

# Scope of Practice Explanatory Statement

Massage Therapy



April 1, 2026



This Scope of Practice Explanatory Statement provides supplemental guidance to the massage therapy scope of practice statement under the *Health Professions and Occupations Act* (HPOA) regulation. It is designed to help licensees understand the limits, conditions, and out of scope activities that shape which diagnostic, therapeutic, procedural, and prescriptive activities are permitted to support consistent, safe, and lawful practice. It consists of two parts:

1. Scope of Practice Statement under the *Complementary Health Professionals Regulation*
2. Explanatory Statement:
  - a. Restricted Activities
  - b. Limits and Conditions
  - c. Out of Scope Activities

## Scope of Practice Statement

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Scope of practice statements in regulation set out broadly what each regulated health professional may do. These statements are not exhaustive lists of every service the profession may provide, nor do they exclude other regulated professions or unregulated persons from providing services that fall within a particular profession's scope of practice. Some aspects of the scope of practice of a regulated health professional may overlap or be shared with those of another regulated health profession. Restricted activities, on the other hand, are defined higher-risk activities only allowed to be performed by authorized professionals or persons who have been appropriately delegated the activity.

Under the [Professional Standard: Scope of Practice](#), licensees must provide safe and competent care, maintain current knowledge and skills, and practice only within their individual and professional scope. Licensees are also responsible for ensuring they do not provide false or misleading information to patients or the public, and that their activities align with the limits and conditions established in legislation and regulation.



## Complementary Health Professionals Regulation

### Scope of practice for massage therapy

**13 (1)** *The following types of health services, provided primarily for the purposes set out in subsection (2), constitute the scope of practice for massage therapy:*

**(a)** *assessing the physical health status of patients for the purpose of providing the health services referred to in paragraph (b);*

**(b)** *preventing, treating and managing disorders and conditions of joints and soft tissue by manual methods, including manipulating and mobilizing the joints and soft tissue;*

**(c)** *advising on the health and care of the joints and soft tissue.*

**(2)** *The primary purposes for providing health services in the practice of massage therapy are the following, as they relate to the joints and soft tissue:*

**(a)** *to promote, maintain and restore physical health;*

**(b)** *to rehabilitate and improve physical function;*

**(c)** *to relieve pain.*

### Limits and conditions

**14** *A massage therapist must not treat a recent fracture of a bone.*

Licensees may continue to use adjunctive therapeutic procedures that are in the public domain provided they have the knowledge, skills and competence to perform the activity and that it is applied directly within scope of practice, including but not limited to:

- i.** hydrotherapy
- ii.** therapeutic exercise for the purpose of home care



## Explanatory Statement

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### Restricted Activities

The new regulations under the HPOA do not limit or reduce any profession's existing scope of practice they had under the *Health Professions Act*. This includes the continued authorization to perform the following restricted activities:

The scope of practice for massage therapy does not include any restricted activities.

## Limits and Conditions

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The following section outlines the limits and conditions that apply to the practice of massage therapy in BC.

### Joint and Soft Tissue Mobilisation

**(a)** licensees may manipulate and mobilize joints and soft tissue within the normal anatomical range of motion **without** using high velocity low amplitude thrusting.

## Out of Scope Activities

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The following section outlines the out of scope activities, that apply to the practice of massage therapy in BC.

- (a)** use of feet to deliver massage therapy services, including but not limited to Ashiatsu, Thai-Mashiatsu/Mashing and Ki-Hara.
- (b)** cupping (all forms)
- (c)** acupuncture
- (d)** aromatherapy and/or essential oils



- (e)** application/use of cannabis oil or CBD products to patients in treatments
- (f)** Shockwave
- (g)** induction of labour
- (h)** one on one Yoga instruction and/or group exercise services
- (i)** nutritional advice including supplements
- (j)** internal pelvic floor work
- (k)** low level laser therapy or low intensity laser therapy
- (l)** psychological counselling or talk therapy or life coaching
- (m)** reiki
- (n)** energy-based modalities
- (o)** providing massage therapy for aesthetic purposes
- (p)** treatment of animals
- (q)** any other procedure that constitute restricted activities outside their authorized scope of practice, as outlined in the [Regulated Health Practitioners Regulation](#)