

Arizona State Board of Massage Therapy

Board did not investigate or timely investigate, document, or review all complaints it received; did not issue some initial licenses in accordance with statute and rule; and did not provide some public information in response to our anonymous requests or on its website

Audit purpose

To determine whether the Board issued licenses in accordance with statute and rule requirements, investigated and resolved complaints within its jurisdiction and in a timely manner, provided information to the public as required by statute, and to provide responses to the statutory sunset factors.

Key findings

The Board:

- Was established in 2003 to license and regulate massage therapists.
- Did not investigate 7 prostitution-related complaints for more than 2 years until we brought them to its attention, document key complaint information for 16 of 29 complaints we reviewed, and investigate and resolve 2 complaints within 180 days; and Board members did not review 20 of 29 complaints.
- Did not issue 6 of 22 initial licenses we reviewed in accordance with statutory and rule requirements, including issuing 1 license to an unqualified individual, issuing 2 licenses after required time frames, and lacking required documentation from 3 license applicants demonstrating they met all requirements.
- Has not provided its telephone number on its website, did not provide some public information in response to all 3 of our anonymous requests, and did not post copies of disciplinary and nondisciplinary actions/orders on its website.
- Renewed 5 licenses that we reviewed for time periods between 3 and 4 years—up to 2 years longer than the 2-year renewal time period allowed by statute.

Key recommendations

The Board should:

- Establish written policies and procedures for complaint handling that specify minimum documentation requirements, time frames for completing key complaint-handling steps and tasks, standards for prioritizing complaints, and complaint-screening protocols, including determining which complaints are within its jurisdiction.
- Investigate and resolve all complaints within 180 days.
- Issue licenses only to applicants who meet all statutory and rule requirements by developing and implementing licensing policies and procedures for processing initial licenses.
- Make its telephone number publicly available through its website and post copies of all statutorily required disciplinary and nondisciplinary actions/orders on its website.
- Issue renewal licenses for only 2 years, as required by statute.