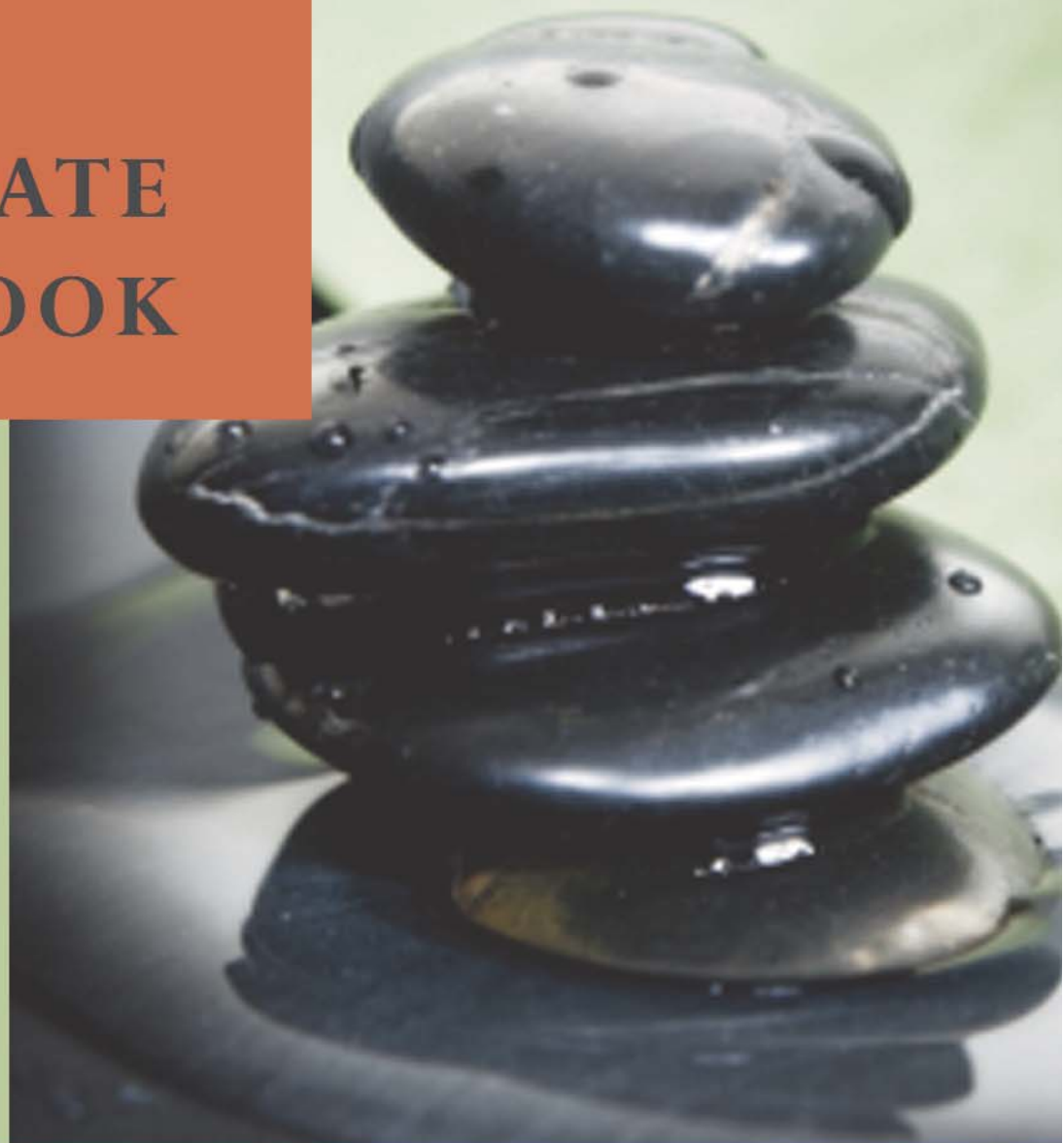




# Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards

Massage & Bodywork  
Licensing Examination  
(MBLEx)

**CANDIDATE  
HANDBOOK**



# INTRODUCTION

---

## ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

---

This Handbook serves as the principal source of information for those applying to take the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx). Since every situation and every applicable rule cannot be cited in a document like this, other FSMTB policies, practices, and instructions, may also apply.

This Handbook provides the information you will need about eligibility requirements; application procedures and fees; examination scheduling; examination content and scoring. You are advised to periodically check our Web site ([www.fsmtb.org](http://www.fsmtb.org)) for any changes in FSMTB policies, requirements, or forms that may be made after this Handbook is published. Although FSMTB gives applicants and candidates as much advance notice as possible when policies and procedures change, it is always your responsibility to make sure that you are fully informed about the current requirements and policies. You should also consult the Web site ([www.fsmtb.org](http://www.fsmtb.org)) to learn about any modifications that may be made in eligibility, exam administration, exam content, or other policies. If you are unsure about a policy or procedure, **contact FSMTB at [mblex@fsmtb.org](mailto:mblex@fsmtb.org) or call the dedicated MBLEx toll-free number 1.866.9MB.EXAM (1.866.962.3926).**

The policies and procedures in this Handbook may be modified, amended, or cancelled by FSMTB at any time, with or without notice. When policies are changed, you may be notified in writing, by e-mail, or by the issuance of a revised edition of this Handbook.

This edition of the Handbook supersedes all prior policies or procedures as to the subjects addressed in it and all representations, oral or written.

The FSMTB strongly recommends carefully reading and thoroughly understanding every topic in this Candidate Handbook.

---

## ABOUT FSMTB

---

The FSMTB is a fully autonomous, non-profit organization established in 2005. It operates under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All revenue collected by the organization is used to enhance FSMTB programs; improve the quality of its examinations and services; and provide support to its Members in fulfilling their responsibility of protecting the public from unsafe practice.

Seven Directors, who are voted into office by general election at the Annual Meeting of the FSMTB, govern the FSMTB. In making nominations, the Nominating Committee considers diversity in ethnicity, gender, geographic distribution, and professional experience.

Our mission is to support our Member Boards in their work to ensure that the practice of massage therapy is provided to the public in a safe and effective manner.

In carrying out this mission, the Federation shall:

- ◆ Facilitate communication among Member Boards and provide a forum for the exchange of information and experience.
- ◆ Provide education, services and guidance to Member Boards that help them fulfill their statutory, professional, public, and ethical obligations.
- ◆ Support efforts among Member Boards to establish compatible requirements and cooperative procedures for the legal regulation of massage therapists, in order to facilitate professional mobility and to simplify and standardize the licensing process.
- ◆ Ensure the provision of a valid reliable licensing examination to determine entry-level competence.
- ◆ Improve the standards of massage therapy education, licensure, and practice through cooperation with entities that share this objective, including other massage therapy organizations, accrediting agencies, governmental bodies, and groups whose areas of interest may coincide with those of Member Boards.
- ◆ Represent the interests of its Member Boards in matters consistent with the scope of the Bylaws.

As part of fulfilling our mission, we have developed a licensing examination that provides a unified set of nationally-verified, entry-level standards for safe and competent practice of Massage & Bodywork. The first Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx) was given in July 2007 during the Pilot Testing Phase of development. The MBLEx was developed during an eighteen-month period with the help of leading Massage & Bodywork professionals throughout the nation. Throughout this development period, the FSMTB followed national guidelines for testing in order to ensure a fair, valid, and reliable examination. The first administration of the MBLEx was a milestone event in the growth of the profession in the United States.

The FSMTB contracts with Pearson VUE for administration, scoring and psychometric analyses of the FSMTB examinations. The global leader in electronic testing for regulatory and other credentialing boards, with the world's largest network of test centers, innovative technology and a commitment to excellent customer service, Pearson VUE provides a superior testing experience to candidates.

---

## CONTACTING YOU

---

Since FSMTB may contact you throughout the application and examination process, it is essential that you notify FSMTB immediately—and in writing—if your address, telephone number, or email address changes. Complete the Change of Contact Information Form and fax it to 615.846.0153, or mail it to FSMTB, PO Box 198748, Nashville, TN 37219. You may also email your change of contact information to [mblex@fsmtb.org](mailto:mblex@fsmtb.org).

---

## PRIVACY

---

For security reasons, before any information is released over the phone, the caller will be asked for identifying information. You may be asked to provide, for example, your date of birth or your address. This security feature helps FSMTB protect your personal information from being inappropriately released. Examination scores are never released over the phone.

---

## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

---

The FSMTB respects the privacy of all examination applicants and candidates. All materials submitted or received in connection with applications and all examination scores are held in confidence, except upon permission for disclosure from the applicant or candidate or except as required by law, including governmental licensing bodies upon appropriate written request.

---

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

---

The FSMTB does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, political or religious beliefs, disability, marital or familial status, ancestry, national origin, nor any other category that is protected by federal law or other applicable laws and regulations.

---

## APPEALS

---

If you believe that a decision has been made that is not consistent with FSMTB's commitment to fairness in the application and testing process, the matter should be brought promptly to the attention of the Executive Director. Your complaint will be investigated and there will be no retaliation against any applicant or candidate who files a complaint in good faith, even if the result of the investigation produces insufficient evidence to support the complaint.

# ELIGIBILITY AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Before you submit an application to take the MBLEx you must make sure that you meet the criteria for eligibility. In addition, you should be sure that you can gather all the required supporting documentation before applying.

The FSMTB has established two avenues of eligibility to take the MBLEx. The first is for individuals who apply directly to the FSMTB. The second is for those who apply directly through a State Licensing Board or Agency. Individuals may qualify to take the FSMTB examination by meeting all of the requirements specified under either one of the two routes. Each of these eligibility routes are outlined below.

---

## SUMMARY OF APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

---

There are TWO possible ways that you can apply to take the MBLEx. The following information gives an overview of the basic requirements:

1. To be deemed eligible to take the MBLEx by FSMTB, you must meet all of the following requirements:
  - ◆ Verify that you have reviewed the Examination Content Outline and have education and training in the content subject areas;
  - ◆ Acknowledge and agree in writing to abide by FSMTB policies; and
  - ◆ Pay the required fee.
  
2. To be deemed eligible to take the MBLEx by a State Licensing Board or Agency, you must meet all of the following requirements:
  - ◆ Be approved by the State Licensing Board or Agency;
  - ◆ Acknowledge and agree in writing to abide by FSMTB policies; and
  - ◆ Pay the required fee.

---

## DOCUMENTATION

---

### **MBLEx Application Form**

Individuals applying directly to the FSMTB must complete and submit the MBLEx Application Form and the fee. The MBLEx Application Form is only required from individuals applying directly to the FSMTB through eligibility route 1 described above.

---

## AUTHENTICITY AND ADEQUACY OF DOCUMENTATION

---

The FSMTB will verify the authenticity of all documents before determining your eligibility to test. Submission of an application does not automatically guarantee your eligibility to take an exam on any particular test date.

**The following guidelines apply to all documents submitted as part of the MBLEx application:**

- ◆ Accuracy is essential. Falsification, misrepresentation, or omissions of any material fact required on the application are grounds for denial of your application.
- ◆ All documentation must contain your name exactly as it appears on your application and a numeric identifier. Examples of numeric identifiers include date of birth or social security number.
- ◆ If your name changes, you must notify FSMTB in writing. Submit your notification of a name change along with the appropriate supporting documentation (e.g., marriage certificate, divorce decree, court documents showing a legal name change).
- ◆ Applicants are solely responsible for ensuring that FSMTB receives all required documentation. The FSMTB is not responsible for lost, undelivered, or misdelivered documents. Therefore, we recommend that you use a traceable form of delivery such as return receipt, Express Mail, First-Class Mail or Priority Mail with delivery or signature confirmation, or a private overnight delivery service such as Federal Express or UPS.
- ◆ If your address changes, you must notify FSMTB immediately or you may miss important information about your application. Submit your change of address in writing or email your change of address to [mblex@fsmtb.org](mailto:mblex@fsmtb.org). A Change of Contact Information Form is available on our Web site at [www.fsmtb.org](http://www.fsmtb.org).

---

## INSUFFICIENT DOCUMENTATION NOTIFICATION

---

It is solely your responsibility to ensure that FSMTB receives all required documentation. If your application is incomplete, FSMTB will, as a courtesy, notify you via telephone, email, or US mail, informing you of any documentation that is needed to complete your application.

The FSMTB will maintain incomplete applications for six months. After that time, the application will be cancelled and the fees forfeited.

---

## SIGNATURE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

---

Your signature on the MBLEx Application Form means that you understand and agree to certain conditions as part of your application. Specifically:

1. You acknowledge and agree to abide by all applicable FSMTB policies and procedures, including the consequences of noncompliance.
2. The information entered on or in connection with your application is accurate and correct to the best of your knowledge. If the information is not true or accurate, your application may be denied.
3. You authorize FSMTB to obtain additional information about your qualifications and application for testing.
4. You recognize that telling or sending others information about FSMTB exam questions or content can result not only in a denial to release examination scores but also in possible legal action against you.

---

## APPROVAL TO TEST

---

Submission of an application does not automatically guarantee your eligibility to take the MBLEx. Once your application is approved, the FSMTB will issue a Notice to Schedule (NTS) to you via email. Applicants who do not have an email address will receive the NTS via regular USPS mail. The NTS will include information that you will need to register for the exam date and exam site of your choice.

---

## APPLICATION EXPIRATION

---

If you are unable to test within 90 days of your approval to test date, you will be required to reapply as a new applicant subject to all application and fee requirements in place at that time. Fees are not refundable.

It is best to plan your time carefully and be prepared to test at the time you submit your application.

---

## WITHDRAWING AN APPLICATION

---

You may withdraw your application at any point by submitting a written request to FSMTB. Fees are refundable, minus a \$45 processing fee. Applicants who have withdrawn their applications and reapply in the future must reapply as new applicants subject to all application and fee requirements in place at that time.

---

## SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS REQUESTS

---

The FSMTB complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and will accommodate requests from qualified candidates with a diagnosed disability for accommodations to take the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx) if the request is reasonable and properly documented and does not fundamentally alter the examination or jeopardize exam security.

To request accommodations, consult the Special Accommodations Handbook and submit the ADA Accommodations Request Form. If you require accommodations in the application process itself, contact FSMTB for assistance.

# FEES

## MBLE<sub>x</sub> FEES

The total fee is \$195. All fees must be paid in U.S. (\$) funds by credit card, certified check or money order. Checks should be made payable to FSMTB. Personal checks are not accepted.

For FSMTB applicants, fees are due at the time of application.

For State applicants, after FSMTB receives notification from the State that you are eligible, you will be sent a Payment Coupon which must be returned to FSMTB before you can receive a Notice to Schedule.

## RETAKE FEES

Candidates who must retake the MBLEx are required to pay the retake fee of \$195.

## REFUNDS

Examination fees paid for an exam not yet taken will be refunded upon written request, minus a \$45 processing fee. Refunds will not be issued in the following circumstances:

1. Your involvement in cheating or fraud at any point in the application/testing process.
2. Registering for an exam and not taking the exam due to lateness or absenteeism.
3. Registering for an exam and rescheduling less than one business day prior to your appointment.

## FRAUD, CHEATING, AND FORFEITURE OF FEES

In the event of a fraudulent application, submission of fraudulent documents, introduction of fraud at any point in the application process, or cheating on any FSMTB examination, FSMTB reserves the right to confiscate all fees to offset any administrative or legal costs associated with the investigation and/or adjudication of the case.

## SCHEDULING FOR A SPECIFIC EXAMINATION DATE AND LOCATION

The FSMTB examinations are administered year-round at test sites across the United States. Once you are approved to test, you will receive a Notice to Schedule that you must use to register for the test date and test site of your choice.

The NTS will show the exam dates for which you may register within a 90-day period of time. Note that your exam fee will be forfeited for failure to appear for a scheduled appointment or upon expiration of the NTS.

We recommend that you schedule your examination as soon as you receive your NTS so that you have the best opportunity to get the date and location that you want. You may use the online scheduler at [www.pearsonvue.com/fsmtb](http://www.pearsonvue.com/fsmtb), or call the Customer Service Call Center at 888.790.4892 toll free Monday through Friday, 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM US Central Time.

---

## REGISTRATION CONFIRMATION AND REPORTING TIME

After you schedule your examination you will receive specific information in the mail about the date, time and location of the test you are registered to take. The mailing will include directions to the test site and reporting time. It may be helpful but it is not necessary to bring your registration confirmation notice with you to the test center.

---

## CHANGING YOUR EXAM REGISTRATION

You may change your test date or test site online or via the Customer Service Call Center. You may not make changes less than one business day prior to your appointment without forfeiting all fees.

---

## TEST CENTER LOCATIONS

Please check the Web site [www.pearsonvue.com/fsmtb](http://www.pearsonvue.com/fsmtb) for current test center information. FSMTB examinations are administered at Pearson Professional Centers. You can link to take an online tour of a PPC at [www.pearsonvue.com/fsmtb](http://www.pearsonvue.com/fsmtb).

---

## COMPUTER-BASED TESTING TUTORIAL

A tutorial is available at [www.pearsonvue.com/fsmtb](http://www.pearsonvue.com/fsmtb) for candidates to learn how to navigate the test on computer and to familiarize themselves with the computer-based testing experience. The tutorial includes a Guided Tour that demonstrates all of the functions that you will use when taking the computer-based examination, including how to answer questions and change answers.

The tutorial also includes a Demonstration Test that will give you an opportunity to become familiar with the operations of the computer-based examination. The demonstration test is not a practice test with content related to Massage & Bodywork. Rather, it is designed to provide candidates with the opportunity to use all of the functions to enter responses, view diagrams, scroll pages, etc.

We strongly advise all candidates to make time to view the tutorial prior to taking the examination.

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE TESTING

The FSMTB currently offers the MBLEx in the English language only.

# EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT

## SCOPE OF THE EXAMINATION

Examination questions are designed to allow candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of facts and use of judgment. There are no trick or ambiguous questions.

Given the diversity of the Massage & Bodywork field there may be a small number of questions outside the training of every individual. This will vary from person to person depending on one's training. The number of these questions, however, is not enough to pose a barrier to passing the MBLEx. Qualified candidates who are adequately prepared should pass the examination.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE EXAMINATION

The FSMTB examination is developed in stages. In the first stage, a job analysis is outlined by a panel of expert practitioners from many traditions and schools of thought in the field of Massage & Bodywork. These outlines describe the functions of a practitioner and the knowledge needed to perform those functions. Since Massage & Bodywork is such a diverse field and is practiced in a variety of ways, the FSMTB takes great care to involve groups of educators and practitioners who are broadly representative of the field as it is practiced in the United States. The job analysis is then validated by surveying practitioners throughout the United States. In 2007, over 7,500 practitioners participated in the job analysis survey. The MBLEx content outline is created from this survey.

The second, on-going stage of development involves other representative groups of practitioners across the country who work with FSMTB to write questions based on the exam content outline. These new questions are reviewed by a committee of subject matter experts and are edited to ensure that they are clearly written and that there is only one correct answer to each question.

In developing the examination, every effort is made to respect and include the various forms of Massage & Bodywork practiced in the United States. Reviews of the field will be undertaken periodically to ensure that the examination remains relevant to current practice standards.

## COMMITMENT TO A FAIR, VALID, AND RELIABLE EXAMINATION

Pearson VUE, the global leader in electronic testing for regulatory and other credentialing boards, is the professional testing agency contracted by FSMTB to assist in the development, administration, scoring, reporting and psychometric analyses of the MBLEx. With the world's largest network of test centers, innovative technology and a commitment to excellent customer service, Pearson VUE provides a superior testing experience to candidates.

A review and appeal process for the MBLEx safeguards candidates in situations where a candidate feels significantly disadvantaged due to a perceived procedural error or adverse environmental conditions during the test administration.

# MASSAGE & BODYWORK LICENSING EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

## ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY (14%)

### A. System structure

- ◆ Circulation
- ◆ Digestive
- ◆ Endocrine
- ◆ Integumentary
- ◆ Lymphatic
- ◆ Muscular
- ◆ Nervous
- ◆ Reproduction
- ◆ Respiratory
- ◆ Skeletal
- ◆ Special Senses
- ◆ Urinary

### B. System function

- ◆ Circulation
- ◆ Digestive
- ◆ Endocrine
- ◆ Integumentary
- ◆ Lymphatic
- ◆ Muscular
- ◆ Nervous
- ◆ Reproduction
- ◆ Respiratory
- ◆ Skeletal
- ◆ Special Senses
- ◆ Urinary

### C. Healthcare related and medical terminology

### D. Tissue injury and repair

### E. Concepts of energetic anatomy

## KINESIOLOGY (11%)

### A. Components and characteristics of muscles

### B. Concepts of muscle contractions

### C. Proprioceptors

### D. Locations, attachments (origins, insertions), actions and fiber directions of muscles

### E. Joint structure and function

### F. Range of motion

- ◆ Active
- ◆ Passive
- ◆ Resisted

## PATHOLOGY, CONTRAINDICATIONS, AREAS OF CAUTION, SPECIAL POPULATIONS (13%)

### A. Common pathologies

### B. Contraindications

- ◆ Site specific
- ◆ Pathology related
- ◆ Special populations
- ◆ Tools
- ◆ Special applications

### C. Areas of caution

### D. Special populations

### E. Classes of medications

## BENEFITS AND PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF TECHNIQUES THAT MANIPULATE SOFT TISSUE (17%)

### A. Identification of the physiological effects of soft tissue manipulation

### B. Psychological aspects and benefits of touch

### C. Benefits of soft tissue manipulation for specific client populations

### D. Soft tissue techniques

- ◆ Types of strokes
- ◆ Sequence of application

### E. Hot/cold applications

## CLIENT ASSESSMENT, REASSESSMENT & TREATMENT PLANNING (17%)

### A. Organization of a massage/bodywork session

### B. Client consultation and evaluation

- ◆ Verbal intake
- ◆ Health history form

### C. Written data collection

### D. Visual assessment

- ◆ General
- ◆ Postural

### E. Palpation assessment

### F. Range of motion assessment

### G. Clinical reasoning

- ◆ Ability to rule out contraindications
- ◆ Client treatment goal setting
- ◆ Evaluation of response to previous treatment
- ◆ Formulation of treatment strategy

## OVERVIEW OF MASSAGE & BODYWORK HISTORY/ CULTURE/ MODALITIES (5%)

### A. History of massage & bodywork

### B. Overview of the different skill sets used in contemporary massage/bodywork environments

### C. Overview of massage/bodywork modalities

## ETHICS, BOUNDARIES, LAWS, REGULATIONS (13%)

### A. Ethical behavior

### B. Professional boundaries

### C. Code of ethics violations

### D. The therapeutic relationship

### E. Dual relationships

### F. Sexual misconduct

### G. Massage/bodywork-related laws and regulations

### H. Scope of practice

### I. Professional communication

### J. Confidentiality

### K. Principles

## GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE (10%)

### A. Proper and safe use of equipment and supplies

### B. Therapist hygiene

### C. Sanitation and cleanliness

### D. Safety practices

- ◆ Facilities
- ◆ Therapist personal safety
- ◆ Client safety

### E. Therapist care

- ◆ Body mechanics
- ◆ Protective gear (masks, gowns, gloves, etc)
- ◆ Self-care
- ◆ Injury prevention

### F. Draping

- ◆ Safe and appropriate
- ◆ Communication

### G. Business Practices

- ◆ Business planning
- ◆ Strategic planning
- ◆ Office management
- ◆ Marketing
- ◆ Hiring/Interviewing
- ◆ Documentation and Records
  - Client records
  - Business records

% weighting is approximate

# MASSAGE & BODYWORK LICENSING EXAMINATION BIBLIOGRAPHY

There is no single text recommended by FSMTB. The Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination reflects practice in the United States as determined by the most recent Job Analysis.

FSMTB's item writers and examination development committee members frequently use the following texts as resources; however, the sources used are not limited to the books listed here. The list is not comprehensive and does not imply that references not included on this list are inappropriate or of lesser value or quality than references that are included. The list is presented to assist individuals in preparing for the examination; however, study of the following references will not guarantee that an individual will pass the examination.

## REFERENCE TEXTS

- ◆ Beck, Mark F. *Theory and Practice of Therapeutic Massage*. (4th edition). New York:Thomson Delmar Learning/Cengage Learning, 2006.
- ◆ Benjamin, Ben and Cherie Sohnen-Moe. *The Ethics of Touch*. Tucson: Sohnen-Moe Associates, Inc., 2004.
- ◆ Benjamin, Patricia and Frances M. Tappan. *Tappan's Handbook of Healing Massage Techniques: Classic, Holistic and Emerging Methods*. (4th edition). Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2005.
- ◆ Biel, Andrew. *Trail Guide to the Body*. (3rd edition). Boulder: Books of Discovery, 2005.
- ◆ Braun, Mary Beth and Stephanie Simonson. *Introduction to Massage Therapy*. Baltimore: Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins, 2005.
- ◆ Fritz, Sandy. *Mosby's Fundamentals of Therapeutic Massage*. (3rd edition). St. Louis: Mosby/Elsevier, 2004.
- ◆ Fritz, Sandy and James M. Grosenbach. *Mosby's Essential Sciences for Therapeutic Massage: Anatomy, Physiology, Biomechanics and Pathology*. (2nd edition). St. Louis: Mosby/Elsevier, 2004.
- ◆ McIntosh, Nina. *The Educated Heart: Professional Boundaries for Massage Therapists, Bodyworkers and Movement Teachers*. (2nd edition). Baltimore: Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins, 2005.
- ◆ Premkumar, Kalyani. *The Massage Connection: Anatomy and Physiology*. (2nd edition). Baltimore: Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins, 2004.
- ◆ Rattray, Fiona and Linda Ludwig. *Clinical Massage Therapy: Understanding, Assessing and Treating Over 70 Conditions*. Ontario: Talus, Inc., 2000.
- ◆ Salvo, Susan G. *Massage Therapy Principles and Practice*. (3rd edition). St. Louis: Saunders/Elsevier, 2003.

- ◆ Sohlen-Moe, Cherie. *Business Mastery*. (3rd edition). Tucson: Sohlen-Moe Associates Inc., 2005.
- ◆ Werner, Ruth. *A Massage Therapist's Guide to Pathology*. (3rd edition). Baltimore: Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins, 2005.

# EXAMINATION DAY

## CONFIDENTIALITY AND EXAM SECURITY

The FSMTB requires you to maintain the confidentiality and security of the test questions on its examinations. All those who take the MBLEx are required to acknowledge that they understand and agree to the following:

- ◆ The examination is the exclusive property of the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards.
- ◆ The FSMTB's examinations and the items contained therein are protected by United States copyright law.
- ◆ No part of an examination may be copied or reproduced or transmitted to any other person in part or in whole by any means whatsoever, including memorization.
- ◆ The theft or attempted theft of an examination, in whole or in part, is punishable as a felony.

Your participation in any irregularity occurring during the examination, such as giving or obtaining unauthorized information or aid, as evidenced by observation or subsequent statistical analysis, or any other examination irregularity, including but not limited to the failure to report any information about any irregularity or any suspected cheating, may be sufficient cause for FSMTB, at its sole discretion, to terminate your participation, invalidate the results of your examination, seek monetary compensation, or take other appropriate action.

Candidates who cheat or attempt to cheat on the examination, or who otherwise breach FSMTB's security policies and procedures, will have their exam scores cancelled, will forfeit all fees, may be barred from reapplying to take the MBLEx and will be subject to all examination and fee requirements in place at the time they may choose to reapply, and may be subject to legal action.

## REPORT TIME AND CHECK IN

Arrive at the test center at least 30 minutes before your appointment.

Allow yourself sufficient time to find the test site. The FSMTB does not have information on nearby lodging or parking for the test centers. You are advised to gather this information before the test day to avoid unnecessary delays. It may be helpful to travel to the test center on the same day of the week and same time of your appointment, prior to the actual test day, to ascertain traffic patterns and travel time to the location.

All candidates must sign in at the test site before the exam can begin. A digital photograph and fingerprint will be taken as part of the check-in procedures.

## CANDIDATES GRANTED SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Candidates who have been granted special accommodations will receive a confirmation letter. You must bring this special accommodation confirmation letter to the test site and present it at registration. No accommodations may be requested on the day of the exam.

## REQUIRED IDENTIFICATION

You must bring TWO forms of identification (ID) to the test site – the primary form of identification must include a photograph and signature and must not be expired. The secondary form of identification may include a photograph but a photograph is not necessary; however, it must include a signature and must not be expired. The same version of your name must appear on your application, the Notice to Schedule, and on the identification you present at the testing center. The identification you bring to the test center must be one of the following:

Primary (photo, signature, not expired)	Secondary (signature, not expired)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Government issued driver's license</li><li>◆ Passport</li><li>◆ Military ID</li><li>◆ State/country ID</li><li>◆ Alien registration card (green card or permanent resident visa)</li><li>◆ Other government-issued ID</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ U.S. Social Security Card</li><li>◆ School ID</li><li>◆ Employee or hospital ID/work badge</li><li>◆ Bank ATM card</li><li>◆ Credit card</li><li>◆ Any ID on the Primary list</li></ul>

You will not be admitted to the exam without proper identification. If the test center staff have questions about the identification presented, you may be asked for additional proof of identity. You may be refused access to the examination and forfeit the examination fee for that session if the staff believe that you have not proven your identity. Admittance to the test center and examination does not imply that your identification is valid or that your scores could not be invalidated if subsequent investigations reveal impersonation or forgery.

## LATENESS ON THE DAY OF THE EXAM

You must arrive by the report time on your registration confirmation notice or you will not be admitted to the test site. You will be considered absent if you arrive late and you will forfeit all fees.

## ABSENCES ON THE DAY OF THE EXAM

The FSMTB is liable for all associated test delivery costs for an applicant, whether the applicant tests or not. If you do not appear for the MBLEx for which you have registered, you will forfeit all fees. You will be required to pay the full fee again, if and when you submit a *Retake Application Form*.

## WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies, Pearson VUE will determine whether circumstances warrant the closure of a particular test center. The examination will not be rescheduled if the supervisor is able to open the test location. You may contact the Customer Service Call Center at 888.790.4892 to determine if your test site is closed. Should an examination be cancelled, candidates scheduled for that site will be contacted to reschedule another exam date. You will not incur any additional

exam fees if your test is cancelled by FSMTB for any reason. The FSMTB is not responsible for any personal expenses (e.g., travel, food, accommodations) incurred for an exam administration that is cancelled due to inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies.

---

## PROCTORS

Proctors cannot answer questions about exam content, but they can help you understand exam directions and procedures. They will also monitor your breaks and require you to provide fingerprint verification should you need to leave the testing room during the examination.

---

## PROHIBITED ITEMS

Items that can NOT be taken into the testing room include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Books
- ◆ Briefcase
- ◆ Calculator/Portable Computer
- ◆ Calculator Watch
- ◆ Camera, Photographic or Scanning Device
- ◆ Cellular Phone
- ◆ Cigarette/Tobacco Product
- ◆ Container of any kind
- ◆ Dictionary – electronic or paper
- ◆ Earphone
- ◆ Earplug (unless provided by test center)
- ◆ Eraser
- ◆ Eyeglass Case
- ◆ Food or Beverage
- ◆ Handbag/Backpack/Hip Pack
- ◆ Hat or Visor (except head coverings for religious reasons)
- ◆ Headsets or Audio Earmuffs (unless provided by test center)
- ◆ Jewelry – Pendant Necklace or Large Earrings
- ◆ Newspaper or Magazine
- ◆ Non-Prescription Sunglasses
- ◆ Notebook
- ◆ Notes in any written form
- ◆ Organizer/Day Planner
- ◆ Outline
- ◆ Pager/Beeper
- ◆ Paper (unless provided by test center)
- ◆ Pen/Pencil (unless provided by test center)
- ◆ Pencil Sharpener
- ◆ Personal Digital Assistant or Electronic Devices
- ◆ Plastic Bag
- ◆ Purse/Wallet
- ◆ Radio/Transmitter/Receiver
- ◆ Ruler/Slide Ruler
- ◆ Study Material
- ◆ Tape/Disk Recorder or Player
- ◆ Umbrella
- ◆ Watch
- ◆ Weapon of any kind

Lockers are provided at the test center to store a small number of personal belongings. It is the candidate's responsibility to surrender all items voluntarily, prior to testing. Any person possessing prohibited items in the examination room will not be allowed to continue their examination, will forfeit all fees, and may have examination scores invalidated.

---

## CLOTHING

Candidates are advised to wear clothing that will be comfortable for various temperature conditions at the test center.

---

## UNSCHEDULED BREAKS

---

Unscheduled breaks during exams are taken on your own time. In other words, the clock does not stop when you take a break during an exam to eat or use the restroom. Plan your exam time carefully.

---

## TEST LENGTH AND TIME ALLOWED

---

Candidates taking the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination have two and a half (2 ½) hours to complete a 125-item multiple-choice examination on computer. Of this time, a maximum of five minutes is allotted to the security and confidentiality agreement and five minutes to a brief survey.

Be aware that you have limited time to read and respond to the introductory screens. While there is adequate time to review the screens and respond, there is NOT enough time to leave the testing room or do anything other than proceed to the exam.

Examination	Number of items	Time allowed
Security Agreement	N/A	5 minutes
Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx)	125	140 minutes
Survey	N/A	5 minutes

Unscheduled restroom or food breaks are permitted during the examination but the clock does not stop.

Proctors at the test site will instruct you on what to do if you finish the exam before the allotted time has passed.

---

## GUESSING

---

If you are not sure of the correct answer on an examination it is to your benefit to make an informed guess. There is no penalty for guessing. In calculating your score, FSMTB counts the questions you do not answer and those you answer incorrectly as wrong answers. A passing score is based on the number of correct answers.

---

## HOW MANY TIMES CAN I TAKE THE EXAMINATION?

---

There is no limit to the number of times an individual can retake the examination until they achieve a passing score. Keep in mind that if you fail the examination you must submit a Retake Application Form before you will be allowed to retest.

---

## TRANSLATORS

---

Translators are not available at any test site.

## EXAM ADMINISTRATION CONDITIONS

Should you experience any environmental difficulties during the administration of the examination (too hot, too cold, too noisy, etc.), you are obligated to tell a proctor about your concern. Concerns not resolved at the test site should be submitted in writing to FSMTB.

**The FSMTB never releases copies of examinations or individual examination items.**

## EXAMINATION SCORES

Examination results are reported as PASS (with a numerical scaled score) or FAIL (with a numerical scaled score) to indicate whether or not a candidate has demonstrated the knowledge required to meet standards of competence as defined by the profession.

Candidates will receive their official Score Report at the test center, upon completing the examination.

### SCORING

The total scaled score you achieved on the examination determines whether you pass or fail. The scale ranges from 300 to 900 and a scaled score of 630 is set as the passing score on the MBLEx. Passing scores are determined through the modified Angoff process, a statistical procedure for establishing the minimum pass level using the judgment of experts. Through this process, the raw score required to pass is established. This raw score is then set to equal a scaled score of 630. A scaled score is not a percentage score.

### CRITERION-REFERENCED SCORING

The passing score on the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination is determined by Subject Matter Experts under the direction of the experts in testing and psychometrics. The criteria define the minimum acceptable level of competence required for the safe and effective practice of Massage & Bodywork. The passing score is determined by a criterion-referenced method, which is commonly used in licensing examinations. A criterion-referenced passing score applies minimum standards for competent practice to all candidates.

Criterion-referenced standard setting begins with the establishment of a minimum acceptable level of competence for safe practice that candidates must possess in order to pass the examination. The standard setting is a group process. The group is comprised of licensed practitioners representing various aspects of the practice, geographic areas, and levels of expertise. To ensure that the description of the profession represents the job tasks of practitioners entering the profession, input from entry-level practitioners is always included.

Criterion-referenced scoring provides safeguards to both the candidate and the consumer.

### PASSING SCORES

You will receive a numerical scaled score total as well as diagnostic information indicating your performance in each content area. The scores reported on the diagnostic summary are provided to guide your future professional development.

### FAILING SCORES

In the event that you fail the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination, you will be given your numerical scaled score total, as well as diagnostic information indicating your performance in each content area. The scores reported on the diagnostic summary are provided to assist your future study efforts.

You have an unlimited window of time within which to pass the MBLEx using a Retake Application if you fail the examination.

# RETAKE AN EXAMINATION

## RETAKE FORM

The MBLEx Retake Form is the form you must use to notify FSMTB that you are ready to retake the MBLEx that you failed or from which you were absent.

Once FSMTB is in receipt of the MBLEx Retake Form and associated fees, upon review and approval, a Notice to Schedule (NTS) will be sent to you by FSMTB.

## SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

See the information on ADA accommodations if you wish to request the same or different accommodations when retaking the examination.

## ACHIEVING LICENSURE

The FSMTB encourages all candidates who have taken the FSMTB examination to become licensed.

Even though you may receive a passing score on the MBLEx, this does NOT mean that you are licensed, and you may not represent or advertise that you are licensed, unless and until you receive official notification from a State Licensing Board or Agency.

The MBLEx is used by a number of state regulatory agencies as part of their licensing requirements. Applicants who have passed the MBLEx by applying directly to a State for licensure do not automatically receive a State license to practice.

### REPORTING MBLEX SCORES TO LICENSING BOARDS

You may request your exam results to be reported to a State licensing agency, for example, by completing the MBLEx Mobility Form, and mailing or faxing it, along with the appropriate fee, to FSMTB. Please allow at least two weeks for your request to be processed by FSMTB. Candidates are solely responsible for submitting requests in a timely manner. You are encouraged to check with the State in which you are applying, for licensure-related deadlines.

It is the candidate's responsibility to inform themselves of particular State licensure requirements. Contact information for State Licensure Boards and Agencies is available on our Web site at [www.fsmtb.org](http://www.fsmtb.org).

### STATE LICENSURE VERSUS CERTIFICATION

Governmental licensing is often confused with private credentialing, generally referred to as certification, because the meanings of the terms are frequently interchanged. Although some jurisdictions use the term certification as signifying governmental authority to practice a profession, the difference between licensure and certification is essentially the difference between governmental regulation and self-regulation of a profession.

### LICENSURE

Licensure is the process by which a federal, state or local governmental agency grants an individual permission to practice in a particular occupation or profession that is subject to regulation under the government's authority and to refer to oneself as "licensed" or authorized to practice. The authority of a state to enact law regulating a particular profession is derived from the United States Constitution and conferred on state and local governments. Using this authority, states adopt "practice acts" which create and empower a board to regulate the profession in the interest of public protection. Within the practice acts are mandates for practitioners to become licensed, usually based upon requirements such as education, examination, experience and moral character. These requirements, which vary among jurisdictions, establish one's minimum competence to safely and effectively practice the regulated profession. The practice act also establishes the powers of the board, the scope of practice, and the legal requirement to uphold certain professional and ethical standards.

Obtaining a license in order to practice a profession is mandatory, and state laws may provide for criminal or administrative penalties for unlicensed practice. Penalties for violating licensure laws vary from state to state. Periodic licensure renewal is also mandatory and usually premised upon substantiating required continuing education or professional development.

## CERTIFICATION

Certification is the process by which private organizations recognize individuals for meeting certain criteria established by the private organization in which individuals are recognized for advanced knowledge and skills. It is a form of self-regulation which is voluntary in that it is not required of individuals prior to practice and is without governmental oversight. Practitioners seek certification usually as a form of self promotion and in an attempt to distinguish one practitioner from another. There is no requirement to be certified and no governmental penalties for failure to achieve or loss of certification recognition.

From the consumer perspective, certification is a fact from which a consumer may or may not draw an inference of the quality of a practitioner's work in a given profession. The only potential direct method of public protection is through enforcement by the private organization that confers the certification.

Like licensure, certification is usually granted for a limited period of time and must be renewed based upon criteria set by the private entity.

Certification does not provide a legal mechanism to practice an otherwise governmentally regulated profession, but does provide certificate holders to accurately promote the fact that they are certified by the private entity.



Federation of State  
Massage Therapy Boards

7111 W. 151st Street, Suite 356, Overland Park, KS 66223

Phone: 913.681.0380 / Fax: 913.681.0391

Toll Free: 1.888.70.FSMTB