



CALIFORNIA MASSAGE THERAPY COUNCIL

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June 10, 2020

VIA EMAIL & FIRST-CLASS MAIL

Governor Gavin Newsom
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

We appreciate the enormous demands placed on the Administration during this time of crisis. We have had several discussions with your representatives in relation to where CAMTC Certified Massage Therapists and Practitioners fit into the phases of re-opening under the current Stay at Home Order. CAMTC's 51,000 Certified Massage Therapists and Practitioners are included with physicians, nurses, chiropractors, physical therapists, and occupational therapists, in Division 2 (Healing Arts) of the Business and Professions Code.

The direct question being asked by consumers and Certificate Holders is what the timeline will be for massage therapists to practice again in California. The materials issued by the State Administration in relation to COVID-19 don't mention therapeutic massage and it is unknown where this sector fits under the current phased plan.

While we care deeply for the massage therapy community and would like to see all of our Certificate Holders thrive, as a public protection entity, we do not represent the economic interests of the industry. Many members of the public, however, are getting increasingly frustrated and desperate with our inability to let them know when they will be able to resume their treatments, which they regard as an essential part of their healthcare. Some of them copied you on their correspondence to CAMTC.

CAMTC has been actively communicating with the public and its Certificate Holders about COVID-19. As early as March 5, 2020, CAMTC issued a bulletin alerting Certificate Holders about COVID-19 related practice issues. CAMTC sent a strong recommendation to stop providing hands-on massage on March 16, 2020. Then, when

you issued your Stay at Home Order, CAMTC alerted Certificate Holders that violation of the Order was considered by CAMTC to be unprofessional conduct that could result in revocation of their Certificates. So far, CAMTC has issued 18 COVID-19 related bulletins to our Certificate Holders and has also publicly posted this information on its website. We are proud of our Certificate Holders who have demonstrated their commitment to caring professionalism and have placed their livelihoods on hold in order to do their part to flatten the curve.

CAMTC has received multiple pleas from members of the public who are desperately waiting to resume their remedial massage treatments. These kinds of touching requests are in no way a surprise. Based on an extrapolation from a recent national survey, it is estimated that more than 7 million Californians get regular massages annually. People from all walks of life and from widely diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds seek care from CAMTC Certificate Holders. Based on the national survey, 70% stated that they received treatments by professional massage therapists for medical or health reasons.

On May 20, 2020, pursuant to CAMTC's request, the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards sent your Administration its guidelines for the practice of massage during COVID-19. CAMTC would also like to offer you any support and guidance it can in relation to the practice of massage therapy, which the California Department of Public Health might find useful as it creates guidelines for re-opening massage therapy.

We look forward to our continued work with your Administration on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ahmos Netanel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ahmos Netanel, CEO
California Massage Therapy Council

cc: Dr. Sonia Angell, CDPH