**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 40‑30‑30, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS CONCERNING THE MASSAGE/BODYWORK PRACTICE ACT, SO AS TO DELETE THE DEFINITION OF THE DISCIPLINARY PANEL; TO AMEND SECTION 40‑30‑40, RELATING TO THE ADVISORY PANEL FOR MASSAGE/BODYWORK THERAPY UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING AND REGULATION, SO AS TO REDESIGNATE THE ADVISORY PANEL TO BE KNOWN AS THE PANEL, TO DELETE CERTAIN QUALIFICATIONS FOR PANEL MEMBERS, TO REDUCE THE TERM OF A PANEL MEMBER TO TWO YEARS, AND TO PROVIDE COMPENSATION FOR MEMBERS; TO AMEND SECTION 40‑30‑50, RELATING TO DUTIES OF THE PANEL, SO AS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL DUTIES AND POWERS; TO AMEND SECTIONS 40‑30‑220, RELATING TO EQUITABLE REMEDIES AVAILABLE TO THE PANEL, 40‑30‑230, RELATING TO GROUNDS OF MISCONDUCT, 40‑30‑240, RELATING TO INVESTIGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT RELATED TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE, 40‑30‑250, RELATING TO DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS, 40‑30‑260, RELATING TO VOLUNTARY SURRENDER OF A LICENSE, 40‑30‑270, RELATING TO APPEALS FROM DISCIPLINARY PANEL DECISIONS, 40‑30‑300, RELATING TO SERVICE OF PROCESS ON NONRESIDENTS, AND 40‑30‑310, RELATING TO CIVIL PENALTIES, ALL SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES; TO AMEND SECTION 40‑30‑60, RELATING TO USE OF EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT AND PROMULGATION OF REGULATIONS BY THE BOARD, SO AS TO REMOVE OBSOLETE REFERENCES; TO AMEND SECTION 40‑30‑90, RELATING TO REPORTING REQUIREMENTS, SO AS TO REMOVE AN OBSOLETE REFERENCE; AND TO AMEND SECTION 40‑30‑110, RELATING TO QUALIFICATIONS FOR LICENSURE, SO AS TO REQUIRE CLASSROOM STUDY INSTEAD OF SUPERVISED STUDY, AND TO SPECIFY PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATIONS CONSIDERED ACCEPTABLE FOR LICENSURE; AND TO REPEAL SECTION 40‑30‑65 RELATING TO THE CREATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE DISCIPLINARY PANEL, SECTION 40‑30‑70 RELATING TO DUTIES OF THE DISCIPLINARY PANEL, AND SECTION 40‑30‑210 RELATING TO PROCEDURES BEFORE THE DISCIPLINARY PANEL.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 40‑30‑30 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑30. As used in this chapter:

(1) ‘Advisory panel’ means the Advisory Panel for Massage/Bodywork under the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.

(2) ‘Approved massage/bodywork school’ means a facility which meets minimum standards for training and curriculum as determined by regulation of the department.

(3) ‘Department’ means the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.

(4) ‘Director’ means the Director of the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.

(5) ~~‘Disciplinary panel’ means the Disciplinary Panel for Massage/Bodywork under the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.~~

~~(6)~~ ‘Hydrotherapy’ means the use of water, vapor, or ice for treatment of superficial tissues.

(~~7~~6) ‘Licensure’ means the procedure by which a person applies to the department and is granted approval to practice massage/bodywork.

(~~8~~7) ‘Massage/bodywork therapy’ means the application of a system of structured touch of the superficial tissues of the human body with the hand, foot, arm, or elbow whether or not the structured touch is aided by hydrotherapy, thermal therapy, a massage device, human hands, or the application to the human body of an herbal preparation.

(~~9~~8) ‘Massage/bodywork therapist’ means a person licensed as required by this chapter, who administers massage/bodywork therapy for compensation.

(~~10~~9) ‘Massage device’ means a mechanical device which mimics or enhances the actions possible by the hands by means of vibration.

(~~11~~10) ‘Thermal therapy’ means the use of ice or a heat lamp or moist heat on superficial tissues.”

SECTION 2. Section 40‑30‑40 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑40. (A) There is created ~~the Advisory~~ a Panel for Massage/Bodywork under the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. The ~~advisory~~ panel consists of ~~five~~ seven members appointed by the Governor. ~~The members of the advisory panel must be licensed massage/bodywork therapists and must have been engaged in the practice of massage/bodywork for not fewer than three consecutive years before appointment to the advisory panel and must be appointed by the Governor. Each advisory~~ A panel member must be a high school graduate or shall have received a graduate equivalency diploma. Each advisory panel member must be a citizen of the United States and a resident of this State for not fewer than five years.

(B) Nominations for appointment to the ~~advisory~~ panel may be submitted to the Governor from any individual, group, or association.

(C) Members serve a term of ~~four~~ two years and until their successors are appointed and qualify. A vacancy on the ~~advisory~~ panel must be filled in the manner of the original appointment for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(D) Members of the panel must be compensated for their services at the usual rate for mileage, subsistence, and per diem as provided by law for members of state boards, committees, and commissions and must be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in connection with and as a result of their work as members of the panel. Compensation and reimbursements paid to panel members under this subsection must be paid as an expense of the panel in the administration of this chapter.

(~~D~~E) The Governor may remove a member of the advisory panel in accordance with Section 1‑3‑240.”

SECTION 3. Section 40‑30‑50 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑50. (A) The duties of the ~~advisory~~ panel are to advise and recommend action to the department in the development of regulations, statutory revisions, disciplinary matters, and ~~such~~ other matters as the department may request ~~in regard to~~ regarding the administration of this chapter.

(B) The panel shall:

(1) conduct hearings on alleged violations of this chapter and regulations promulgated under this chapter;

(2) conduct hearings where licensure is not appropriate at staff level;

(3) mediate consumer complaints, where appropriate and possible; and

(4) recommend discipline for persons licensed under this chapter in any manner provided for in this chapter.

(C) The panel may administer oaths and, upon its own motion or upon request of any party, shall subpoena witnesses, compel their attendance, take evidence, and require the production of any matter which is relevant to the investigation including, but not limited to, the existence, description, nature, custody, condition, and location of any books, documents, or other tangible items and the identity and location of persons having knowledge of relevant facts or any other matter reasonably calculated to lead to the discover of material evidence. Upon failure to obey a subpoena or to answer questions propounded by the panel, the panel may apply pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act to an administrative law judge for an order requiring the person to appear before the panel and to produce documentary evidence and give other evidence concerning the matter under inquiry.”

SECTION 4. Section 40‑30‑220 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑220. (A)(1) When the ~~disciplinary~~ panel or the department has reason to believe that a person is violating or intends to violate a provision of this chapter or a regulation promulgated under this chapter, in addition to all other remedies, it may order the person to immediately cease and desist from engaging in the conduct. If the person is practicing massage/bodywork without being licensed under this chapter the ~~disciplinary~~ panel or the department also may apply to an administrative law judge for a temporary restraining order prohibiting the unlawful practice. The administrative law judge may issue a temporary restraining order ex parte and the ~~disciplinary~~ panel or the department is not required to:

(~~1~~a) post a bond;

(~~2~~b) establish the absence of an adequate remedy at law;

(~~3~~c) establish that irreparable damage would result from the continued violation.

(2) ~~No disciplinary~~ A panel member ~~nor~~, the ~~Director of the Department of Labor, Licensing or Regulation nor any other~~ director, or other employee of the department may not be held liable for damages resulting from a wrongful temporary restraining order.

(B) In accordance with the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure, the disciplinary panel or the department also may seek from an administrative law judge other equitable relief to enjoin the violation or intended violation of this chapter or a regulation promulgated under this chapter.”

SECTION 5. Section 40‑30‑230 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑230. The following constitute misconduct and are grounds for the department denying initial licensure to or the disciplinary panel taking ~~disciplinary~~ action against a person who:

(1) used a false, fraudulent, or forged statement or document or committed a fraudulent, deceitful, or dishonest act in applying for licensure under this chapter;

(2) has had his license to practice massage/bodywork from another state or jurisdiction canceled, revoked, suspended, or otherwise restricted;

(3) has violated a provision of this chapter, a regulation promulgated under this chapter, or an order of the department or the ~~disciplinary~~ panel;

(4) has intentionally or knowingly, directly or indirectly, aided or abetted in the violation or conspiracy to violate this chapter or a regulation promulgated under this chapter;

(5) has intentionally used a fraudulent statement in a document connected to the practice of massage/bodywork or has made false, deceptive, or misleading statements in the practice of massage/bodywork or in advertising;

(6) has obtained fees or assisted in obtaining fees under intentionally fraudulent circumstances;

(7) has committed dishonorable, unethical, or unprofessional conduct that is likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public;

(8) lacks the professional or ethical competence to practice massage/bodywork;

(9) has been convicted of or has pled guilty to or nolo contendere to a felony or a crime which directly relates to the practice or ability to practice massage/bodywork;

(10) has practiced massage/bodywork while under the influence of alcohol or drugs or uses alcohol or drugs to such a degree as to render him unfit to practice massage/bodywork;

(11) has sustained a physical or mental disability, as determined by a physician, which renders further practice by the licensee dangerous to the public.”

SECTION 6. Section 40‑30‑240 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑240. When investigating grounds for taking disciplinary action based upon an alcohol or drug addiction, as provided for in Section 40‑30‑230(10), or a physical or mental disability, as provided for in Section 40‑30‑230(11), the ~~disciplinary~~ panel upon reasonable grounds may:

(1) require an applicant or licensee to submit to a mental or physical examination including a drug test by physicians designated by the ~~disciplinary~~ panel. The results of an examination are admissible in a hearing before the ~~disciplinary~~ panel, notwithstanding a claim of privilege under a contrary rule of law. A person who accepts the privilege of practicing massage/bodywork in this State or who files an application for a license to practice massage/bodywork in this State is ~~deemed~~ considered to have consented to submit to a mental or physical examination, including a drug test, and to have waived all objections to the admissibility of the results in a hearing before the ~~disciplinary~~ panel upon the grounds that the results constitute a privileged communication. If an applicant or licensee fails to submit to an examination when requested by the ~~disciplinary~~ panel under this section, unless the failure was due to circumstances beyond the person’s control, the ~~disciplinary~~ panel shall enter an order automatically denying or suspending the license pending compliance and further order of the ~~disciplinary~~ panel. An applicant or licensee who is prohibited from practicing under this subsection must be afforded at reasonable intervals an opportunity to demonstrate to the ~~disciplinary~~ panel the ability to resume or begin the practice of massage/bodywork with reasonable skill and safety to patients;

(2) obtain records specifically relating to the mental or physical condition of an applicant or licensee who is the subject of an investigation authorized by item (1) and these records are admissible in a hearing before the ~~disciplinary~~ panel, notwithstanding any other provision of law. A person who accepts the privilege of practicing massage/bodywork in this State or who files an application to practice massage/bodywork in this State is ~~deemed~~ considered to have consented to the ~~disciplinary~~ panel obtaining these records and to have waived all objections to the admissibility of these records in a hearing before the ~~disciplinary~~ panel upon the grounds that the records constitute a privileged communication. If a licensee or applicant refuses to sign a written consent for the ~~disciplinary~~ panel to obtain these records when requested by the ~~disciplinary~~ panel under this section, unless the failure was due to circumstances beyond the person’s control, the ~~disciplinary~~ panel shall enter an order automatically denying or suspending the license pending compliance and further order of the ~~disciplinary~~ panel. An applicant or licensee who is prohibited from practicing massage/bodywork under this section must be afforded at reasonable intervals an opportunity to demonstrate to the ~~disciplinary~~ panel the ability to resume or begin the practice of massage/bodywork with reasonable skill and safety to patients.”

SECTION 7. Section 40‑30‑250 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑250. (A) Upon a determination by the ~~disciplinary~~ panel that one or more of the grounds for discipline exists, as provided for in Section 40‑30‑230, the ~~disciplinary~~ panel may:

(1) issue a nondisciplinary letter of caution;

(2) issue a public reprimand;

(3) impose a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars;

(4) place the licensee on probation, restrict the license, or suspend the license for a definite or indefinite time and prescribe conditions to be met during probation, restriction, or suspension, respectively, including, but not limited to, satisfactory completion of additional education of a supervisory period or of continuing education programs as may be specified;

(5) permanently revoke the license.

(B) A decision by the ~~disciplinary~~ panel to discipline a licensee as authorized under this section must be made by a majority vote of the total membership of the ~~disciplinary~~ panel serving at the time the vote is taken.

(C) A final order of the department refusing to issue a license to an applicant or of the ~~disciplinary~~ panel disciplining a licensee under this section, except for a private reprimand, is public information.”

SECTION 8. Section 40‑30‑260 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑260. A licensee who is under investigation for misconduct as defined in Section 40‑30‑230 ~~for which the disciplinary panel~~ may take disciplinary action may voluntarily surrender his license to the department. The voluntary surrender invalidates the license at the time of its relinquishment, and no person whose license is surrendered voluntarily may practice as a massage/bodywork therapist until the ~~disciplinary~~ panel reinstates the license. A person practicing as a massage/bodywork therapist during the period of voluntary license surrender is considered an illegal practitioner and is subject to the penalties provided by this chapter. The surrender of a license may not be considered as an admission of guilt in a proceeding under this chapter. The surrender does not preclude the ~~disciplinary~~ panel from imposing conditions on the acceptance of the proffered surrender and does not preclude the ~~disciplinary~~ panel from taking disciplinary action against the licensee.”

SECTION 9. Section 40‑30‑270 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑270. A person aggrieved by an action of the ~~disciplinary~~ panel or the department may appeal the decision to an administrative law judge in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act. Service of a notice of appeal does not stay ~~the disciplinary panel’s or the department’s decision~~ the decision of the panel or the department pending completion of the appellate process.”

SECTION 10. Section 40‑30‑300(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A) Every communication, whether oral or written, made by or on behalf of a person, to the director or the ~~disciplinary~~ panel, whether by way of complaint or testimony, is privileged, and no action or proceeding, civil or criminal, may be brought against the person, by or on whose behalf the communication is made, except upon proof that the communication was made with malice.”

SECTION 11. Section 40‑30‑310(B) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(B) The department may institute civil action in the circuit court, in the name of the State, for injunctive relief against any person violating the provisions of this chapter or the regulations or orders of the department or ~~disciplinary~~ panel. For each violation, the court may in its discretion, impose a fine of no more than one thousand dollars.”

SECTION 12. Section 40‑30‑60 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑60. (A) ~~In accordance with Section 40‑73‑15, the Director of the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation~~ The director may employ and establish compensation for personnel the director considers necessary and appropriate for the administration of this chapter.

(B) Duties must be prescribed by the director and may include, but are not limited to:

(1) maintaining and preserving records;

(2) receiving and accounting for all monies received by the department;

(3) issuing necessary notices to licensees;

(4) determining the eligibility of applicants for examination and licensure;

(5) examining applicants for licensure including, but not limited to:

(a) prescribing the subjects, character, and manner of licensing examinations;

(b) preparing, administering, and grading the examination or contracting for the preparation, administration, or grading of the examination. Professional testing services may be utilized to formulate and administer any examinations required by the department;

(6) license and renew the licenses of qualified applicants;

(7) evaluate and approve continuing education course hours and programs;

(8) promulgate regulations to carry out this chapter including, but not limited to, establishing a code of ethics to govern the conduct and practices of persons licensed under this chapter. ~~In accordance with Section 40‑73‑15, the Director of the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation may employ and establish compensation for personnel the director considers necessary and appropriate for the administration of this chapter.~~”

SECTION 13. Section 40‑30‑90 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑90. The department shall prepare and submit an annual report on the administration of this chapter ~~in accordance with Section 40‑73‑20~~.”

SECTION 14. Section 40‑30‑110 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 40‑30‑110. To be licensed by the department as a massage/bodywork therapist a person must:

(1) be at least eighteen years of age and have received a high school diploma or graduate equivalency diploma;

(2) have completed a five hundred hour course of ~~supervised~~ classroom study at an approved massage/bodywork school having a curriculum that meets the standards as set forth in regulation by the department; and

(3) have received a passing grade on the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork~~, or any other national examination for massage/bodywork therapy that meets the educational requirements of this chapter and have been certified by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, or an examination that meets the standards recommended by the advisory panel as set forth in regulation by the department~~ (NCETMB), National Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage (NCETM), Massage Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEX), or any other examination approved in regulation by the panel, as an examination required for licensure.”

SECTION 15. Sections 40‑30‑65, 40‑30‑70, and 40‑30‑210 are repealed.

SECTION 16. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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