” program for review. An approved program can transfer the student’s credits (if they choose to) and graduate them from the approved school. It’s still very early in the process, since

schools are just applying for State approval themselves. They may not have plans (yet) to accept transcripts from other programs.

There is no way we can predict exactly how this will work, but it is strongly suggested that before contacting an “approved” school, you obtain a copy of your complete transcript, showing the number of hours you completed broken down into the state’s specific curriculum requirements (available on the DOH website). It will not be enough to say, “I completed this program of 200 or more hours.” If you are interested in pursuing this option, dig through your files now, get organized and have all of your information ready.

Remember, the State’s certification process is new for all of us and as time goes by, it will become more streamlined. The new reflexology law was introduced to reduce the specter of human trafficking operating under the guise of reflexology. Ultimately, it will raise the level of professional standards and elevate the practice of reflexology in Washington State.

To download the application form or check the status of your application, visit: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/ProfessionsNewReneworUpdate/Reflexologist/ApplicationsandForms.aspx>