ARC 0716D

INSPECTIONS, APPEALS, AND LICENSING DEPARTMENT[481]

Notice of Intended Action

Proposing rulemaking related to licensure of massage therapists and providing an opportunity for public comment

The Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing hereby proposes to amend Chapter 821, "Licensure of Massage Therapists," Iowa Administrative Code.

Legal Authority for Rulemaking

This rulemaking is proposed under the authority provided in Iowa Code chapters 147, 152C, and 272C.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code chapters 147, 152C, and 272C.

Purpose and Summary

This proposed rulemaking updates the Board of Massage Therapy's rules regarding reactivation of licenses and licensing of foreign-trained graduates. This rulemaking allows the Board to issue a massage therapy license to a foreign-trained graduate who has completed an equivalency evaluation at an approved agency, eliminates outdated agency information in the current rule, and clarifies and simplifies the rules for reactivation of a massage therapy license. New rules allow the applicant whose license has been inactive for more than five years to verify active practice and 16 hours of continuing education, complete 32 hours of continuing education, or retake the examination. This provides additional pathways to reactivation rather than just the examination.

Regulatory Analysis

A Regulatory Analysis for this rulemaking was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on August 19, 2026. A public hearing was held on the following date(s):

- September 8, 2026

Fiscal Impact

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Board for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 7—Chapter 2504.

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit written comments concerning this proposed rulemaking, which must be received by the Board no later than 4:30 p.m. on December 1, 2026. Comments should be directed to:

Emily DeRonde
Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing
6200 Park Avenue

Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Email: emily.deronde@dia.iowa.gov

Public Hearing

No public hearing is scheduled at this time. As provided in Iowa Code section 17A.4(1)"b," an oral presentation regarding this rulemaking may be demanded by 25 interested persons, a governmental subdivision, the Administrative Rules Review Committee, an agency, or an association having 25 or more members.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its regular monthly meeting or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

The following rulemaking action is proposed:

ITEM 1. Amend subrule 821.3(1) as follows:

821.3(1) Provide an equivalency evaluation of their educational credentials by ~~one of the following entities~~ a board-approved agency, demonstrating the curriculum is equivalent to that stated in these rules. The applicant bears the expense of the curriculum evaluation.

~~*a.* International Education Research Foundation, Inc., Credentials Evaluation Service, P.O. Box 3665, Culver City, CA 90231-3665; telephone 310.258.9451; website www.ierf.org.~~

~~*b.* International Credentialing Associates, Inc., 7245 Bryan Dairy Road, Bryan Dairy Business Park II, Largo, FL 33777; telephone 727.549.8555.~~

~~*c.* Josef Silny & Associates, Inc., 7101 SW 102nd Avenue, Miami, FL 33173; telephone 305.273.1616; website jsilny.org.~~

ITEM 2. Rescind subrule 821.9(2) and adopt the following **new** subrule in lieu thereof:

821.9(2) The licensee shall submit all of the following:

a. A completed online application for licensure and the nonrefundable licensure fee specified in rule 481—507.8(147).

b. If licensed in another state, verification of the license from the jurisdiction in which the applicant has most recently been practicing during the time period the Iowa license was inactive, sent directly from the jurisdiction to the board office. Web-based verification may be substituted for verification from a jurisdiction's board office if the verification includes:

(1) Licensee's name;

(2) Date of initial licensure;

(3) Current licensure status; and

(4) Any disciplinary action taken against the license.

c. If the license has been inactive for five years or less, proof of completion of 16 hours of continuing education within two years of application.

d. If the license has been on inactive status for more than five years:

(1) Proof of completion of 16 hours of continuing education within two years of application and proof of two years of active, licensed practice in another issuing jurisdiction immediately prior to submitting the application;

(2) Proof of completion of 32 hours of continuing education to include 16 hours of in-person, clinical training; or

(3) Proof of passing one of the following examinations within two years of submitting the application:

1. The National Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage (NCETM);
2. The National Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCETMB);

3. The National Examination for States Licensing (NESL) option; or
4. The Massage and Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx).