



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

PROPOSED CHANGES TO CITY OF SANTA BARBARA MESSAGE ORDINANCE

Meeting Date: Friday, November 14, 2025, 5:00 P.M.
Meeting Location: Carrillo Recreation Center Ballroom
100 E. Carrillo St, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

You are receiving this Notice because our records indicate that you are a massage therapy professional in the City of Santa Barbara. The Santa Barbara Police Department will be amending Chapter 5.76 of the Municipal Code pertaining to the Massage Establishment and Massage Therapist permits.

WHY IS THE MUNICIPAL CODE CHANGING?

The California Legislature approved the Massage Therapy Act in 2008 and subsequently assigned the California Massage Therapy Council as the regulatory agency for massage schools and therapists. The current massage ordinance is being updated to comply with current state laws and is incorporating the standards set by the California Massage Therapy Council.

The proposed massage ordinance will incorporate additional standards to reinforce public safety in the community and will provide new enforcement guidelines for city-designated officials, set operational standards for massage establishments, and establish a new permit renewal procedure.

WHAT IS CHANGING?

In order to comply with current state laws, there will be new standards and requirements for massage establishments and massage therapists.

Massage Therapists

The City of Santa Barbara will no longer require a permit for massage therapists who have obtained a massage therapist certification through the California Massage Therapy Council. There will be a limited certification exception for those massage therapists who possess a City of Santa Barbara Massage Therapist permit and do not have a massage therapist certification through the California Massage Therapy Council. Massage therapists that would like to apply for the limited certification exception, must meet all the requirements and provide the proper documentation. Massage therapists that are issued a limited certification exception must comply with the California Massage Therapy Council certification requirements by January 1, 2029. Any massage therapist who does not obtain a limited certification exception must comply with the California Massage Therapy Council certification requirements.

Massage Establishments

Massage establishments within the Santa Barbara city limits will be required to obtain and maintain an annual Massage Establishment permit. This requirement includes sole proprietors who are the sole owner and sole employee practicing massage therapy within the city limits. The proposed massage ordinance will incorporate new operational standards which allow city designated personnel to conduct inspections and enforce these standards and requirements.

The following are examples of the changes to the operational standards massage establishments must meet to receive and retain their Massage Establishment Permit.

1. An employee roster for all staff must be kept at the massage establishment at all times, this is to include staff that are not practicing massage therapy. This list must be available for inspection and be routinely updated with roster changes to the Santa Barbara Police Department.
2. All administrative staff not certified by the California Massage Therapy Council must undergo live scan fingerprinting for a background review.
3. Hours of operation must be between 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM. Massage therapy services cannot be provided outside of those hours.
4. The Massage Establishment permit shall be displayed in a visible place near the front door or waiting area. All massage therapists must display their California Massage Therapy Council certification at all times.
5. Massage establishments can be inspected at any time for the purposes of enforcing the massage ordinance. For home occupations, reasonable inspections shall be limited to the portions of the residence open to patrons.
6. The massage establishment permit is required to be renewed annually.

Permit Fees

Below is the proposed fee schedule.

Permit Type	Current Fees	Proposed Annual Fees
Massage Establishments	\$25.00	\$375.00
Sole Proprietors	\$25.00	\$275.00
Massage Therapists	\$25.00	Review California Massage Therapy Council Fee Schedule

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ATTEND THIS MEETING?

This proposed massage ordinance will impact ALL massage therapists and massage establishments operating in the City of Santa Barbara limits. Any person who is interested in learning about the proposed changes that are being presented to the City of Santa Barbara should attend. The Santa Barbara Police Department will have staff available to answer questions during the meeting.

UPDATES

A Fire and Police Commission Special Meeting will be held on November 20, 2025 at 10:00 AM located at City Council Chambers, 735 Anacapa St, Santa Barbara, CA 93101. This meeting will be open to the public.

The Santa Barbara Police Department will continue to update this information on its website at <http://sbpd.com>. For any questions related to this notice, you may call the Police Services Coordinator at (805) 897-2333 or email permits@sbpd.com.