

COVID-19 Notification

Information in Reference to the Reopening of Massage Establishments:

Proclamation 74 JBE 2020 provides in Section 2, G), 7), a) - d) that Massage Establishments may continue operations subject to stated conditions. Please see below.

- 7) All other businesses or organizations shall be allowed to continue operations, subject to the following conditions:
- No establishments shall exceed 50% of the total occupancy as determined by the State Fire Marshal.
 - All employees and owners of such businesses shall maintain social distancing to the extent possible between themselves and members of the public and shall wear face coverings at all times if interacting with the public.
 - Waiting rooms, lobbies, or other areas where members of the public may congregate (except for bathrooms) shall be closed to the public. Members of the public should be required to wait outside, while maintaining social distancing, or in vehicles.
 - Any business operating pursuant to this subsection shall follow the applicable guidance from the State Fire Marshal published at opensafely.la.gov and the Louisiana Department of Health with regard to sanitization and disinfection.

SECTION 6: Unless otherwise provided in this order, these provisions are effective from Friday, June 5, 2020 to Friday, June 26, 2020, or as extended by any subsequent Proclamation, unless terminated sooner.

To read Proclamation 74 JBE 2020 click [here](#) or visit gov.louisiana.gov.

Information in Reference to Guidelines for Reopening:

The Louisiana Board of Massage Therapy ("LBMT") is an active member of the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards ("FSMTB"). The LBMT, like Massage Therapy Boards in other states, has been receiving numerous inquiries from massage therapists and massage establishments as to guidelines and protocols that should be followed once individuals and businesses engaged in the practice of massage therapy are permitted to reopen. In response to requests from its Members, the FSMTB has recently issued "Guidelines for Practice with COVID-19 Considerations" ("Guidelines") which are recommendations and guidelines for massage and bodywork practitioners to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The FSMTB relied on numerous resources to develop the Guidelines and has authorized its Member Boards to use the Guidelines as deemed appropriate to regulate the practice of massage therapy for the benefit of the public. The "Guidelines for Practice with COVID-19 Considerations" document can be accessed at fsmtb.org.

In making the Guidelines available on its website and as noted in the Guidelines document itself, therapists and establishments should be aware that the recommendations of the LBMT do not replace any directives or guidance provided by any federal or state agencies, regulatory boards or authorities having jurisdiction. The LBMT has previously posted on its website references to guidelines and directives issued by the Louisiana Department of Health as well as other agencies recommended by the Louisiana Governor's office. While the LBMT believes that the FSMTB Guidelines are a valuable source of information, the LBMT cannot independently verify the effectiveness of or enforce the procedures and policies recommended. The guidelines are provided for information use only for licensees, and they have not been verified or endorsed by the Board. These recommendations and guidelines do not replace any directives or guidelines by federal agencies or contained in Louisiana law, rules, regulations, and Executive Orders and Proclamations issued by the Governor. Where conflicts occur, licensees must refer to and be in compliance with the stricter requirement of the various provisions at all times.

Additional Websites in reference to guidelines for reopening:

opensafely.la.gov
ldh.la.gov

Information in reference to Proclamations issued by Governor John Bel Edwards:

Proclamation 58 JBE 2020 provided that "Massage Establishments" are to remain closed at least until June 5, 2020 or until further orders are issued. A "Massage Establishment" is defined in La. R.S.37:3552 (7) as follows:

"Massage Establishment" means any place of business that offers the practice of massage therapy and where the practice of massage therapy is conducted on the premises of the business. A place of business includes any office, clinic, facility, or other location where a person or persons engage in the practice of massage therapy. The residence of a therapist or an out-call location which is not owned, rented, or leased by a massage therapist or massage establishment shall not be considered a massage establishment, unless the location is advertised as the therapist's or establishment's place of business. The term "massage establishment" shall not include physician offices, physical therapy facilities, chiropractic offices, or athletic training facilities, whether or not they employ, contract with, or rent to massage therapists, or institutions of secondary or higher education when massage therapy is practiced in connection with employment related to athletic teams.

The Board office sought clarification on the issue and has been advised that the most recent proclamation ordering closure applies only to "Massage Establishments" that are open to the public. The order would not apply to massage therapists who perform services at specific offices/facilities which are excluded from statutory definition of a "massage establishment" and are otherwise allowed to operate under the recent proclamation. In addition, it appears the emergency authority under which the proclamation was issued would not prohibit a licensed massage therapist from providing massage services on an out-call basis at a location that was not open to the general public.

A massage therapist electing to provide services on an out-call basis or at offices/facilities which are not considered a "massage establishment" should practice the state's recommended safety and sanitary guidelines to protect themselves and their clients. Those guidelines can be referenced at ldh.la.gov and opensafely.la.gov .

Proclamations issued by Governor John Bel Edwards:

gov.louisiana.gov

Information in reference to Renewal Date Extension:

Governor Edwards recently issued Proclamation 58 JBE 2020 which extends the shutdown of certain non-essential services, including specifically massage establishments and spas (Section 2 (E)), through June 5, 2020. Section 3 (I) of Proclamation 59 grants state departments and agencies the authority to extend "non-essential deadlines for a period of no longer than 30 days." In view of the fact that massage establishments must remain shut-down under the Governor's order through at least June 5, 2020, the Louisiana Board of Massage Therapy has elected to exercise the authority granted under Proclamation 59, Section 3 (I) to extend the deadline for the licenses with the original expiration date of March 31, 2020 extended to April 30, 2020 to May 15, 2020, to May 30, 2020 will now be extended to June 30, 2020, which is the maximum allowable period authorized by the Governor's order.

As a reminder, therapists that intend to resume their practice once the Governor lifts the shut-down, should seek to renew before the new extension period expires (June 30, 2020) in order to avoid a late fee.

While LBMT does not have jurisdiction to mandate the operation of your business, the board would encourage all therapist and establishments to follow the State's guidelines on public health. For information on those guidelines, please visit ldh.la.gov .

The website will be updated when new information is available.

The LBMT staff will be available to assist you as this COVID-19 pandemic allows. Please address any questions to admin@labmt.org .