

# **Is your massage therapist licensed? In Illinois, it's the law**

October 6 2016 10:39 AM



**SPRINGFIELD—** With instances of unlicensed practice of massage therapy linked to dangerous criminal activity, such as human trafficking and prostitution, the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) is reminding the public that massage therapists must be licensed to practice in the State of Illinois. Massage therapists are required to display their license, or a copy, in a conspicuous place in their primary office or any other location where the holder renders massage therapy

services. Applicants for massage therapy must also undergo a fingerprint background check and are automatically disqualified from licensure if they have been convicted of prostitution, rape, sexual misconduct or are registered as a sex offender.

As an added security measure, IDFPR now offers a unique quick response (QR) code on all certificates of licensure, allowing the public to verify the authenticity of a license from any mobile device through use of a QR reader app.

“The single biggest prevention method to ensure consumers protect themselves when they get a massage is to check for a license,” said Bryan A. Schneider, IDFPR Secretary. “If licensure cannot be verified, we strongly encourage individuals not to use the offered services and report any observed impropriety to our Department. With over 12,000 licensed massage therapists in Illinois, we want to ensure that those individuals and entities holding themselves out as massage therapists adhere to the licensure qualifications and standards for professional practice.”

Under Illinois law, massage therapists must meet standards of qualification, education, training and experience prior to licensure. Individuals who knowingly practice or offer to practice massage therapy in Illinois for compensation without a license for that purpose, or knowingly aids, abets, assists, procures, advises, employs, or contracts with any unlicensed person to practice massage therapy contrary to state law, shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor. Subsequent convictions are a Class 4 felony. Exemptions to massage therapy licensure exist under Illinois law, and can be found here: <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=2469>.

IDFPR’s announcement is the latest in Illinois’ ongoing attempts to combat human trafficking. In August, Governor Rauner took [action](#) by signing [HB 2822](#), creating a Task Force to examine how the State of Illinois can partner with agencies across the state to counter the egregious offenses of human exploitation. The Task Force will submit a report with its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly on or before June 30, 2017.

IDFPR encourages individuals who suspect the unlicensed practice of massage therapy to file a complaint with the Department. Consumers can file complaints at [www.idfpr.com](http://www.idfpr.com) or by calling our consumer hotline number at 1-888-4REGUL8 (1-888-473-4858).