SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT - PERMITS AND LICENSING
1400 'E' STREET, MS-735, SAN DIEGO, CA 92101
Telephone No.: (619) 531-2250

Massage Therapist / Massage Therapist Off-Premise

San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC), Section 33.0101(c) states you must have a valid Police Permit to operate a business designated as police regulated. You are responsible for being familiar with and complying with the rules and regulations related to massage. Copies of the Massage Ordinance and General Divisions for police regulated activities may be obtained from the City Clerk's office located at 202 C Street, 2nd Floor, Tel. No.: (619) 533-4000 or via the City's website: www.sannet.gov / (Department, City Clerk, Documents, Municipal Code) SDMC Chapter 3, Article 3, Division 35 and Divisions 1-5).

TYPES OF MASSAGE PERMITS:

- **MASSAGE THERAPIST** - Requires a minimum of 500 hours and NCBTMB or NCCAOM National Certification. The massage therapist permit is not a license to operate a massage establishment. A massage therapist must be employed by a massage establishment, or fall under an exempt individual or be employed by a Holistic Health Practitioner Business. This permit is valid for one year.
- **MASSAGE THERAPIST OFF- PREMISE** - means the business of providing massage services by appointment at a location other than a fixed location e.g., a *massage establishment*. It includes *massage therapists* who provide *off-premise massage* services and who are self-employed and/or who contract with or work for a business other than a massage establishment.

YOU MUST PROVIDE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING WHEN APPLYING FOR A POLICE PERMIT.

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

MASSAGE THERAPIST

- **APPLICATION** and **STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING** (attached).
- **TRANSCRIPTS** – Satisfactory proof of completion of 500 hours of instruction from any state-approved school in a massage specialty and a therapeutic approach in caring for clients. The applicant must provide proof that the school or schools attended by the applicant were state-approved schools (United States)
- **NATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAM** – Proof of successful completion of the National Certification Exam administered by NCBTMB or NCCAOM.
- **LIVE SCAN FINGERPRINTS** are **required** for all new applicants. Fill out the attached "Request for Live Scan Service" form and bring it with you to the Live Scan agency. **The completed "Request for Live Scan Service" form is valid for only thirty (30) from the date your fingerprints were taken. After thirty (30) days you will be required to re-do your Live Scan fingerprints.**
- **IDENTIFICATION** - Valid government issued picture identification card (i.e., driver's license or military I.D., passports are an acceptable form of identification.)
- **FEES** - Cash, personal check, cashier's check or money order for **$208.00**. This fee includes payment for the permit fee of $193.00 and photo I.D. card of $15.00. Please make checks payable to the City Treasurer.

MASSAGE THERAPIST OFF- PREMISE

- **APPLICATION**, **BUSINESS ADDENDUM** and **STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING** (attached).
- **Original Transcripts** – showing completion of 500 hours of instruction from any U.S. state-approved school in a massage specialty and a therapeutic approach in caring for clients. **The applicant must provide proof that the school attended by the applicant is a state-approved school.**
- **NATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAM** – Proof of successful completion of the National Certification Exam administered by NCBTMB or NCCAOM
- **BUSINESS TAX CERTIFICATE (BTC)** - A copy of your current BTC from the San Diego City Treasurer's Office, 1200 Third Avenue (1st Floor), San Diego, CA 92101 at (619) 615-1500.
- **LIVE SCAN FINGERPRINTS** are **required** for all new applicants. Fill out the attached "Request for Live Scan Service" form and bring it with you to the Live Scan agency. **The completed "Request for Live Scan Service" form is valid for only thirty (30) from the date your fingerprints were taken. After thirty (30) days you will be required to re-do your Live Scan fingerprints.**
- **IDENTIFICATION** - Valid government issued picture identification card (i.e., driver's license or military I.D., passports are an acceptable form of identification.)
- **FEES** - Cash, personal check, cashier's check or money order for **$708.00**. This includes the massage therapist off premise permit fee of **$693.00** and photo ID fee **$15.00**. Please make checks payable to the City Treasurer.

PLEASE NOTE: In order to legally perform a massage, you must be in possession of a valid police department-issued permit. You must also have an off-premise massage permit or a massage establishment permit or be a bona-fide employee of the following:

1. Someone who possesses a massage establishment permit; or
2. Someone who possesses a Holistic Health Practitioner Business permit pursuant to Division 44; or
3. Someone who is state licensed (individual) who is exempt pursuant to SDMC 33.3513, e.g., physicians, surgeons, chiropractors, physical therapists, etc. The exempt individual has to be physically present at the location while the massage is administered.

If you are a massage therapist working for any individual or business and you are not on their payroll because you are self-employed or treated as an independent contractor, then you are **not** considered an employee. If you are operating from a fixed location and not an employee of a licensee or exempt individual as stated above, you will need a massage establishment permit. A massage therapist cannot rent space. Any person desiring to engage in off-premise massage must also obtain an off-premise massage business permit. You cannot use an off-premise massage permit to operate from a fixed location.

"***MASSAGE***" - means any method of pressure on, or friction against, or stroking, kneading, rubbing, tapping, pounding, vibrating, or stimulating the external parts of the human body with the hands or other parts of the body, with or without the aid of any mechanical or electrical apparatus or appliances, or with or without supplementary aids such as rubbing alcohol, liniments, antiseptics, oils, powder, creams, lotions, ointments or other similar preparations commonly used in this practice.

"***NCBTMB***" - means the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork. They can be reached at Tel. No.: (800) 296-0664 or at their website: www.ncbtmb.com.

"***NCCAOM***" - means the National Certification Commission of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. They can be reached at Tel. No.: (703) 548-9004 or website: www.nccaom.org.

"***State-approved school***" - means any school or institution within the United States which is approved by the state in which it resides for the teaching of massage.

INVESTIGATION PERIOD: A thirty (30) day investigation period begins at the time each completed application is submitted. A criminal records check will be made on each applicant.

CHANGE OF EMPLOYMENT: You must notify the Permits and Licensing Unit of any change of employment within fifteen (15) calendar days of changing to the new employer.

RENEWING PERMITS: Permits must be renewed each year (except the Massage Trainee permit, which is valid for two (2) years and is non-renewable.) After the ten (10) day grace period (from the expiration date shown on your permit) you will be assessed a late fee of $25.00 plus a penalty fee of 10% of the regulatory fee.

Contact massage@pd.sandiego.gov if you have any questions.