

Essential Massage Therapy Academy



Where Experience Inspires Excellence.

Academic Catalog

2026–2027 Academic Year

Massage Therapy Diploma Program
725 Clock Hours

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Welcome from the Director

Welcome to Essential Massage Therapy Academy.

Thank you for considering our Massage Therapy Diploma Program. We are honored to play a role in your professional journey.

Massage therapy is both a science and an art. Successful therapists must understand anatomy, movement, pathology, communication, ethics, and the human experience. Our program is designed to provide students with a strong educational foundation while preparing them for real-world success in today's wellness industry.

At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, students learn from active practitioners who bring current industry experience into the classroom. Through hands-on training, supervised clinical practice, and professional development opportunities, students gain the knowledge, confidence, and practical skills necessary to build rewarding careers.

We are committed to creating a supportive learning environment where students are challenged to grow professionally while also learning the importance of self-care, body mechanics, and lifelong wellness.

We look forward to helping you achieve your goals and become an exceptional massage therapist.

Sincerely,

Jacki Amstutz

School Owner & Director

Mission Statement

At **Essential Massage Therapy Academy**, our mission is to educate and inspire the next generation of massage therapists through exceptional hands-on training, experienced mentorship, and a commitment to whole-person wellness.

We prepare students to become confident, compassionate, and highly skilled professionals by combining evidence-informed education, real-world clinical experience, and meaningful business and communication training. Guided by instructors who are active practitioners, our students graduate ready to pass the MBLEx, meet licensure requirements, and build rewarding, sustainable careers while making a positive impact on the lives of those they serve.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to be recognized as a leading massage therapy academy where experience inspires excellence. We strive to graduate therapists who are respected for their clinical knowledge, professionalism, integrity, and genuine compassion. Through innovative education, lifelong learning, and a culture of wellness, we aim to elevate the massage therapy profession and improve the health and well-being of the communities our graduates serve.

Core Values

Excellence

We are committed to providing an exceptional educational experience that challenges students to achieve the highest standards of clinical skill, professionalism, and personal growth.

Integrity

We foster honesty, accountability, ethical decision-making, and respect in every interaction, creating a culture built on trust and professionalism.

Compassion

We believe healing begins with empathy. Students learn to treat every client, classmate, and colleague with kindness, dignity, and respect.

Experience

We believe the best education comes from learning alongside professionals who actively practice what they teach. Real-world experience is at the heart of everything we do.

Lifelong Learning

Massage therapy is an evolving profession. We encourage curiosity, continued education, and a commitment to personal and professional growth throughout every stage of a therapist's career.

Whole-Person Wellness

Caring for others begins with caring for ourselves. We promote healthy body mechanics, movement, self-care, and sustainable career habits that support long-term success and well-being.

Professionalism

We prepare students to represent the massage therapy profession with confidence through effective communication, ethical practice, reliability, and exceptional client care.

Community

We believe massage therapy has the power to strengthen individuals and communities. Through clinical experiences, outreach opportunities, and service, students learn the value of giving back while building meaningful relationships.

Why Choose Essential Massage Therapy Academy?

Choosing a massage therapy school is one of the most important decisions you'll make in your professional journey. At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, we believe your education should prepare you for more than passing a licensing exam—it should prepare you for a rewarding, successful career.

Our curriculum combines science, hands-on practice, business education, and real-world experience to develop confident, compassionate massage therapists who are ready to thrive in today's wellness industry.

Learn from Professionals Who Still Practice

Our instructors don't just teach massage therapy—they live it every day.

Our faculty members continue to work with clients, manage successful practices, and stay current with industry trends. Students benefit from learning techniques that are being used in treatment rooms today, gaining practical insight into client care, communication, professionalism, and the realities of working in the massage and wellness profession. When you learn from active practitioners, you're learning from experience—not just textbooks.

Small Class Sizes. Personalized Education.

We intentionally keep our cohorts small to provide every student with individualized instruction and meaningful mentorship.

Small class sizes allow instructors to spend more one-on-one time refining hands-on techniques, answering questions, and helping each student build confidence throughout the program. You'll never feel like just another number—you'll become part of a supportive learning community invested in your success.

More Than MBLEx Preparation

Passing the MBLEx is an important milestone—but it's only the beginning of your career.

Our curriculum prepares students not only for licensure, but for long-term professional success. Along with anatomy, physiology, pathology, and therapeutic techniques, you'll develop the communication, professionalism, critical thinking, and business skills employers value most.

Graduates leave prepared to succeed on exam day—and every day after.

Hybrid Pain Management & Spa Excellence

Today's massage therapists work in a wide variety of settings, and successful graduates need the versatility to serve diverse client needs.

Our unique curriculum blends therapeutic pain management techniques with luxury spa experiences, allowing graduates to confidently work in medical offices, chiropractic clinics, wellness centers, destination spas, resorts, or private practice.

Whether your goal is helping clients recover from injury, reduce chronic pain, manage stress, or simply relax, you'll graduate with a well-rounded skill set that prepares you for a variety of career opportunities.

Real-World Clinical Experience

Confidence comes through experience.

Students complete supervised clinical training while providing massage services to members of the public in a professional learning environment. Clinical experiences strengthen technical skills while developing professional communication, documentation, treatment planning, time management, and guest care.

These experiences help bridge the gap between the classroom and professional practice, making the transition into your career smoother and more successful.

Learn the Business of Massage Therapy

Being an exceptional massage therapist is only part of building a successful career.

Our students also learn the business side of the profession, including guest communication, scheduling systems, ethical retail recommendations, client retention, marketing fundamentals, professionalism, and career planning.

Whether you choose to work for an established practice or eventually own your own business, you'll graduate with practical knowledge that extends beyond the treatment room.

Wellness Begins With You

A successful massage therapy career depends on taking care of yourself as well as your clients.

Throughout the program, students learn proper body mechanics, injury prevention strategies, stretching, movement, ergonomics, and self-care practices that promote career longevity. We believe healthy therapists provide better care, enjoy longer careers, and experience greater professional fulfillment.

A Supportive Learning Community

We believe students learn best in an environment where they are encouraged, challenged, and respected.

From your admissions interview through graduation, our faculty is committed to helping you succeed academically, professionally, and personally. We celebrate your accomplishments, provide guidance through challenges, and foster a culture of collaboration, integrity, and lifelong learning.

At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, you're not just earning a diploma—you are joining a community dedicated to excellence in massage therapy.

About Essential Massage Therapy Academy

Essential Massage Therapy Academy was founded with a simple vision: to provide an exceptional massage therapy education that prepares graduates for successful, fulfilling careers in today's wellness industry.

Located inside Essential Massage & Spa in Bloomfield, Iowa, our Academy offers students the unique opportunity to learn in an active professional environment where education and real-world practice come together. From the first day of class, students are immersed in a culture of professionalism, compassion, and excellence.

Our 725-hour Massage Therapy Diploma Program exceeds Iowa's minimum educational requirements and combines classroom instruction, hands-on laboratory experience, and supervised clinical practice. Students develop a strong foundation in anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, pathology, therapeutic massage techniques, ethics, business principles, and professional communication while preparing for the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx).

At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, we believe that becoming an outstanding massage therapist requires more than mastering techniques. It requires confidence, critical thinking, professionalism, and the ability to build meaningful relationships with clients. Our curriculum emphasizes not only clinical excellence but also communication skills, career development, and self-care practices that promote long-term success in the profession.

As a student, you'll learn from experienced instructors who continue to actively practice massage therapy and work within the wellness industry. Their current, real-world experience provides valuable insight that extends beyond the classroom, helping students understand what it truly takes to succeed after graduation.

Whether your goal is to work in a spa, wellness center, chiropractic office, medical setting, athletic environment, or private practice, Essential Massage Therapy Academy is committed to equipping you with the knowledge, hands-on experience, and professional skills needed to confidently begin your career.

Our Learning Environment

Students enjoy a welcoming, supportive atmosphere designed to encourage both personal and professional growth. Our intentionally small class sizes allow instructors to provide individualized guidance, hands-on coaching, and meaningful mentorship throughout the program.

Our facility includes:

- Professional classroom and hands-on training space
- Student clinic providing supervised public massage services
- Modern massage tables and classroom equipment
- Professional-grade lotions, oils, linens, and supplies
- Access to a fully operational spa environment
- Opportunities to participate in community outreach and wellness events

By learning in a real practice setting, students gain firsthand exposure to the expectations of today's massage therapy profession while building the confidence and experience employers value.

Our Commitment to Student Success

From your admissions interview through graduation, our faculty is committed to helping you achieve your goals. We are dedicated to creating an educational experience that is supportive, engaging, and challenging—one that encourages students to pursue excellence while developing confidence in their knowledge, hands-on skills, professionalism, and ability to serve others.

When you graduate from Essential Massage Therapy Academy, you'll leave with more than a diploma. You'll leave prepared to begin your career with confidence, professionalism, and a passion for helping others live healthier, happier lives.

Meet Your Faculty

At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, our greatest resource is our people. Our faculty brings decades of combined experience in massage therapy, healthcare, education, business ownership, and wellness. More importantly, they are passionate mentors dedicated to helping students succeed both in the classroom and throughout their careers. Unlike many massage therapy programs, our instructors remain actively engaged in the professions they teach. Their current, real-world experience provides students with practical knowledge, clinical insight, and professional guidance that extends far beyond textbooks.

Jacki Amstutz

Owner • Director • Instructor

Jacki Amstutz is the Owner and Director of Essential Massage Therapy Academy and Essential Massage & Spa. As a licensed massage therapist, business owner, educator, and entrepreneur, Jacki has dedicated her career to helping others achieve wellness while creating opportunities for future massage therapists.

After building a successful spa focused on exceptional guest experiences and professional excellence, Jacki recognized the growing need for a massage therapy program that combines outstanding clinical education with real-world career preparation. That vision became Essential Massage Therapy Academy.

Jacki's teaching philosophy extends beyond the classroom. She believes students should graduate with the confidence to not only pass the MBLEx, but also excel in communication, professionalism, business, and client care. Her goal is to prepare graduates for meaningful, sustainable careers while inspiring a lifelong passion for learning and serving others.

"Success in massage therapy comes from knowledge, compassion, professionalism, and a commitment to lifelong learning."

Jackie White

Instructor

Jackie White's journey is proof that it's never too late to discover your calling.

After years as a hog farmer and later a registered nurse, Jackie attended massage therapy school in her 60s, combining her passion for helping others with a new career in therapeutic massage.

Her unique life experiences bring warmth, compassion, and perspective to the classroom. Jackie encourages students to embrace lifelong learning, believe in themselves, and recognize the profound impact massage therapy can have on improving quality of life.

Esther Rose

Lead Massage Therapy Instructor

Esther Rose has been a licensed massage therapist for more than 13 years and is highly respected for both her clinical expertise and commitment to massage therapy education.

As the leader of the Massage Therapy Program at Mahaska Health, Esther has extensive experience mentoring future massage therapists and preparing students for successful careers. She combines strong anatomical knowledge with practical clinical application, helping students understand not only how to perform techniques safely and effectively, but why they work.

Her passion for education, professionalism, and excellence makes her an invaluable mentor for aspiring massage therapists.

Nancy Proctor

Instructor

Nancy Proctor brings a unique blend of education, mindfulness, and holistic wellness to the Academy. Following a distinguished career as a school teacher, Nancy became a certified yoga instructor and has traveled extensively to study yoga, meditation, breathing techniques, and wellness practices from around the world. She encourages students to understand the connection between body, mind, and movement while emphasizing healthy body mechanics, stress management, mindfulness, and career longevity. Nancy also introduces students to holistic wellness concepts, including energy awareness and chakras, helping them appreciate the many approaches that support overall well-being.

Guest Instructors & Industry Experts

Learning at Essential Massage Therapy Academy extends beyond our core faculty.

Throughout the program, students have opportunities to learn from experienced guest instructors and industry professionals who share specialized knowledge, advanced techniques, and diverse career perspectives. Guest presentations may include topics such as medical massage, sports massage, pain management, spa operations, business ownership, marketing, specialty modalities, wellness education, and emerging trends within the profession. Because our guest instructor schedule evolves throughout the year, presenters may vary from cohort to cohort. This flexibility allows us to bring current experts into the classroom and continually enrich the student experience with fresh ideas, innovative techniques, and real-world insight.

Faculty and guest instructors are subject to change based on scheduling, availability, and program needs. Essential Massage Therapy Academy is committed to providing qualified educators with current industry experience and a passion for student success.

Massage Therapy Diploma Program

Program Overview

The Massage Therapy Diploma Program at Essential Massage Therapy Academy is designed to prepare students for successful careers as licensed massage therapists through a balanced combination of classroom instruction, hands-on laboratory experience, supervised clinical practice, and professional development.

Our comprehensive **725-clock-hour program** exceeds Iowa's minimum educational requirements and provides students with the knowledge, technical skills, and confidence needed to enter the profession with excellence.

Throughout the program, students develop a strong foundation in anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, pathology, ethics, business practices, therapeutic massage techniques, and client-centered care. Under the guidance of experienced instructors, students progressively build their skills while learning the importance of professionalism, communication, critical thinking, and lifelong wellness.

Graduates leave the Academy prepared to:

- Successfully complete the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx)
 - Meet Iowa licensure requirements
 - Provide safe, ethical, and effective therapeutic massage
 - Develop individualized treatment plans based on client needs
 - Communicate confidently with clients and other healthcare professionals
 - Build a rewarding career in a variety of massage and wellness settings
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Program at a Glance

Credential Awarded: Massage Therapy Diploma

Program Length: 725 Clock Hours

- 625 Hours of Classroom & Laboratory Instruction
- 100 Hours of Supervised Clinical Practice

Program Format

- Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday evenings
- 5:00 PM – 9:00 PM
- One weekend intensive each month and four months have two weekends each month
- Supervised student clinic scheduled throughout the program

Program Dates

September 1, 2026 – May 27, 2027

Students who need additional time to complete required clinical hours may do so through June 2027 with approval from the Academy.

What You'll Learn

During the program, students gain experience in:

- Human anatomy and physiology
- Kinesiology and movement assessment
- Therapeutic massage techniques
- Relaxation massage
- Pain management strategies
- Clinical assessment

- Pathology and contraindications
 - Ethics and professional standards
 - Business and career development
 - Communication and guest relations
 - Self-care and injury prevention
 - Documentation and SOAP notes
 - Professional body mechanics
 - Student clinic operations
 - Community outreach experiences
 - MBLEx preparation and professional readiness
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Learning Beyond the Classroom

Education at Essential Massage Therapy Academy extends far beyond lectures and textbooks.

Students participate in hands-on laboratory instruction, supervised clinical experiences, peer practice sessions, community outreach opportunities, and professional development activities designed to build confidence before graduation.

By the time students complete the program, they will have developed not only the technical skills required of a massage therapist, but also the professionalism, communication skills, and clinical judgment needed to thrive in today's wellness industry.

Curriculum & Course Descriptions

The Essential Massage Therapy Academy curriculum has been thoughtfully designed to build knowledge and confidence in a progressive sequence. Students begin with a strong foundation in anatomy and body systems before advancing into assessment, therapeutic techniques, pathology, business practices, and supervised clinical experience. Each course builds upon the previous one, allowing students to develop the clinical reasoning, technical skills, professionalism, and confidence necessary to become successful licensed massage therapists.

MTA 101 – Anatomy & Physiology I

60 Clock Hours

Students explore the structure and function of the human body, including anatomical terminology, cells, tissues, the integumentary system, skeletal system, muscular system, and nervous system. This course provides the scientific foundation necessary for safe and effective massage therapy practice.

MTA 102 – Anatomy & Physiology II

65 Clock Hours

Building on Anatomy & Physiology I, students study the cardiovascular, lymphatic, respiratory, digestive, endocrine, urinary, and reproductive systems while developing an understanding of how body systems work together to maintain health and support therapeutic massage.

MTA 110 – Fundamentals of Massage Therapy

50 Clock Hours

Students are introduced to the history, principles, and foundations of massage therapy. Topics include sanitation, therapist body mechanics, draping, client positioning, therapeutic touch, contraindications, professionalism, and introductory massage techniques.

MTA 120 – Assessment, Indications & Contraindications

30 Clock Hours

Students learn how to conduct thorough client consultations, review health histories, recognize indications and contraindications for massage, and develop safe, individualized treatment plans based on client needs and goals.

MTA 130 – Kinesiology & Functional Movement

75 Clock Hours

This course explores muscles, joint movement, posture, gait, and biomechanics. Students learn to evaluate movement patterns and understand how muscular function influences pain, mobility, and therapeutic treatment planning.

MTA 201 – Therapeutic Massage Techniques I

75 Clock Hours

Students develop proficiency in foundational massage techniques including Swedish massage, therapeutic applications, proper body mechanics, draping, and treatment flow while building confidence through supervised hands-on practice.

MTA 202 – Therapeutic Massage Techniques II

75 Clock Hours

Advanced therapeutic techniques are introduced with an emphasis on treatment planning, clinical reasoning, pain management, and adapting massage sessions to meet a variety of client conditions and goals.

MTA 210 – Pathology, Injury Prevention & Infection Control

50 Clock Hours

Students study common diseases, disorders, injuries, and medical conditions while learning appropriate massage modifications, infection prevention practices, universal precautions, and therapist safety.

MTA 220 – Iowa Massage Law, Ethics & Professional Standards

25 Clock Hours

This course examines Iowa massage laws, professional ethics, scope of practice, informed consent, documentation, confidentiality, and the legal responsibilities of licensed massage therapists.

MTA 230 – Business Practices & Career Development

20 Clock Hours

Students gain practical knowledge in business operations, communication, professionalism, interviewing, résumé development, marketing, client retention, scheduling, retail recommendations, and career planning for employment or private practice.

MTA 240 – Professional Self-Care, Body Mechanics & Wellness

40 Clock Hours

Students learn techniques that promote career longevity through proper body mechanics, stretching, strengthening, stress management, mindfulness, breathing techniques, ergonomics, and personal wellness strategies.

MTA 250 – Advanced Techniques & Pain Management Lab

35 Clock Hours

Students explore advanced therapeutic approaches while refining clinical reasoning and hands-on skills. Through instructor demonstrations, case studies, and practical application, students gain experience addressing common pain conditions using evidence-informed techniques.

MTA 260 – MBLEx Review & Professional Preparation

25 Clock Hours

Designed to prepare students for successful licensure, this course includes comprehensive content review, practice examinations, test-taking strategies, practical review sessions, and career readiness activities to build confidence before graduation.

MTA 300 – Supervised Student Clinical Practicum

100 Clock Hours

Students apply their knowledge and skills while providing massage services to members of the public under instructor supervision. Clinical experiences include client intake, treatment planning, SOAP documentation, professional communication, time management, ethical practice, and delivering safe, effective massage in a professional setting.

Program Total

Course Component	Clock Hours
Classroom & Laboratory Instruction	625
Supervised Student Clinical Practicum	100
Total Program Hours	725

Clinical Education & Student Clinic

At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, we believe confidence is built through experience. While classroom instruction provides the knowledge and laboratory practice develops technical skills, it is through supervised clinical experience that students truly begin to grow into professional massage therapists. Our Student Clinic bridges the gap between education and professional practice by allowing students to provide massage therapy services to members of the public in a safe, supportive, and supervised environment. Throughout the clinical experience, students work closely with licensed instructors who provide guidance, feedback, and mentorship every step of the way.

Real Experience. Real Clients.

Students complete **100 hours of supervised clinical practice**, providing approximately **50 one-hour massage sessions** while developing the confidence and professionalism expected of licensed massage therapists. Every clinical session is an opportunity to refine technical skills, strengthen communication, and apply classroom knowledge in real-world situations.

Students learn to:

- Conduct professional client consultations
 - Review health histories and identify contraindications
 - Develop individualized treatment plans
 - Perform safe and effective therapeutic massage sessions
 - Document treatments using SOAP notes
 - Recommend appropriate self-care techniques
 - Practice professional communication and ethical decision-making
 - Build confidence through instructor feedback and mentorship
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Learning Beyond Massage Techniques

Success as a massage therapist requires much more than excellent hands-on skills.

Throughout the Student Clinic, students gain experience with the daily responsibilities of professional practice, including:

- Time management
- Professional appearance and conduct
- Guest communication
- Scheduling and appointment flow
- Client education
- Documentation
- Rebooking conversations
- Professional boundaries
- Teamwork and collaboration

These experiences prepare graduates to transition confidently into employment immediately after graduation.

Community Outreach & Service Learning

Students may also participate in approved community outreach opportunities throughout the program.

These experiences may include wellness events, chair massage clinics, educational presentations, and other community service activities that allow students to build confidence while promoting health and wellness within the communities we serve.

Community outreach helps students develop professionalism, communication skills, and a deeper appreciation for the positive impact massage therapy can have on individuals and organizations.

Guided Every Step of the Way

Every clinical experience is supervised by experienced instructors who are committed to student success.

Students receive ongoing coaching and constructive feedback to help refine techniques, improve clinical reasoning, strengthen professionalism, and build confidence before entering the workforce.

By graduation, students will have developed not only the technical skills required of a licensed massage therapist, but also the confidence and professionalism needed to provide exceptional care from their very first day in practice.

Career Opportunities

Massage therapy is a growing profession with opportunities in a wide variety of healthcare, wellness, hospitality, and entrepreneurial settings. Graduates of Essential Massage Therapy Academy are prepared with the clinical knowledge, professional skills, and business foundation needed to pursue the career path that best aligns with their goals and interests.

Whether your passion is helping individuals recover from injury, reducing stress, improving athletic performance, or creating exceptional spa experiences, a career in massage therapy offers flexibility, purpose, and the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

Where Our Graduates Can Work

Graduates may pursue employment in a variety of professional settings, including:

- Day spas and destination resorts
- Medical and chiropractic offices
- Physical therapy and rehabilitation clinics
- Wellness centers
- Sports medicine and athletic programs
- Corporate wellness programs
- Assisted living and senior care communities
- Cruise ships and luxury resorts
- Hotels and hospitality spas
- Fitness and health clubs
- Mobile massage practices
- Self-employment and private practice

As the demand for complementary and integrative healthcare continues to grow, massage therapists are finding increasing opportunities to collaborate with healthcare providers and wellness professionals.

Build the Career You Want

At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, we believe graduating with excellent hands-on skills is only part of the equation.

Throughout the program, students also develop the professional and business skills needed to build successful, long-term careers. Topics such as communication, professionalism, client retention, ethical business practices, interviewing, résumé preparation, marketing, and entrepreneurship are woven throughout the curriculum.

Whether you dream of joining an established practice, specializing in therapeutic massage, working in a luxury spa, or eventually owning your own business, our goal is to provide you with the knowledge and confidence to take that next step.

Career Preparation

Students receive guidance and support as they prepare to enter the profession, including:

- Professional résumé development
- Interview preparation

- Professional communication skills
- Workplace expectations and ethics
- Client relationship building
- Career planning and goal setting
- Business fundamentals and entrepreneurship
- Professional networking opportunities

Our instructors are committed to helping students transition from the classroom into successful, rewarding careers.

A Profession with Purpose

Massage therapy is more than a job—it is a profession built on compassion, connection, and service.

Every day, massage therapists have the opportunity to help people reduce pain, recover from injuries, manage stress, improve mobility, and enhance their overall quality of life. For those who enjoy helping others while working in a flexible and rewarding career, massage therapy offers a unique opportunity to make a lasting impact.

At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, we are proud to prepare graduates who enter the profession with confidence, integrity, and a genuine passion for improving the health and well-being of the communities they serve.

Admissions

Your Journey Starts Here

Thank you for considering Essential Massage Therapy Academy as the next step in your professional journey. Choosing a career in massage therapy is a meaningful decision, and we are committed to making the admissions process personal, informative, and supportive. From your first inquiry through your first day of class, our team is here to answer questions, provide guidance, and help you determine if our program is the right fit for your goals. Because we intentionally maintain small class sizes, admission is selective and enrollment is limited. Applications are reviewed in the order they are received, and acceptance is based on available space and successful completion of the admissions process.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must:

- Be at least 18 years of age before the start of classes
- Possess a high school diploma, GED, or equivalent
- Submit a completed application for admission
- Pay the non-refundable \$100 application fee
- Complete an admissions interview with the School Director
- Demonstrate the maturity, professionalism, and commitment necessary to complete the program

Meeting the minimum admission requirements does not guarantee acceptance, as enrollment is limited to maintain an exceptional educational experience.

The Admissions Process

Step 1 – Explore the Program

Review the Academic Catalog, Future Student Guide, and admissions information available on our website. Prospective students are encouraged to attend an Open House, schedule a campus visit, or contact the Academy with questions.

Step 2 – Submit Your Application

Complete the Application for Admission and submit it along with the required non-refundable application fee.

Step 3 – Admissions Interview

Applicants will meet with the School Director for a personal interview to discuss career goals, program expectations, scheduling, and the responsibilities of becoming a licensed massage therapist. Interviews may be conducted in person or virtually when appropriate.

Step 4 – Acceptance Notification

Applicants will be notified of their admission decision after the interview and review process. Accepted students will receive an official acceptance packet outlining the next steps for enrollment.

Step 5 – Confirm Your Enrollment

To reserve a seat in the program, accepted students must submit a **\$500 Enrollment Deposit**, which is applied toward tuition. Because class sizes are intentionally small, enrollment is confirmed only after the deposit has been received.

Enrollment Capacity

To provide individualized instruction and meaningful mentorship, enrollment is intentionally limited.

Founding Cohort (2026–2027): Maximum of **6 students**

Future cohorts may increase in size while maintaining the Academy's commitment to small class learning and personalized instruction.

Equal Opportunity

Essential Massage Therapy Academy welcomes applicants from diverse backgrounds who share a passion for helping others.

Admissions decisions are made without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, or any other status protected by applicable law.

Questions?

We encourage prospective students to reach out at any point during the admissions process.

Our goal is not simply to enroll students—it is to help each applicant determine whether massage therapy is the right career path and whether Essential Massage Therapy Academy is the right place to begin that journey.

We look forward to meeting you and helping you take the first step toward a rewarding career in massage therapy.

Tuition & Financial Information

Investing in Your Future

Choosing a career in massage therapy is an investment in yourself, your future, and your ability to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others. At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, we are committed to providing a high-quality education with transparent tuition and payment options. Our goal is to make your educational journey as accessible as possible while delivering exceptional instruction, hands-on experience, and personalized mentorship.

Tuition

Description	Amount
Standard Program Tuition	\$12,000
Application Fee (Non-Refundable)	\$100
Enrollment Deposit*	\$500

*The enrollment deposit is applied toward tuition and secures your place in the program after acceptance.

Founding Cohort Savings

To celebrate our inaugural class, students accepted into the first cohort will receive a **\$1,000 Founding Cohort Scholarship**, reducing tuition from **\$12,000 to \$11,000**. Students who choose to **pay tuition in full prior to the first day of class** will receive an **additional 10% Paid-in-Full Discount**, reducing tuition to **\$9,900**. This special pricing is available only to the Academy's founding cohort.

Payment Options

Students may choose the payment option that best fits their needs.

Pay in Full

- Receive an additional **10% tuition discount**
- Tuition reduced to **\$9,900** for the founding cohort
- Payment due prior to the first day of class

Monthly Payment Plan

Students may divide the remaining tuition balance into convenient monthly payments after the enrollment deposit has been received.

- \$500 enrollment deposit due upon acceptance
- Interest-free payment plan
- No prepayment penalties
- Remaining balance paid through 10 scheduled monthly installments

Students will receive a payment agreement outlining due dates and payment expectations before classes begin.

Tuition Includes

Your tuition covers far more than classroom instruction. Students receive access to the educational resources and equipment needed to successfully complete the program, including:

- Required textbooks
 - Academy-issued clinical shirt
 - Massage tables during instruction
 - Bolsters, face cradles, and classroom equipment
 - Professional massage lotions and oils
 - Linens and laundry service during classes and clinic
 - Classroom supplies and educational materials
 - MBLEx preparation resources
 - Clinical supervision
 - Community outreach opportunities
 - Personalized instructor mentorship
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Student Expenses

Students should also plan for a few personal expenses that are not included in tuition.

These may include:

- Black scrub pants or black joggers
 - Closed-toe professional shoes
 - Transportation to and from the Academy
 - Optional massage tools or supplies for personal use
 - Iowa licensure fees
 - MBLEx examination fee
 - Professional liability insurance after graduation
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Refund Policy

The Academy understands that circumstances sometimes change. Our refund policy is designed to be fair while recognizing the educational resources reserved for each enrolled student.

- The **\$100 application fee is non-refundable.**
- The **\$500 enrollment deposit is refundable only if an applicant is denied admission.**

After classes begin, tuition refunds are calculated as follows:

Percentage of Program Completed	Tuition Refund
0–10%	75%
11–25%	50%
26–50%	25%
More than 50%	No Refund

Books, uniforms, and educational materials that have been issued to the student are non-refundable.

Financial Responsibility

Students are responsible for meeting all financial obligations outlined in their enrollment agreement.

Official transcripts and diploma documentation will be released after all tuition balances and financial obligations have been satisfied.

If you have questions regarding tuition, payment options, or enrollment, we encourage you to contact the Academy. We are happy to discuss your options and help you find the payment plan that best supports your educational goals.

Academic Calendar & Program Schedule

Designed for Working Adults

At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, we understand that many of our students are balancing careers, families, and other responsibilities while pursuing a new profession. That's why our program has been thoughtfully designed to provide the flexibility adult learners need without compromising the quality of their education.

Classes are held during the evenings, allowing students to continue working while earning their Massage Therapy Diploma. Monthly weekend intensives provide additional hands-on instruction, practical application, and immersive learning experiences throughout the program.

Program Schedule

Program Start Date

September 1, 2026

Classroom Instruction Ends

May 27, 2027

Clinical Completion Period

June 2027 (as needed)

Weekly Class Schedule

Tuesday

5:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Wednesday

5:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Thursday

5:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Monthly Weekend Intensives

Students participate in one/two scheduled weekend intensive each month.

Saturday

9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Sunday

9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Weekend intensives allow students to focus on hands-on techniques, practical assessments, specialty topics, guest instructors, and collaborative learning experiences that enhance classroom instruction.

Student Clinic

Clinical massage sessions are scheduled throughout the program outside of regular classroom hours.

Students complete supervised clinical experiences while providing massage therapy services to members of the public. Clinic schedules are designed to provide flexibility while ensuring each student completes the required 100 clinical hours before graduation.

Academic Breaks

The Academy observes several scheduled breaks throughout the academic year.

Thanksgiving Break

November 23–28, 2026

Winter Break

December 21, 2026 – January 1, 2027

Spring Break

March 8–12, 2027

Additional holidays or schedule adjustments will be communicated to students as needed.

Attendance Expectations

Massage therapy education is based on clock hours, making attendance an essential part of student success. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, laboratory sessions, weekend intensives, and clinical experiences. Active participation is critical to developing the knowledge, technical skills, and professional confidence required for graduation and licensure. Detailed attendance policies, make-up procedures, and leave of absence information are provided in the Student Handbook.

Learning Through Experience

Each week of the program is intentionally designed to build upon the last. Students progress from foundational sciences and introductory techniques to advanced therapeutic applications, clinical reasoning, business development, and supervised client care. By graduation, students will have completed hundreds of hours of classroom instruction, extensive hands-on practice, and meaningful clinical experiences that prepare them to confidently begin their careers as licensed massage therapists.

Graduation, MBLEx & Licensure

Preparing You for Professional Success

The goal of every student at Essential Massage Therapy Academy is simple: graduate with confidence, earn licensure, and begin a rewarding career helping others.

Throughout the program, students receive the academic knowledge, hands-on training, and professional mentorship needed to successfully complete the Massage Therapy Diploma Program and prepare for the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx).

Graduation Requirements

To earn a Massage Therapy Diploma from Essential Massage Therapy Academy, students must successfully:

- Complete all **725 required clock hours**
- Complete **625 classroom and laboratory hours**
- Complete **100 supervised clinical hours**
- Successfully complete all required coursework
- Pass all written and practical examinations
- Demonstrate competency in required massage therapy skills
- Complete all required clinical documentation, including SOAP notes
- Meet all financial obligations to the Academy
- Maintain professional conduct consistent with Academy standards

Students who successfully complete all graduation requirements will be awarded a **Massage Therapy Diploma**.

MBLEx Preparation

Preparation for the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx) is integrated throughout the curriculum rather than limited to a single review course.

Students benefit from:

- Comprehensive review of all MBLEx content areas
- Practice examinations
- Case study discussions
- Clinical reasoning exercises
- Test-taking strategies
- Instructor-led review sessions
- Individual guidance and support

Our curriculum is intentionally designed to build knowledge progressively, allowing students to strengthen both their understanding and confidence as they prepare for licensure.

Iowa Licensure

Graduation from Essential Massage Therapy Academy satisfies Iowa's educational requirement for massage therapy licensure.

After graduation, students are responsible for completing all licensure requirements established by the Iowa Board of Massage Therapy, which generally include:

- Graduation from an approved massage therapy program
- Successful completion of the MBLEx
- Submission of a licensure application
- Payment of applicable licensing fees
- Meeting any additional state requirements in effect at the time of application

Licensure requirements are established by the State of Iowa and are subject to change. Students are encouraged to review the most current licensing requirements before applying for licensure.

Seeking Licensure in Another State

Licensure requirements vary from state to state.

Many states recognize educational programs similar to Iowa's; however, individual licensing boards determine their own educational, examination, and application requirements.

Students who plan to practice outside Iowa are encouraged to contact the licensing board in their intended state before graduation to ensure they understand that state's specific requirements.

The Academy is happy to assist students in locating licensing information whenever possible.

Career Support Beyond Graduation

Graduation marks the beginning of your professional journey—not the end of your education.

Our commitment to students extends beyond the classroom through continued encouragement, professional mentorship, and career guidance as graduates begin building their practices and serving their communities.

Whether your goal is employment in a spa, healthcare setting, wellness center, or private practice, we are proud to celebrate your success and welcome you as part of the Essential Massage Therapy Academy alumni community.

Your Future Begins Here

Every lecture, every practical lab, every clinic session, and every interaction throughout the program is designed with one purpose in mind—to prepare you to become a skilled, ethical, and compassionate massage therapist.

We look forward to celebrating your graduation and welcoming you into a profession dedicated to improving the health, wellness, and quality of life of others.

Student Services & Resources

Supporting Your Success

At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, we believe every student deserves an educational experience that is supportive, encouraging, and focused on long-term success.

Our commitment extends beyond teaching massage techniques. We strive to create an environment where students feel challenged, respected, and empowered to grow both personally and professionally. From your first day of class through graduation, our faculty is invested in helping you achieve your goals.

Personalized Instruction

One of the greatest advantages of attending Essential Massage Therapy Academy is our intentionally small class sizes.

With a limited number of students in each cohort, instructors are able to provide individualized attention, answer questions, offer additional demonstrations, and provide meaningful feedback throughout the program.

Students are encouraged to ask questions, seek guidance, and actively participate in their own learning experience.

Experienced Faculty Mentorship

Our instructors bring years of real-world experience into every classroom and clinical session.

Because our faculty members actively work in the massage and wellness profession, students receive practical advice, current industry knowledge, and mentorship that extends beyond textbooks.

Whether you need help mastering a technique, preparing for an exam, or planning your career, our instructors are committed to helping you succeed.

Hands-On Learning Environment

Massage therapy is a hands-on profession, and we believe the best way to learn is through practice.

Students benefit from:

- Extensive hands-on laboratory instruction
- Supervised clinical experience
- Individual instructor feedback
- Peer practice sessions
- Practical demonstrations
- Real-world client interactions

These experiences help students build confidence while developing safe, effective therapeutic skills.

Professional Learning Resources

Throughout the program, students have access to educational resources designed to support academic success, including:

- Required textbooks
- Instructor-developed learning materials
- Anatomy models and visual teaching aids

- Skills demonstrations
- Practice assessments
- MBLEx review materials
- Clinical documentation resources

Additional educational resources may be introduced throughout the program as curriculum and industry standards evolve.

Career Development

Preparing students for successful careers is an important part of our mission.

Students receive guidance in areas such as:

- Professional communication
- Résumé development
- Interview preparation
- Professional networking
- Career planning
- Business fundamentals
- Professional ethics
- Workplace expectations

Our goal is to help graduates enter the workforce with confidence, professionalism, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Student Wellness

As future healthcare professionals, students are encouraged to prioritize their own health and well-being throughout the program.

The Academy emphasizes:

- Proper body mechanics
- Injury prevention
- Stress management
- Stretching and mobility
- Mindfulness and breathing techniques
- Healthy work-life balance
- Career longevity

We believe that caring for yourself is an essential part of providing exceptional care to others.

Accommodations

Essential Massage Therapy Academy is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for qualified students. Applicants or enrolled students who require reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the School Director. Requests will be reviewed individually in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, and reasonable accommodations will be provided whenever appropriate and feasible.

A Community That Cares

When you enroll at Essential Massage Therapy Academy, you become part of a community built on encouragement, professionalism, and mutual respect.

We celebrate each student's accomplishments, support one another through challenges, and share a common goal—to prepare compassionate, confident massage therapists who are ready to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Your success is our success, and we are honored to be part of your journey.

Academy Policies at a Glance

Essential Massage Therapy Academy is committed to maintaining a professional, respectful, and supportive learning environment. The following policies provide an overview of the standards and expectations that guide our program. Complete policies and procedures are outlined in the Student Handbook, which is provided to each student upon enrollment.

Attendance

Massage therapy is a hands-on profession, and consistent attendance is essential for developing the knowledge and clinical skills required for success.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, laboratory sessions, weekend intensives, and clinical experiences. Because Iowa massage therapy programs are based on clock-hour education, all required program hours must be completed prior to graduation.

Students who miss scheduled instruction may be required to complete approved make-up work or additional supervised educational activities.

Academic Progress

Students are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress throughout the program.

Progress is evaluated through written examinations, practical demonstrations, homework assignments, classroom participation, clinical performance, and professional conduct. Students who require additional assistance may receive individualized support and remediation opportunities to help them achieve competency.

Professionalism

Massage therapists are trusted healthcare and wellness professionals. Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism in every aspect of their education.

Professional expectations include:

- Respect for instructors, classmates, guests, and staff
- Honest and ethical behavior
- Professional communication
- Confidentiality
- Appropriate appearance and hygiene
- Dependability and punctuality
- A willingness to learn and accept constructive feedback

Developing professional habits during school prepares students for success throughout their careers.

Clinical Expectations

Students participate in supervised clinical experiences designed to prepare them for professional practice.

During clinic, students are expected to:

- Arrive prepared and on time
- Maintain a professional appearance
- Follow all sanitation and safety procedures
- Protect guest confidentiality

- Complete accurate SOAP documentation
- Communicate respectfully with guests and instructors
- Practice within the scope of their education and training

Clinical experiences are supervised by licensed instructors to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment.

Code of Conduct

Students are expected to contribute to a positive learning environment that reflects the values of the Academy and the massage therapy profession.

Behavior that may result in disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to:

- Academic dishonesty
- Harassment or discrimination
- Disruptive behavior
- Breach of confidentiality
- Unsafe clinical practices
- Failure to follow Academy policies
- Possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol on Academy property
- Any conduct that compromises the safety or well-being of others

The Academy reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action when necessary to maintain a safe and professional educational environment.

Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination

Essential Massage Therapy Academy provides equal educational opportunities to all qualified applicants and students.

The Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, or any other status protected by applicable law.

Student Concerns & Grievances

We believe open communication is essential to a positive educational experience.

Students are encouraged to address concerns promptly and respectfully. When concerns cannot be resolved informally, students may submit a written grievance to the School Director for review. Every concern is taken seriously and reviewed fairly, without fear of retaliation.

Policy Updates

The Academy reserves the right to revise policies, procedures, tuition, curriculum, schedules, or other program information when necessary to maintain compliance, improve educational quality, or respond to operational needs. Students will be notified of significant changes that affect their enrollment or educational experience.

Additional Information

This Academic Catalog provides an overview of Essential Massage Therapy Academy and its educational programs. Detailed policies regarding attendance, grading, dress code, professionalism, clinical procedures, disciplinary processes, student expectations, and daily operations are contained in the **Essential Massage Therapy Academy Student Handbook**, which is provided to each enrolled student during orientation.

Begin Your Journey

Your Future Starts Here

Choosing a career in massage therapy is more than selecting a profession—it's choosing a life dedicated to helping others heal, relax, and live healthier lives.

At Essential Massage Therapy Academy, we believe education should do more than prepare you for an examination. It should prepare you for a meaningful career built on compassion, professionalism, confidence, and lifelong learning. From your first day of class to your first day as a licensed massage therapist, our faculty is committed to supporting, encouraging, and challenging you to become the very best version of yourself.

Whether you dream of working in a luxury spa, medical practice, wellness center, sports setting, or owning your own business, we're here to help you build the knowledge, skills, and confidence to get there.

We invite you to take the next step and discover how Essential Massage Therapy Academy can help turn your passion for helping others into a rewarding career.

Ready to Apply?

Applications are accepted throughout the year until each cohort reaches capacity.

Because class sizes are intentionally small, applications are reviewed in the order they are received, and enrollment is limited.

We encourage you to apply early to reserve your place in an upcoming class.

Schedule a Tour

The best way to experience Essential Massage Therapy Academy is to visit us in person.

Prospective students are encouraged to:

- Tour our classroom and student clinic
- Meet our instructors
- Learn about the curriculum
- Ask questions about admissions and tuition
- Experience our learning environment firsthand

Private tours are available by appointment.

Contact Us

Essential Massage Therapy Academy

Where Experience Inspires Excellence

Address

209 E Franklin St.
Bloomfield, IA 52537

Phone

641-664-1022

Email

info@essentialmassagespa.com

Website

www.essentialmassagespa.com

Connect With Us

Follow Essential Massage Therapy Academy on social media for program updates, student highlights, educational resources, and upcoming events.



Facebook



Instagram



LinkedIn (*coming soon*)

We Can't Wait to Meet You

Thank you for considering Essential Massage Therapy Academy.

We are honored to be part of your journey and look forward to helping you build a rewarding career in massage therapy.

Helpful Resources

Students are encouraged to review the most current licensing information through the Iowa Board of Massage Therapy and the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB) regarding the MBLEx examination.

Stay Connected

Follow Essential Massage Therapy Academy for:

- Program Updates
 - Open Houses
 - Student Highlights
 - Continuing Education Opportunities
 - Community Events
 - Career Resources
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Essential Massage Therapy Academy

Where Experience Inspires Excellence.