

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87R3776 ANG-D

S.B. 1130
By: Hancock
Business & Commerce
3/26/2021
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Prior to COVID-19, the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation required all portions of the massage therapy school curriculum to be taught in person. Due to COVID-19, Governor Abbott issued a waiver allowing most of the massage therapy school curriculum to be taught online, with the exception of 50 hands-on hours that are required as part of an internship program.

The bill allows students to continue to take a portion of the massage therapy school curriculum online, which removes barriers to entry, both for schools that wish to offer online courses, and for students who may have a full-time job or other responsibilities that prevent them from attending in-person courses. The bill would still require that the "hands-on" portions of the course, the Swedish massage training and the internship, take place in person.

As proposed, S.B. 1130 amends current law relating to the provision of certain massage therapy instruction using distance learning.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 455.156, Occupations Code, by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (c), as follows:

(b) Requires an applicant for a license under Section 455.156 (License Requirements for Massage Therapist) to be an individual and:

(1) present evidence satisfactory to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation that the person has satisfactorily completed massage therapy studies in a 500-hour minimum, supervised course of instruction in a manner provided by Subsection (c), rather than a supervised course of instruction provided by a massage therapy instructor at a massage school, a licensed massage school, a state-approved educational institution, or any combination of instructors or schools, in which at least certain hours of instruction on certain topics are provided; and

(2)-(3) makes no changes to these subdivisions.

(c) Requires that the hours of instruction required by Subsection (b) be provided by a massage therapy instructor at a massage school, licensed massage school, state-approved educational institution, or any combination of instructors or schools. Authorizes the hours of instruction required by Subsections (b)(1)(B)-(H) (relating to the number of hours required to be dedicated to certain fields of massage therapy) to be provided by a massage therapy instructor through a school or institution described by this subsection using distance learning.

SECTION 2. Authorizes an applicant for a massage therapist license to satisfy the requirements of Sections 455.156(b)(1)(B)-(H), Occupations Code, using distance learning as provided by Section 455.156(c), Occupations Code, as added by this Act, regardless of whether the application is submitted before, on, or after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.