



# ALEXANDRIA HEALTH DEPARTMENT

## Environmental Health Division

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[www.alexandriava.gov/MassagePermits](http://www.alexandriava.gov/MassagePermits)

## Massage Therapist Guide

### New Permit Instructions

1. **Obtain the Virginia State Certification.** Apply and obtain a Virginia Department of Health Professions, Board of Nursing Certificate to practice as a massage therapist. To contact the Board of Nursing for an application, see the below table.
2. **Find an Approved Work Location.** Permitted massage therapists can only practice at certain approved locations, including permitted massage establishments or specific hotels that provide in-room massages. Home massage is not permitted by the Alexandria Health Department; therapists seeking to practice home massage should contact the Alexandria Police Department.

Once a therapist has secured a position, he/she shall obtain an "employment letter" from the hotel or establishment stating the therapist is (or will be, pending Health Department approval) approved to provide massage services at that location. This letter must be on the facility's official letterhead.

*Hotels:* Some hotels contract with an intermediary company to manage the massage services provided to its guests. A therapist may provide a letter from the intermediary in lieu of the letter from the hotel.

3. **Complete an Application for Permit.** Obtain and complete a [Massage Therapist Permit Application](#). The application is available from the Health Department online or in person during normal business hours. Make two copies of the application.
4. **Pay the Application Fee.** Bring all three applications to the Treasury Division to pay the \$50 non-refundable application [fee](#). If paying by check, make it payable to the "City of Alexandria" and write "119768-7043" in the memo line. The cashier shall stamp the applications as paid and retain one copy for their own records.

Office	Address	Activity
Board of Nursing Ph. 804.367.4515	Perimeter Center 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300 Henrico, VA 23233-1463 <a href="http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing">www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing</a>	For state certification
Business Tax Office Ph. 703.746.4398	301 King Street, Rm 1700 Alexandria, VA 22314	Apply for business license (not required in all cases)
Health Department Ph. 703.746.4910	4480 King Street, Rm 360 Alexandria, VA 22302 <a href="http://www.alexandriava.gov/MassagePermits">www.alexandriava.gov/MassagePermits</a>	Pick up permit Amend existing permits
Police Department Ph. 703.746.6277	3600 Wheeler Avenue Alexandria, VA 22304 <a href="http://www.alexandriava.gov/MassagePermits">www.alexandriava.gov/MassagePermits</a>	Background check Home massage permit
Treasury Division Ph. 703.746.3902	301 King Street, Rm 1510 Alexandria, VA 22314	Pay permit fee

**Note:** If a therapist anticipates working as an independent contractor, he/she should visit the Business Tax Branch for information about obtaining a business license. If he or she operates a business under a fictitious (or trade name), call the Health Department for a letter to assist in the application of the business license.

5. **Obtain a Background Check.** Contact the Police Department to schedule an appointment. Sgt. Jose Garcia schedules appointments from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesdays through Thursdays. Fingerprints and photographs are taken at no charge. On the day of the appointment, the therapist must bring all of the following:
  - Drivers license or valid photo ID and a copy of his/her Social Security card.
  - Board of Nursing Certificate to practice as a massage therapist (step 1)
  - Employment letter (step 2); can be emailed to [jose.garcia@alexandriava.gov](mailto:jose.garcia@alexandriava.gov)
  - Transcript(s) and diploma(s) from the massage school attended
  - The paid health department application copies

At the conclusion of the appointment, the therapist's remaining applications will be collected. If approved, one application copy will be forwarded to the Health Department; other documentation will not. The approval process can vary from person to person, but the average wait time is approximately 1-2 weeks.

6. **Issuance of the Permit.** Once received at the Health Department, the approved application will be processed. If the work location is permitted, the therapist's permit will be issued. The applicant will be notified by phone to pick up the permit in person at the Health Department. Prior to issuing the permit, our office will need the employment letter (see step 2) and a copy of a government issued photo ID for verification purposes. If this information is provided in advanced, and the address listed on the government ID matches that on the application, the Health Department can mail the permit directly to the applicant's preferred mailing address.

### ***Working at Multiple Locations***

Every permit issued by the Health Department lists the therapist's name and specific work address. If the therapist desires to work at multiple locations simultaneously (ex: a salon chain that has two locations in the City), a separate permit is issued for each location.

### ***Adding/Changing Work Locations***

To add an additional work location, complete and submit a new [Massage Therapist Permit Application](#) to the Health Department; no additional fee is required so long as the permit is not up for renewal. The employment letter described in Step 2 above shall be attached.

### ***In-Room Hotel Massages***

The Alexandria City Code allows a therapist to provide in-room massage services to registered, overnight guests of hotels under specific conditions. Call for more information.

### ***Massage Therapist Permit Renewal***

Every two years a therapist shall renew his or her permit(s) by completing and submitting a new [Massage Therapist Permit Application](#). Renewals can be submitted by mail or in person, and it must be accompanied by the non-refundable application fee. The therapist is responsible for tracking his/her own permit expiration date. The Health Department makes every effort to notify the therapist when his/her permit is nearing expiration, but it is not always possible to do this.

### ***Permit Closures***

A permit is considered voluntarily surrendered if the therapist does not renew his/her permit. A permit can be surrendered without the therapist's permission, if the approved work location withdraws its consent. A permit can be rescinded (closed) by the Health Department if the therapist does not maintain an active certification from the VA Board of Nursing. In each case, the therapist will be notified by mail.