



MBLEx

Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination

Candidate Handbook

Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards
fsmtb.org

Effective July 2016



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The Federation of State Massage
Therapy Boards

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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 Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (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 website (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 website (www.fsmtb.org) to learn about any updates that may be introduced regarding eligibility, exam administrations, exam content or other policies.

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*.

Contact Us

If you are unsure about an examination policy or procedure, contact FSMTB at mblex@fsmtb.org or call the dedicated MBLEx toll-free number 1.866.9MB.EXAM (1.866.962.3926).

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 member boards in fulfilling their responsibility of protecting the public.

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, FSMTB 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 and 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, the FSMTB has 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 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.

Contacting You

FSMTB's primary mechanism of communication with you will be via email. It is your responsibility to keep FSMTB apprised of your current email address. If you do not have an email address, FSMTB will communicate with you via USPS which may result in delays in communication. Such delays will not extend any timeframes or deadlines.

If your name changes, submit the Change of Contact Information Form (available at fsmtb.org) along with the appropriate supporting documentation, e.g., marriage certificate, divorce decree or court documents showing a legal name change.

Complete the Change of Contact Information Form, and mail it to FSMTB, PO Box 198748, Nashville, TN 37219. You may also email your change of contact information to 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 results 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 as required by law, including governmental licensing bodies upon appropriate written request. FSMTB will not communicate with a third-party such as your school, parent, spouse or friend regarding your examination score or examination experience without your express consent.

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 applicable laws and regulations.



MBLEx Score Invalidation

Violation of any FSMTB examination policy or Pearson VUE testing site rule may be grounds for a candidate's MBLEx score being invalidated by the FSMTB. If an MBLEx score is invalidated, FSMTB reserves the right to suspend further access to the exam for a period of time of no less than 12 months. A new application must be submitted with a massage school transcript and access to the MBLEx will be determined at the discretion of the FSMTB Board of Directors.

The MBLEx Process

1 Application

Candidate may apply online or by mail.

2 Processing

FSMTB processes the application within five business days.

3 Authorization to Test

FSMTB sends ATT via email. Candidate must test within 90 days.

4 Schedule MBLEx

Candidate may schedule online or call toll-free, selecting date, time, and location.

5 Confirmation

Appointment confirmation is sent to the candidate via email.

6 Take MBLEx

Candidate will receive result at the test center and FSMTB sends result to the designated state board or agency within 24 hours.

Massage Education Policy

This policy was revised subsequent to the passage of a resolution put forth by the Georgia Board of Massage and adopted by the FSMTB Membership at the 2016 annual meeting.

Effective July 1, 2017, candidates seeking access to the MBLEx will be required to substantiate either:

- a. enrollment in and having received education and training in all subject areas of the MBLEx Content Outline from an approved massage therapy education program; or
- b. graduation from an approved massage therapy education program.

Substantiation documentation must be submitted to FSMTB directly from the education program.

An approved massage therapy education program is one that is approved or recognized by the state board or agency authorized to regulate massage therapy in the state in which the school is located.

In the event the massage therapy board/agency does not approve or recognize education programs, approval or recognition from the relevant state department of education or like agency, in the state in which the school is located, shall apply. In the event of a conflict between the state board/agency and department of education, the approval or recognition of the massage therapy board/agency shall prevail.

Application & Documentation Requirements

Before you submit an application to take the MBLEx you must make sure that you meet the criteria for eligibility.

The FSMTB has established two pathways 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 pathways. Each of these eligibility pathways is outlined below.

MBLEx applications do not require the submission of a massage school transcript; however, FSMTB reserves the right to request verification of education at any time.

Two Ways to Apply

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

Pathway #1

To be deemed eligible to take the MBLEx by FSMTB, you must meet all of the following requirements:

- Submit an MBLEx Application;
- 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.

Pathway #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;
- Submit an MBLEx Application;
- Acknowledge and agree in writing to abide by FSMTB policies; and
- Pay the required fee.

Apprenticeship & Foreign Education

If you received your massage education by completing an apprenticeship or obtained your massage education outside of the United States, check with the State Licensing Board or Agency to verify that they will consider your education acceptable for licensing BEFORE you apply to take the MBLEx.

MBLEx applicants with these circumstances must submit proof of your massage education with your MBLEx application. You must also apply for your license to practice through your State Licensing Board or Agency before you take the MBLEx. In all such cases, FSMTB will verify with a State Licensing Board or Agency that the State is in possession of the individual's licensing application before the examination candidate will be approved to take the MBLEx.

Remember that passing the MBLEx does NOT guarantee that a State Board or Licensing Agency will issue you a license. Passing the MBLEx is only one component of licensure requirements.

Testing Accommodations

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, properly documented and does not fundamentally alter the examination or jeopardize exam security.

The *MBLEx Testing Accommodations Handbook* and request form are available at fsmtb.org. Please review these items for details on how to request testing accommodations.

Individuals who wish to request testing accommodations must notify the FSMTB at the time of submitting their MBLEx application by choosing the accommodations selection on the application. Subsequent to the MBLEx application, the applicant must submit an ADA Request form and documentation of the diagnosis. Please read the MBLEx Testing Accommodations Handbook at fsmtb.org.

If you require accommodations in the application process itself, contact FSMTB for assistance.

There are no additional fees assessed to the exam candidate for testing accommodations.

Candidates may request the same or different accommodations when retaking the examination.

Candidates who have been granted testing accommodations will receive an approval letter. You must sign and return the approval letter to FSMTB, accepting the accommodations granted, in order to receive your *Authorization to Test (ATT)*. You must bring the accommodations approval letter to the test site and present it at check-in. Accommodations cannot be requested on the day of the exam.

Documentation

Individuals applying directly to the FSMTB must complete and submit an MBLEEx Application along with the fee.

You may obtain a paper MBLEEx application form from FSMTB by mail or print an MBLEEx application form from our website. Alternately, you can save time and paper by applying directly online at www.fsmtb.org.

Be sure that the name you submit on your MBLEEx application matches the name on the two pieces of identification that you bring to the testing center.

Insufficient Documentation Notification

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

The FSMTB will retain incomplete applications for six months. After that time, the application will expire and the fees forfeited.

Authenticity and Adequacy of Documentation

The FSMTB may 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 information submitted as part of the MBLEEx application:

Accuracy is essential. Falsification, misrepresentation, or omission of any required information on the application or in supporting documentation are grounds for denial of your application.

If requested, transcripts must be sent directly from the school to FSMTB.

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.

Applicants are solely responsible for ensuring that FSMTB receives all required or requested documentation. The FSMTB is not responsible for lost, undelivered, or misdelivered documents; therefore, we recommend that you apply online. If you wish to submit written materials, use a traceable form of delivery such as return receipt, Express Mail, First-Class Mail or Priority Mail with delivery signature confirmation, or a private overnight delivery service such as FedEx or UPS.

Signature and Acknowledgment

Your signature on the *MBLEx Application Form* or submission of your *Application* electronically 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. You completed the application and 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 acknowledge and agree that giving information about FSMTB exam questions or content to others can result not only in a denial to release examination results, invalidations of examination results, suspension from access to the MBLEx and other FSMTB programs and services, but also in possible legal action against you.

FSMTB has provided a video explaining [examination security](#) which can be viewed at [fsmtb.org](https://www.fsmtb.org). We strongly advise all candidates to make time to view the video prior to taking the examination.

Application Approval

Submission of an application does not automatically guarantee your eligibility to take the MBLEx. Once your application and all requisite documentation is received, there is a five-business-day processing period to process your payment and review your eligibility. The FSMTB will retain incomplete applications for six months. After that time, the application will be expired and the fees forfeited.

Authorization to Test

After your application is approved, the FSMTB will issue an *Authorization to Test (ATT)* to you via email. Applicants who do not have an email address will receive the ATT via regular USPS mail.

The ATT will include information that you will need to register for the exam date and exam site of your choice. You must complete the exam within the 90-day period indicated on your ATT.

Be certain to review your ATT for accuracy. Your name should match the name on the two pieces of identification that you will bring to the testing center. Do not delay contacting FSMTB if you have not received your ATT within five business days.

ATT Expiration

If you are unable to test within 90 days of your authorization 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. FSMTB will not extend the expiration date of an ATT.

Withdrawing an Application

You may withdraw your application by submitting a written request to FSMTB via email at mblex@fsmtb.org. Please include your postal address in your withdrawal request. Note:

- You must cancel your scheduled exam appointment with Pearson VUE at least one business day prior to requesting an application withdrawal.
- There is no opportunity to cancel an exam appointment or withdraw an application less than one business day prior to a scheduled exam appointment.
- Exam fees may be 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.

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. Fees are due at the time of application submission.

Retake Fees

Candidates who apply to retake the MBLEx are required to pay the exam fee of \$195. If directed by a State Board or Licensing Agency to retake the MBLEx after previously passing it, the applicant is required to be approved by the State Board or Licensing Agency to retest before an ATT will be issued.

Refunds

Examination fees paid for an exam not yet taken may be refunded upon written request, when the request meets examination withdraw/cancellation policies, minus a \$45 processing fee. Refunds will not be issued in the following circumstances:

- Your involvement in cheating or fraud at any point in the application and testing process.
- Applying for the exam and not scheduling to test within 90 days of approval.
- Denial of your MBLEx Application.
- Registering for an exam and not taking the exam due to lateness or absenteeism.
- Registering for an exam and rescheduling less than one business day prior to your appointment.

- Registering for the MBLEx and not taking the exam due to lack of acceptable identification or other event determined by test center personnel.

If requested documentation for an incomplete application is not received prior to the six month expiration date of an MBLEx application, all fees will be forfeited and reapplication is subject to the fee structure in place at that time.

Fraud, Cheating, and Forfeiture of Fees

In the event of a fraudulent application, submission of fraudulent documents, inaccuracies, misrepresentations or discrepancies, the introduction of fraud at any point in the application process, sharing exam content after your exam administration, advance access to exam content prior to your exam administration (cheating), or violation of any FSMTB and test site rules, policies or procedures, 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 on a daily basis, year-round at test sites across the United States. Once you are approved to test and receive an *Authorization to Test (ATT)*, you will use that information to register for the exam date and exam site of your choice. Review the spelling of your name on the ATT. If it does not match the identification you will take to the testing site, be sure to contact FSMTB immediately via mblex@fsmtb.org and provide the correct spelling.

The ATT includes the beginning and end dates of the 90-day period in which you are eligible to schedule and take your exam. Note that your exam fee will be forfeited for failure to appear for a scheduled appointment or upon expiration of the ATT.

We recommend that you schedule your examination as soon as you receive your ATT so that you have the best opportunity to get the date and location that you want. Same day appointments and walk-ins are not permitted. To schedule your examination appointment, you may use the online scheduler at 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 Notice

After you schedule your examination you will receive a registration confirmation notice with specific information from Pearson VUE via email or postal mail (if you did not include an email address on your application) about the date, time and location of the test you are registered to take. The information will include directions to the test site

and reporting time. It may be helpful, although it is not necessary, to bring your registration confirmation notice with you to the test center.

Changing Your Exam Registration

Within your 90-day eligibility window you may change your test date and/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. Cancellations cannot be made by leaving a phone message; you must speak with a scheduling representative. If you cancel your appointment online, be sure to complete the entire process. You will receive an email with your cancellation confirmation when you successfully complete the cancellation process (by phone or online).

Test Center Locations

FSMTB examinations are administered at Pearson Professional Centers. Please check the website pearsonvue.com/fsmtb for current test center information.

What To Expect At The Testing Center

FSMTB has provided a video explaining the [testing experience](#) which can be viewed at fsmtb.org. We strongly advise all candidates to view the video prior to taking the examination.

Exam Language

The FSMTB offers the MBLE[®]x in the English and Spanish languages only. Examination language is chosen by the candidate when completing the application.

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 with the requisite education and training should pass the examination.

Development of the Examination

The MBLEx 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. Several thousand practitioners participate in the job analysis surveys. 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 MBLEx 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

The FSMTB contracts with an independent vendor for the ongoing development and psychometric analyses of the MBLEx.

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 administration, scoring, and reporting 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.

MBLEx Content Outline

ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY (12%)

- 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. Tissue injury and repair
- D. 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
 - Resistant

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

- A. Overview of 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 (14%)

- 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

% weighting is approximate

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 MODALITIES / CULTURE / HISTORY (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 (15%)

- 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 (13%)

- 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

G. Communication

H. Business Practices

- Business planning
- Strategic planning
- Office management
- Marketing
- Hiring/Interviewing
- Documentation and Records
 - Client records
 - Business records
- I. Healthcare and business terminology

% weighting is approximate

MBLEx Bibliography

The Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination reflects practice in the United States as determined by the most recent Job Task Analysis.

There is no single text recommended by FSMTB. FSMTB's item writers and examination development committee members use texts as resources, some of which are listed below; however, the sources used are not limited to the books listed here. Because 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, from 2017 forward, such a list will no longer be provided.

Reference Texts

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Sohnen-Moe, Cherie. *Business Mastery*. (5th edition). Tucson: Sohnen-Moe Associates Inc., 2016.

Werner, Ruth. *A Massage Therapist's Guide to Pathology*. (6th edition). Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer, 2016.

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, 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 before, during or after 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.

Unless otherwise informed, candidates who cheat or attempt to cheat on the examination, or who otherwise breach FSMTB's security policies and procedures, will have their exam results invalidated, will forfeit all fees, be barred from reapplying to take the MBLEx for a period of 12 months, will be subject to all examination and fee requirements in place at the time 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 biometric security procedures such as palm vein recognition will be employed as part of the check-in procedures.

Candidates are not permitted to leave the building during the examination.

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 new MBLEx application. There are no refunds for examination day absences.

Required Identification

You must bring TWO forms of identification (ID) to the test site - see examples below.

The **primary form** of identification must include a photograph and signature, and must not be temporary or 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.

PRIMARY (PHOTO, SIGNATURE, NOT EXPIRED)	SECONDARY (SIGNATURE, NOT EXPIRED)
Government issued U.S. State/Territory driver's license*	U.S. Social Security Card
Government issued U.S. State/Territory ID	School ID
Government issued Passport or U.S. Certificate of Naturalization	Employee ID/work badge
Military ID	Bank issued credit card, ATM or debit card
Alien registration card (green card or permanent resident visa)	Any ID on the Primary list

* NOTE: a temporary driver's license, a learner's license, a learner's permit or an expired driver's license with renewal paperwork is NOT acceptable.

The same version of your name must appear on your application, the Authorization to Test, and on the identification you present at the testing center. The accuracy of your first and last names on your ID is critical and must match your name as submitted on your MBLEx application. Your middle name or initial is less critical and is not a required field on the MBLEx application. If you have a middle name or initial on your ID and not on your MBLEx application, it will not prevent you from testing.

You will not be admitted to the examination without proper identification. If the test center staff question 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 you have not proven your identity.

Admission to the test center and access to the examination does not imply that your identification is authentic and does not preclude subsequent invalidation of your MBLEx results due to misrepresentation, impersonation, forgery or fraud.

FSMTB has provided a video explaining [identification](#) requirements which can be viewed at [fsmtb.org](https://www.fsmtb.org). We strongly advise all candidates to make time to view the video prior to taking the examination.

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.

- If an examination is cancelled by Pearson VUE, candidates scheduled for that site will be contacted by Pearson VUE to reschedule another exam date. You will not incur any additional exam fees if your test is cancelled by Pearson VUE or FSMTB for any reason.
- The FSMTB is not responsible for any personal expenses (e.g., travel, food, lodging) incurred for an exam administration that is cancelled due to inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies.

Proctors

Proctors will assist you with the check-in process at the testing center and will observe examinations in progress. Proctors can review test site protocol and procedures but are prohibited from answering questions about exam content or from providing support for any computer screen prompts. Proctors monitor breaks and require you to provide biometric verification if you need to leave the exam room during the examination.

Prohibited Items

Cell phone access is prohibited at any time while at the testing center.

Backpack or bag	Computers of any kind	Large jewelry of any kind	Radio transmitter or receiver
Beverage of any kind	Cup or container of any kind	Magazine	Recording device or player
Bluetooth devices of any kind	Digital scanning or imaging device, stick or pen	Notebook	Ruler or slide rule
Books or textbooks	Earplugs	Notes in any form	Study materials of any kind
Briefcase or other luggage	E-cigarettes or gum	Outline	Sunglasses
Calculator	Electronic device of any kind	Pager or beeper	Umbrella
Calendar, day planner, or other organizer	Electronic, printed or live translators	Paper of any kind	USB storage device
Camera of any kind	Eyeglasses case	Paper or electronic dictionary	Wallet or clutch
Car or house keys	Food or snacks of any kind	Pens, pencils, erasers	Watch of any kind
Cellphone or smart phone	Good luck charms	Pencil sharpener	Weapon of any kind, including pocket knife
Cigarettes or tobacco products	Hat, cap or visor	Plastic bag	
Coat, jacket, gloves	Headphones or earphones	Purse or handbag	

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 or accessing lockers during the examination, whether inside or outside of the testing room, will not be allowed to continue their examination, will forfeit all fees, and will receive a failing result due to an incomplete examination.

Translators

Translators are not permitted at any test site, including print, electronic or in person. Testing center proctors and staff are prohibited from acting as translators at any point in the check-in and testing experience. Candidates are prohibited from bringing a translator to translate for them during any part of the examination appointment, including check-in.

Clothing

Candidates are advised to wear clothing that will be comfortable for various temperature conditions at the test center. Note that eye glasses, layered clothing and accessories will be inspected prior to access to the testing room and examination.

Test Length and Time Allowed

Candidates taking the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination must complete a 100-item multiple choice examination on computer. Candidates have two (2) hours to complete the examination process. Of this time, a maximum of five minutes is allotted to the security and confidentiality agreement and five minutes to a brief survey. When scheduling the appointment to test, candidates may select an exam site and exam date of their choice, within the 90-day authorized testing window.

EXAMINATION	NUMBER OF ITEMS	TIME ALLOWED
Security Agreement	N/A	5 minutes
MBLEx Survey	N/A	5 minutes
Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx)	100	110 minutes

Be aware that you have limited time to read and respond to the introductory screens. While there is adequate time to read and respond, there is not enough time to leave the testing room or do anything other than proceed to the exam. Proctors at the test site will instruct you on what to do if you finish the exam before the allotted time has passed.

Examination Breaks

There are no scheduled breaks during the examination unless approved for ADA testing accommodations during the MBLEx application process.

Unscheduled breaks during the examination are taken on your own time. The clock does not stop if you take a break during the examination to eat or use the restroom. Plan your exam time carefully. Security protocols will be in effect as you exit and reenter the testing room; there is no time adjustment for security checks.

How Many Times Can I Take The MBLEx?

FSMTB does not limit the number of times a candidate may take the MBLEx; however, a State may impose a limit. Check to see if your State Licensing Board or Agency has a limit to the number of times a candidate may attempt to pass the MBLEx.

FSMTB allows candidates who have failed the MBLEx to retake the examination after thirty (30) days has elapsed from the previous examination attempt. You must reapply online or mail in the MBLEx application form and fee.

Exam Administration Conditions

Should you experience any concerns, challenges or difficulties during the administration of the examination (too hot, too cold, too noisy, testing issues, technology issues, etc.), it is your responsibility to notify a proctor about your concern at the time of your examination and before you leave the test center. Candidates should also notify FSMTB in writing within two business days after the exam administration of concerns that were reported at the test center so that FSMTB can verify. FSMTB, in consultation with the test administrator, will investigate and verify the incident.

Concerns not resolved at the test site should be submitted in writing to FSMTB. If you have any concerns that need to be reported to FSMTB they must be submitted to FSMTB within two days of your examination date. Please send your written report to FSMTB via email to info@fsmtb.org.

Examination Results

Examination results are reported as PASS or FAIL 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 examination result at the test center, upon completing the examination. FSMTB never releases copies of examinations or individual examination items.

After you complete the examination, you will receive your examination result at the test center. This report will indicate whether you have passed or failed. If you fail, you will be given diagnostic information indicating your performance in each content area. The indicators on the diagnostic summary are provided to assist your future study efforts.

Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT)

The MBLEx has a fixed length of 100 questions and is a computer adaptive test. Candidates must answer every question in the order presented. With CAT, when a candidate answers a question correctly, the next question has a slightly higher level of difficulty. The difficulty level of questions presented to the candidate continues to increase until a question is answered incorrectly. Then a slightly easier question is presented. In this way, the exam is customized to the candidate's ability level.

FSMTB has provided a video explaining [Computer Adaptive Testing](#) which can be viewed at [fsmtb.org](https://www.fsmtb.org). We advise all candidates to make time to view the video prior to taking the examination.

Scoring

The total scaled score you achieve on the examination determines whether you pass or fail. The scale ranges from 300 to 900 (the lowest score anyone can get is 300 and the highest score anyone can get is 900) and a scaled score of 630 is set as the passing score on the MBLEx. Not completing the examination will result in a failing score.

Passing results are determined through the modified Angoff process, a statistical procedure for establishing the minimum pass level using the judgment of experts. NOTE: In 2017, MBLEx results will be reported as pass or fail.

Criterion-Referenced Scoring

The passing standard for the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination is set by the FSMTB Board of Directors using a recommendation from a panel of subject matter experts under the direction of professionals 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 standard 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.

Retaking an Examination

Reapplying For The Exam

To reapply to take the MBLEx, candidates must submit a new application online or by mail, inclusive of exam fee. Candidates who fail the exam may reapply; however, a new Authorization to Test (ATT) will indicate that a minimum period of thirty days (30) must elapse from the date of the failed examination attempt before being able to retake the exam.

Once FSMTB is in receipt of the application and associated fees, upon review and approval, a new Authorization to Test (ATT) will be sent to you by FSMTB, after the 30-day waiting period has elapsed indicating your new 90-day authorization period.

Achieving Licensure

The MBLEx is used by State Licensing Boards and 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. Please note that the license to legally practice is issued by State Licensing Boards and Agencies, not the FSMTB. The FSMTB provides the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination which is only one component of licensure requirements.

Even though you may receive a passing result on the MBLEx, this does NOT mean that you are licensed, and you may not represent or advertise that you are licensed until you receive official notification of licensure from State Licensing Boards and Agencies.

Reporting MBLEx Results to Licensing Boards

Candidates must indicate on their MBLEx Application the State to which they wish their exam result sent. The first result report request is fulfilled at no additional cost to the candidate. A second state may be chosen on the application for an additional fee.

Future requests for your exam results to be reported to a state licensing board or agency may be requested by completing the MBLEx Result Transfer form available at [fsmtb.org](https://www.fsmtb.org). Candidates are solely responsible for submitting result transfer requests in a timely manner. You are encouraged to check with the State in which you are applying, for licensure-related deadlines.

When FSMTB reports your MBLEx result to the State you have designated, it is reported along with the identification and educational information that you provided to FSMTB on your application. This ensures that your exam result is matched correctly to the licensing application you submit to the State. State Boards and Licensing Agencies will contact

FSMTB if there are any discrepancies in the information when comparing your MBLEx result file to your application for licensure. In the event of a discrepancy, FSMTB will request that you submit documentation to verify the information that you provided on your MBLEx application. If any of the information on your MBLEx application is determined to be inaccurate, FSMTB reserves the right to invalidate your MBLEx result, suspend future access to the MBLEx or other FMSTB programs and services, or impose other conditions on access to the MBLEx.

It is the candidate's responsibility to meet State licensure requirements. Contact information for State Licensure Boards and Agencies is available on our website at www.fsmtb.org.

We hope you have a positive and successful experience taking the MBLEx as you move towards becoming a licensed professional.



MBLEx

MASSAGE & BODYWORK
LICENSING EXAMINATION



The Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards

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