College of Massage Therapists of Ontario

TouchPoint

June 2026

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario

Provide Your Feedback – Proposed Spousal Exemption Regulatory Change

The College of Massage Therapists of Ontario (CMTO) is planning to submit a proposal to the Government of Ontario for a spousal exemption, a regulatory change to the *Massage Therapy Act, 1991*, that would allow RMTs/MTs to treat their spouse. Currently, under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA), treating one's spouse is considered sexual abuse.

CMTO is seeking feedback from the public, RMTs/MTs, and members in the Massage Therapy community. The deadline to submit your feedback is **July 10, 2026, by 5 p.m.**

To read CMTO's proposal and to provide feedback via the survey and/or the discussion forum, please visit the Provide Your Feedback webpage. For any questions, please email feedback@cmto.com.

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario

Board Elections Coming Soon for Districts 2, 5, and 7

Want to get involved in the regulation of the Massage Therapy profession? Run in the elections to become a Board member! Board elections will be held this fall in Districts 2, 5, and 7. Board elections are an important opportunity for registrants to participate in shaping the future of the profession by nominating themselves or a fellow registrant to protect the public interest as a Board member.

Registrants in each district should monitor official notices for nomination deadlines, voting procedures, and election dates. Registrants interested in serving on the Board are encouraged to put their names forward.

In addition to the elected Board positions, CMTO is also recruiting registrants and public members to serve as non-Board committee members.

For more information, please review the following:

- College of Massage Therapists of Ontario By-Law No. 2 - Election of Members to the Board
- Board Elections

Please email vera.patterson@cmto.com if you have any questions.

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Board Highlights

CMTO's Board met on Tuesday, June 9. The complete meeting package is available on CMTO's website and the livestream recording is available on CMTO's YouTube channel. Highlights from the meeting are below:

The Board approved:

- In principle the 2027 registration fee as follows:
  - The General Certificate fee remains unchanged;
  - The Inactive Fee is reduced from $457.50 to $228.75 (25% of GC fee);
  - The Initial application fee is reduced from $225 to $150;
  - The Workshop fee is eliminated ($225 to $0); and
  - Compliance-related fees (late fees, reinstatement) remain unchanged.
- Amendments to *By-Law No. 8: The Register and Registrant Information* to add a provision that permits CMTO staff to share a registrant's certificate of registration number with health insurance providers for the purpose of verifying an RMT's registration status effective Oct 1, 2026
- Amendments to the *Acupuncture Education and Authorization Policy* that make the policy easier to understand, more accessible and defines scope and qualifications, taking effect June 12, 2026
- Updates to the *Examination Candidates Returning after Three Previous Failures Policy* to clarify that a second diploma must be from a different educational institution, and to remove the reference to Ministry-approved education programs from the policy effective January 1, 2027

Discussion:

- RMTAO presented a proposed pilot project to integrate RMTs into Ontario's interprofessional primary care system and asked for CMTO's engagement and support. The presentation was informational only; no decisions were made.

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STRiVE is Improving

STRiVE – Be the Best You Can Be will not take place in 2026.

STRiVE is improving and being modernized, the new program will:

- Reduce the number of annual touchpoints with the profession in terms of *STRiVE* requirements;
- Eliminate overlap with *STRiVE* requirements and annual renewal;
- Continue to provide flexibility and choice;
- Incorporate feedback and suggestions collated from the profession and other stakeholders; and
- Focus on three versus four Standards of Practice in 2027. The following topics have been selected:
  - Fees and Billing
  - Prevention of Sexual Abuse
  - Record Keeping

Stay tuned for more information on a merged *Be the Best You Can Be* and *Practice Profile* to launch in March 2027.

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Thank you for attending the 2026 CMTO and RMTAO Town Halls

In partnership with the Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario (RMTAO), CMTO hosted a six-event Town Hall tour in Sault Ste. Marie, St. Catharines, Kingston, Guelph, Toronto, and Ottawa. CMTO connected with over 330 attendees and heard directly from RMTs/MTs about their experiences.

Maureen Boon, Registrar and CEO presented on regulatory changes shaping Massage Therapy practice, discussed CMTO's new Strategic Plan, shared highlights from the past year, CMTO's plans for 2026, and answered questions. RMTAO's team spoke about their advocacy efforts, including HST exemption and Queen's Park Day, and how RMTAO is addressing sexual harassment and assault of RMTs/MTs by patients.

Key discussion topics included:

- **Patient discharge:** When can an RMT/MT discharge a patient who is behaving abusively, and what documentation is required?
- **HST:** What is RMTAO doing to make Massage Therapy HST exempt?
- **Insurance billing:** How do CMTO and insurers interact when fraud is suspected?

Thank you to everyone who attended.

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Operating Solo and Home-Based Practices

RMTs/MTs working solo or in home-based settings must meet the same professional, ethical, and regulatory expectations as those in larger clinics to protect patient safety and uphold appropriate professional boundaries.

To support safe and compliant practice, RMTs/MTs should ensure the following key requirements are consistently met:

- **Maintaining a safe practice environment:** A private, professional treatment area separate from personal living space, or other spaces that are not part of the practice.
- **Practising proper infection control:** Proper cleaning, disinfecting, and linen management consistent with Public Health Ontario and CMTO standards. For example, laundry for the practice should be washed and handled separately from family items.
- **Ensuring patient privacy:** Secure storage of records and sound privacy during treatments. Patient information, including names and contact information, must not be accessible to unauthorized people (i.e., including other people living in the home).
- **Accurate record keeping:** Accurate, complete, and securely stored clinical and financial records.
- **Managing risks:** Clear procedures, accessible exits, appropriate lighting to allow for privacy and safety, relevant documentation (equipment/maintenance log) and suitable first aid resources.
- **Meeting all business compliance requirements:** Appropriate insurance, municipal licensing, and adherence to *the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA).

For further guidance, RMTs/MTs are encouraged to consult the Guide to Record Keeping, Infection Prevention and Control (Standard), Professional Boundaries (Standard), Safety and Risk Management (Standard), Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and email the Practice Specialist at practicespecialist@cmto.com.

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Responsibilities of a Regulatory College vs. an Association

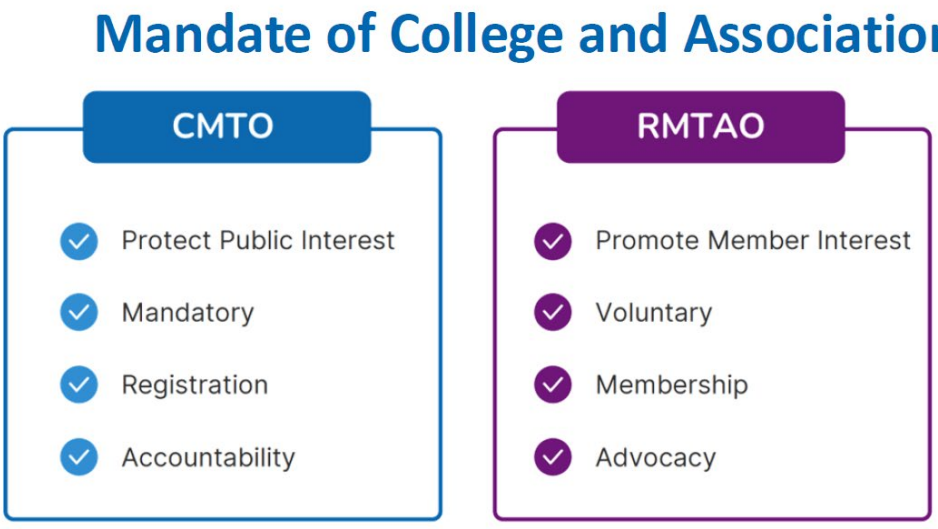
Confused about the difference between a regulator and an association? Here are the key differences:

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario (Regulator):

- Governed under the *Regulated Health Professions Act* and the *Massage Therapy Act*
- Purpose: Protect the public interest
- Participation: Mandatory for RMTs/MTs
- Registration: Must obtain a General Certificate through the College in order to practise and call themselves a Registered Massage Therapist/Massage Therapist
- Accountability: Receives and investigates complaints from the public and takes disciplinary action when necessary

Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario (Association):

- RMTAO is a non-profit organization and is not governed by legislation.
- Purpose: Promote member interest
- Participation: Voluntary for RMTs/MTs
- Registration: Provides benefits such as offering professional liability insurance and advocates for the profession
- Accountability: To advocate on behalf of its membership



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Communicating Insurance Delisting to Patients

If you've been delisted by an insurance company, it's important to inform patients promptly. Delisting means the insurer will not reimburse patients for services provided by that practitioner. In some cases, an entire clinic or some of its practitioners may also be delisted, which affects coverage for anyone treated at that location.

Here are some tips for communicating this type of information:

- **Notify patients promptly**: Inform affected patients as soon as possible, ideally before their next appointment. Use clear, simple and neutral language.
- **Use factual language**: For example, "As of [date], I am no longer a participating provider with [Insurance Company]. Services may not be eligible for reimbursement under your plan."
- **Avoid misleading claims**: All advertising must be factual, verifiable and not misleading. Do not suggest in your advertising that coverage is available under all insurance plans.
- **Provide receipts**: Continue to issue receipts for all treatments, even if direct billing is no longer available. Patients may still submit claims manually, depending on their plan.
- **Respect patient choice**: Be prepared to discuss alternative payment options or refer patients to other providers if needed.

For further guidance, RMTs/MTs are encouraged to consult both the guide to Record Keeping, and the guide to Advertising, Communication (Standard), Code of Ethics, Fees and Billing (Standard) and email the Practice Specialist at practicespecialist@cmto.com.

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Moving from Inactive to General Certificate: What Registrants Need to Know

RMTs/MTs who hold an Inactive Certificate and want to transition to a General Certificate at any time of the year should know the following:

Why Change from an Inactive Certificate to a General Certificate?
Registrants must move to the General Certificate to practise Massage Therapy.

Am I Eligible to Change My Registration Class?
Eligibility depends on whether an RMT/MT meets the practice requirements at the time of application. This includes:

- Having practised the profession for at least 500 hours in the previous three-year period in a regulated Canadian jurisdiction or completed a CMTO Refresher Course in the last 15 months; and
- Providing evidence of having the required insurance.

How do I Submit a Registration Change request?
Log in to the Registrant Portal to submit a Registration Change request.

Is There a Fee to Change Registration Class?
Yes, payment of the balance of the annual General Certificate fee is due. The fee is not prorated.

How Long Does the Process Take?
Processing time typically is 2-3 business days. However, it may vary if additional review is required.

When Should I Apply?
Registrants are encouraged to apply well in advance of their intended return-to-work date. Employers often require confirmation of registration status before a start date can be confirmed.

Need Help?
If you're unsure about the process or have questions, Registration Services can help guide you through the requirements. You can also find helpful details on the Class Change webpage.

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Discipline Decisions

When CMTO receives complaints, the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (ICRC) can refer serious allegations (e.g., sexual abuse or other professional misconduct) to the Ontario Massage Therapists Discipline Tribunal (OMTDT), which is the Discipline Committee of CMTO.

The OMTDT has issued the following decisions:

- Jude Ranjith Jesuthasan (2026) Read CanLII

The Tribunal found that Mr. Jesuthasan improperly solicited information about actual MCQ questions from students who had recently attempted the MCQ and then shared that information with students in his tutoring class who were about to attempt the exam. Additionally, between May and July 2022, while practising at a clinic, Mr. Jesuthasan issued or allowed others to issue receipts for Massage Therapy treatments that he did not provide. He also created false treatment notes and recorded inaccurate treatment times on patient records.

- Hamilcar II Englis Amaya (2026) Read CanLII

The Tribunal found that Mr. Amaya failed to maintain the standards for Consent, and Draping and Physical Privacy; physically abused a patient; and engaged in conduct or performing an act relevant to the practice of the profession that, having regard to all the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.

- Jierong Zhang (2026) Read CanLII

Ms. Zhang did not complete the 2024 requirements of the College's Quality Assurance (QA) Program despite receiving several reminders and extensions from the College. When she was subsequently selected for a practice assessment as an alternative to fulfilling the incomplete QA Program requirements, Ms. Zhang neither completed it nor responded to any of the College's communications.

- Aaron Shad (2026) Read CanLII

Mr. Shad had a concurrent treating and personal relationship with a patient who was also his student at the Massage Therapy program where Mr. Shad worked as an instructor. In his capacity as a Massage Therapy instructor, Mr. Shad altered the patient's exam answers to give her a better mark. Following the patient's complaint to the College, Mr. Shad contacted the patient despite being advised by the College not to do so without prior consent.

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Case Study: Managing a Difficult Patient Interaction

Managing difficult patient interactions can be complex. It requires balancing professional boundaries, regulatory obligations, and practitioner safety. The following example highlights considerations for RMTs/MTs when responding to inappropriate patient behaviour.

Practice Scenario

Jordan, an RMT/MT, is providing treatment to a returning patient. During the appointment, the patient repeatedly makes personal comments, saying Jordan has a nice body. They attempt to redirect the interaction away from the treatment, despite Jordan's efforts to maintain professional boundaries. Jordan addresses the behaviour by clearly reminding the patient that those comments are inappropriate and unacceptable and asks the patient to stop. The patient's behaviour continues despite this redirection. Jordan determines that continuing the therapeutic relationship is no longer appropriate and informs the patient that due to the repeated comments, the treatment cannot continue and ends the appointment.

Following the appointment, Jordan documents the interaction in the patient's health record, including the comments made and the steps taken to address the behaviour. Jordan then reviews the steps for discharge, as outlined in the Standard of Practice: Client-Centred Care and proceeds with terminating the therapeutic relationship.

Jordan also decides to review the clinic policy, seek support from a peer, and engage in training related to professional boundaries and managing challenging patient interactions. These actions help Jordan manage the impact of the challenging patient encounter so that they are better prepared should a similar situation occur again.

For more information, RMTs/MTs can review CMTO's FAQs for RMTs/MTs Discharging a Client Due to Abusive Behaviour or contact the CMTO's Practice Specialist: practicespecialist@cmto.com.

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Scope of Practice Considerations When Providing Referrals

Patients may ask RMTs/MTs questions or seek guidance about concerns that fall outside the Scope of Practice for Massage Therapy care. In these situations, RMTs/MTs should use their professional judgement to determine how to respond and whether a referral to another healthcare professional is needed to address the patient's concerns.

Practice Scenario

Morgan, an RMT/MT, is treating a patient who presents with concerns related to post-exercise soreness following a workout. During the appointment, the patient asks what supplements they should take to support recovery and improve their symptoms.

Morgan acknowledges the question and recognizes that while Massage Therapy care can help address physical symptoms related to muscle tension and soreness, recommending specific supplements falls outside the Scope of Practice for Massage Therapy care.

In this situation, Morgan refers the patient to a physician or registered dietitian for guidance on supplementation. Morgan avoids suggesting specific products or supplements for the patient, recognizing that these decisions fall within the Scope of other healthcare professionals.

Morgan documents the interaction, including the patient's questions and the referral provided, in the patient's health record.

For more information about providing referrals to other healthcare professionals, RMTs/MTs can review the Standard of Practice: Collaboration and Professional Relationships or contact CMTO's Practice Specialist: practicespecialist@cmto.com.