

**Chapter 246-940 WAC**  
**CERTIFIED ANIMAL MASSAGE THERAPIST**

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**WAC**

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**WAC 246-940-005 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout the chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

- (1) "Client" means the owner of the animal or the owner's agent.
- (2) "Department" means the department of health.
- (3) "Didactic instruction" means instructor led classroom instruction.
- (4) "Distance learning" includes instruction completed through written correspondence courses, video instruction, or provided electronically through web-based instruction.
- (5) "Large animals" includes equine, food animals, camelids-ruminants, nonruminants, and large exotics.
- (6) "Client information form" means a form provided to the large or small animal's client informing them of the therapist's scope of practice and qualifications.
- (7) "Practical or hands-on instruction" means in-person instruction, or demonstration under the direction of a qualified instructor.
- (8) "Secretary" means the secretary of the department of health.
- (9) "Small animals" includes cats, dogs, pocket pets, avian and small exotics.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050 and 2016 c 41. WSR 17-11-058, § 246-940-005, filed 5/16/17, effective 7/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-005, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-010 Scope of practice.** (1) A certified animal massage therapist is an individual who provides external manipulation or pressure of soft tissues by use of the hands, body, or device designed and limited to providing massage. Animal massage may include techniques such as stroking, percussions, compressions, friction, Swedish gymnastics or movements, gliding, kneading, range of motion or stretching, and fascial or connective tissue stretching, with or without the aid of superficial heat, cold, water, lubricants, or salts.

(2) A certified animal massage therapist may not diagnose, prognose, or treat diseases, deformities, defects, wounds, or injuries of animals; attempt to adjust or manipulate any articulations of the animal's body or spine or mobilization of these articulations by the use of a thrusting force; perform acupuncture involving the use of needles; or perform mechanical therapies that are restricted to the field of veterinary medicine.

(3) A certified animal massage therapist may provide animal massage solely for purposes of the animal's well-being.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050 and 2016 c 41. WSR 17-11-058, § 246-940-010, filed 5/16/17, effective 7/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-010, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-020 Certification requirements.** To qualify for certification, a candidate must:

(1) Successfully complete a three hundred hour training program approved by the secretary, that includes instruction in general animal massage techniques, kinesiology, anatomy, physiology, behavior, first-aid care and handling techniques:

(a) To practice animal massage on large animals, the three hundred hours of instruction must be related to the performance of animal massage on large animals;

(b) To practice animal massage on small animals, the three hundred hours of instruction must be related to the performance of animal massage on small animals;

(c) For certification in both small animal massage and large animal massage, the candidate must complete the training described in (a) and (b) of this subsection.

(2) Successfully complete a qualifying examination approved by the secretary:

(a) To practice animal massage on large animals, successfully complete the National Certification Examination for Equine Massage administered by the National Board of Certification for Animal Acupresure and Massage;

(b) To practice animal massage on small animals, successfully complete the National Certification Examination for Canine Massage administered by the National Board of Certification for Animal Acupresure and Massage.

(c) Candidates seeking certification in both small animal massage and large animal massage must meet all requirements in (a) and (b) of this subsection.

(3) Successfully complete the Washington state animal massage jurisprudence examination.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.19.050, 18.29.130, 18.29.210, 18.34.120, 18.46.060, 18.55.095, 18.84.040, 18.88B.060, 18.89.050, 18.130.050, 18.138.070, 18.155.040, 18.200.050, 18.205.060, 18.215.040, 18.230.040, 18.240.050, 18.250.020, 18.290.020, 18.360.030, 18.360.070, 70.41.030, 70.230.020, 71.12.670, and 18.108.085. WSR 21-02-002, § 246-940-020, filed 12/23/20, effective 1/23/21. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-020, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-030 Washington state animal massage jurisprudence examination.** (1) The Washington state animal massage jurisprudence examination consists of multiple choice questions relating to state laws and administrative regulations in the practice of animal massage.

(2) The passing score on the examination is ninety percent.

(3) An applicant who does not successfully complete the examination may request to retake the examination by submitting a written request to the department.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-030, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-040 Application requirements.** An applicant for certification as an animal massage therapist shall submit or cause to be submitted to the department:

- (1) A completed application and fee;
- (2) Proof of successful completion of the training required in WAC 246-940-050 received directly from the program where the applicant completed the training;
- (3) Proof of successful completion of a certification examination required in WAC 246-940-020;
- (4) Proof of successful completion of the Washington state jurisprudence examination as required in WAC 246-940-020;
- (5) Verification from all states in which the applicant holds or has held a credential to practice animal massage, indicating that the applicant has or has not been subject to charges or disciplinary action for unprofessional conduct or impairment; and
- (6) Additional documentation as required by the secretary to determine whether an applicant is qualified for certification.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.19.050, 18.29.130, 18.29.210, 18.34.120, 18.46.060, 18.55.095, 18.84.040, 18.88B.060, 18.89.050, 18.130.050, 18.138.070, 18.155.040, 18.200.050, 18.205.060, 18.215.040, 18.230.040, 18.240.050, 18.250.020, 18.290.020, 18.360.030, 18.360.070, 70.41.030, 70.230.020, 71.12.670, and 18.108.085. WSR 21-02-002, § 246-940-040, filed 12/23/20, effective 1/23/21. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050 and 2016 c 41. WSR 17-11-058, § 246-940-040, filed 5/16/17, effective 7/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-040, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-050 Approval of animal massage therapist educational programs.** (1) The secretary recognizes as approved those animal massage programs that:

- (a) Are accredited by a recognized regional or state accrediting body or vocational or technical accrediting body; and
  - (b) Meet the requirements of subsection (3)(a) through (f) of this section.
- (2) Methods of instruction may include didactic instruction, distance learning, and practical or hands-on instruction.
- (3) Approved animal massage programs must include a minimum of three hundred hours of instruction related to either large animals or small animals as follows:
- (a) A minimum of seventy-five hours of instruction in general animal massage techniques. At least thirty-five of those hours must be practical or hands-on instruction. The instruction must include, but not be limited to, the following subjects:
    - (i) Technique:
      - (A) Stroking including effleurage, and gliding;
      - (B) Percussions, including tapotement;
      - (C) Compressions;

- (D) Friction, including rubbing, and gliding with pressure;
- (E) Swedish gymnastics or movements;
- (F) Kneading;
- (G) Range of motion or stretching;
- (H) Fascial or connective tissue stretching.
- (ii) Contraindications in zoonotic diseases;
- (iii) Documentation and recordkeeping;
- (iv) Physiological benefits;
- (v) Palpation; and
- (vi) Body mechanics of the therapist.
- (b) A minimum of sixty hours of instruction in kinesiology. At least twenty-one of those hours must be practical or hands-on instruction. The instruction must include the following subjects:
  - (i) Biomechanics, including range of motion, gait analysis, and muscle actions;
  - (ii) Conformation analysis; and
  - (iii) Observation.
- (c) A minimum of seventy-five hours of instruction in anatomy and physiology. At least twenty-one of those hours must be practical or hands-on instruction.
  - (i) The instruction in anatomy and physiology must include the function and structure of the following systems:
    - (A) Skeletal system;
    - (B) Muscular system;
    - (C) Nervous system;
    - (D) Digestive system; and
    - (E) Circulatory system.
  - (ii) The instruction in anatomy and physiology must include the relationship and effect of massage on the following systems:
    - (A) Endocrine system;
    - (B) Integumentary; and
    - (C) Fascial anatomy.
- (d) A minimum of seventy-five hours of instruction in animal behavior and handling. At least twenty-one of those hours must be practical or hands-on instruction. The instruction must include the following subjects:
  - (i) Breed characteristics;
  - (ii) Body language;
  - (iii) Social dynamics;
  - (iv) Signs of stress;
  - (v) Communication;
  - (vi) Methods of restraints;
  - (vii) Situations with specially trained animals; and
  - (viii) Environment.
- (e) A minimum of ten hours of instruction in business practices. The instruction must include the following subjects:
  - (i) Ethics;
  - (ii) File management;
  - (iii) Documentation of care;
  - (iv) Liability; and
  - (v) Multicultural education as described in RCW 43.70.615.
- (f) A minimum of five hours of instruction in first aid. At least two of those hours must be practical or hands-on instruction. The instruction must include the following subjects:
  - (i) Vitals, including respiration, pulse, heart rate, temperature, and capillary refill;
  - (ii) Recognizing emergencies;

- (iii) Emergency first-aid care;
- (iv) Hydration test; and
- (v) Ethics and responsibilities.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050 and 2016 c 41. WSR 17-11-058, § 246-940-050, filed 5/16/17, effective 7/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-050, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-060 Client information form.** The information form is to advise the client of the therapist's qualifications and authorized scope of practice. The following information must be furnished to the client in writing prior to or at the time of the initial visit and signed by the client.

- (1) Therapist's qualifications, including:
  - (a) Education; and
  - (b) State certification number and date of issue.
- (2) A statement that the therapist is limited to providing massage solely for purposes of animal well-being.
- (3) A statement that the therapist may not:
  - (a) Diagnose, prognose, or treat diseases, deformities, defects, wounds, or injuries;
  - (b) Adjust or manipulate any articulations of the animal's body or spine;
  - (c) Perform acupuncture; or
  - (d) Perform mechanical therapies that are restricted to the field of veterinary medicine.
- (4) A copy of the signed information form must be maintained in the animal's record.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050 and 2016 c 41. WSR 17-11-058, § 246-940-060, filed 5/16/17, effective 7/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-060, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-070 Display of certification.** (1) Certified as animal massage therapists who practice in this state shall display their certification at all times, in a conspicuous place within their primary place of practice.

- (2) Therapists must keep a copy of their certification with them when practicing at locations other than their primary place of practice.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050 and 2016 c 41. WSR 17-11-058, § 246-940-070, filed 5/16/17, effective 7/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-070, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-080 Maintenance and retention of records.** (1) Every certified animal massage therapist shall maintain written records of all animal massage services he or she provides.

- (2) A separate record shall be kept for each animal.
- (3) All records shall be legible, readily retrievable and shall be kept for a period of three years following the last treatment.

(4) The records shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- (a) Name, address, and telephone number of the client;
- (b) Name or other identification of the animal;
- (c) Description of the animal's condition and the nature of the massage services provided;
- (d) The client information form;
- (e) If the certified animal massage therapist suspects that the animal has an injury or condition that may require veterinary care, he or she must advise the client and make a notation in the animal's record.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050 and 2016 c 41. WSR 17-11-058, § 246-940-080, filed 5/16/17, effective 7/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-080, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-090 Expired certification.** (1) If the certification has expired, the animal massage therapist must meet the requirements of WAC 246-12-040.

(2) If the certification has expired for more than five years, the animal massage therapist must also submit verification of active practice in any other state or jurisdiction, or retake and successfully pass the examinations required in WAC 246-940-020. For the purpose of this section, active practice means at least two hundred hours of practice in each of the previous three years.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050 and 2016 c 41. WSR 17-11-058, § 246-940-090, filed 5/16/17, effective 7/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-090, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-100 Nonaccredited education.** (1) Applicants who have not completed an accredited program as required in WAC 246-940-050 (1)(a) may submit proof of instruction from a nonaccredited program.

(2) Proof of instruction submitted under this section must include three hundred hours of instruction related to either large animals or small animals and must include the content areas described in WAC 246-940-050 (3)(a) through (f).

(3) The applicant must meet all certification requirements except the training may be from a nonaccredited program.

(4) Applications under this section must be submitted by December 31, 2011, including all supporting documentation.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-100, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]

**WAC 246-940-990 Certified animal massage therapist—Fees and renewal cycle.** (1) Certification must be renewed every year on or before the animal massage therapist's birthday as provided in chapter 246-12 WAC, Part 2.

(2) The following nonrefundable fees will be charged for certification:

<b>Title of Fee</b>	<b>Fee</b>
Application for large animal certification	\$440.00
Application for small animal certification	440.00
Renewal of certification for large animal certification	335.00
Renewal of certification for small animal certification	335.00
Late renewal penalty fee per certification	170.00
Expired credential reissuance fee per certification	95.00
Duplicate credential per certification	30.00
Verification of credential per certification	30.00

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.250 and 43.70.280. WSR 19-13-034, § 246-940-990, filed 6/12/19, effective 10/1/19. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050 and 2016 c 41. WSR 17-11-058, § 246-940-990, filed 5/16/17, effective 7/1/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.250 and 43.70.280. WSR 16-15-013, § 246-940-990, filed 7/8/16, effective 10/1/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.240.050. WSR 11-14-026, § 246-940-990, filed 6/24/11, effective 7/25/11.]