

Board of Massage Therapy
Substantive Policy Statement
SP-MT-004

Clarification of A.R.S. § 32-4223 for Reciprocity

This substantive policy is advisory only. A substantive policy statement does not include internal procedural documents that only affect the internal procedures of the agency and does not impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties or include confidential information or rules made in accordance with the Arizona Administrative Procedure Act. If you believe that this substantive policy does impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties, you may petition the agency under Arizona Revised Statutes Section 41-1033 for a review of this statement.

The purpose of this substantive policy statement is to clarify the requirements in A.R.S. § 32-4223 (A)(1) and (A)(2), which allow the Board to license an applicant by reciprocity if either of the following applies:

1. The applicant has been licensed continuously in another state for the last five years preceding the filing of an application and the other state has standards for massage therapists that are substantially equivalent to those in this state; or
2. The applicant holds a current certification from the national certification board for therapeutic massage and bodywork or another agency that meets the standards of the national organization on competency assurance and received education and training substantially equivalent to that required by this chapter.

Regarding the first provision, if an applicant has been licensed for five continuous years or more in another state immediately before the application date, the Board believes the applicant meets the substantially equivalent standard if the applicant:

Has graduated from a board-approved school in another state with 500 classroom hours or more; or

Was grandfathered into state licensing in another state by a state licensing authority and currently meets the standards of the licensing authority.

The Board believes that the combination of practicing for a minimum of five years and graduating from a board-approved school with 500 hours or more of education protects the health and safety of the citizens of Arizona. Similarly, being grandfathered in by a state licensing authority in another state and meeting the state's current licensing standards protects the health and safety of the citizens of Arizona.

Regarding the second provision, if an applicant holds a current certification from the NCBTMB or another agency such as the FSMTB, the Board believes the applicant meets the substantially equivalent education and training standard if the applicant graduated from a board-approved school in another state with 500 hours or more of education and training. The combination of certification and completion of 500 hours or more of education and training protects the health and safety of the citizens of Arizona.