



# Code of Ethics

## Applies to Registered Massage Therapists

The College of Complementary Health Professionals of BC was created on June 28, 2024 through the amalgamation of four health regulatory colleges:

- College of Chiropractors of BC
- College of Massage Therapists of BC
- College of Naturopathic Physicians of BC
- College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of BC

All current requirements for standards of clinical and ethical practice issued by the four colleges remain in place upon amalgamation.

This document was created by the College of Massage Therapists of BC and will be updated to reflect the amalgamation.

## **Code of Ethics**

### **Purpose**

The Code of Ethics outlines the expectations for ethical massage therapy practice.

When faced with an ethical dilemma, massage therapists are responsible for exercising their professional judgment in accordance with their duties under this code.

### **Definitions**

In this code:

**“CMTBC”** means the College of Massage Therapists of British Columbia;

**“conflict of interest”** means a situation in which:

- a. an RMT’s personal interest, or
- b. an interest of any person related to or closely associated with an RMT,

may affect or influence, or reasonably be perceived to affect or influence, an RMT’s clinical treatment of a patient;

**“RMT”** means a registrant of CMTBC, whether practising or non-practising;

**“sexual misconduct”** means:

- a. any form of consensual or non-consensual physical contact of a sexual nature between an RMT and a patient, whether or not this occurs in the course of treatment,
- b. touching of a sexual nature, of a patient by an RMT, in the course of providing massage therapy,
- c. behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature by an RMT towards a patient, or
- d. conduct by the RMT that sexualizes the treatment environment.

### **Ethical Duties of RMTs**

An RMT must:

#### **General**

1. Act in the best interest of the patient.
2. Recognize and disclose any conflicts of interest that arise in the therapeutic relationship and resolve them in the patient’s best interest.

3. Treat the patient with respect and uphold the patient's dignity.
4. Refrain from any involvement, direct or indirect, in fraudulent billing activities.
5. Be aware of and comply with all legal and professional requirements that apply to practice, including CMTBC's standards of practice.
6. Be aware of and comply with BC's *Human Rights Code*.

### **Treatment**

7. Recommend or deliver only treatment that can reasonably be expected to provide a benefit to the patient's health.
8. Refrain from providing unqualified statements or assurances about the therapeutic benefit that a patient will experience as a result of treatment.

### **Competency**

9. Practice competently and within the limits of the RMT's knowledge and skills.
10. Continue to develop competence throughout the RMT's career in practice.
11. Recognize one's own personal and practice limitations.
12. Request consultation or refer a patient to colleagues or to other health care professionals when such actions are in the best interest of the patient.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

13. Be aware of and comply with all applicable laws and CMTBC standards regarding the collection, use, disclosure and access to patients' personal information.
14. Refrain from health care discussions, including in person, public or virtual conversations, that either directly or indirectly reveal confidential or identifying information about a patient (except with the patient's express consent) or that are disrespectful to a patient, a patient's family member, or a patient's caregiver.

### **Sexual Misconduct**

15. Refrain from engaging in sexual misconduct with a patient.

### **Terminating the Therapeutic Relationship**

16. Continue to treat patients until:

- i. therapy is no longer indicated or wanted,
- ii. another health care professional has assumed primary care responsibility, or
- iii. written notice of the intended termination has been provided to the patient.

17. Despite section 16, an RMT may immediately terminate the therapeutic relationship with any patient who:

- i. sexualizes or attempts to sexualize the treatment or environment,
- ii. directly or indirectly acts in a discriminatory manner, and/or
- iii. harasses, abuses, or threatens the RMT, or otherwise engages in behaviour that places the RMT at risk of harm.

### **Professional**

18. Recognize that professional regulation is a privilege and that each RMT has a continuing responsibility to uphold the honour, dignity and credibility of the profession.

19. Respond to any inquiries, requests and directions from the College in a professional, responsive and timely manner.

20. Conduct oneself in a manner as to merit the respect of society for the profession, RMTs, and other health care professionals.

21. Collaborate with other health care professionals when appropriate.

22. Protect and maintain personal and professional integrity.

23. Be aware of one's own mental, physical and emotional fitness to practice, and refrain from practicing when that fitness is impaired for any reason.

24. Seek appropriate assistance for personal problems that may adversely impact one's ability to fulfill the ethical duties set out in this Code.