

Summary of Components for 2015 Bill Known As The Music Therapist Licensing Act

What This Act Represents and Why

The profession of music therapy has been determined to affect the public safety and welfare; therefore this act sets the standards of qualification, education, training, and experience for music therapists. The license provides the method to regulate and control who may practice music therapy and who may call themselves music therapists.

The License Title

Under this act, the new title for music therapists practicing in New Jersey will be “licensed professional music therapist” (LPMT) and a “music therapist” will be anyone licensed to practice in New Jersey. No one shall engage in the practice of music therapy or use the LPMT title unless licensed under this act. (A music therapist who holds both board certification and a license will list the license first, followed by the national certification as such: John Doe, LPMT, MT-BC.)

Requirements for Initial Licensing

The act accepts American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) and Certification Board for Music Therapists (CBMT) education, training, and certification standards as the standards defining the practice of music therapy and the qualifications required for the license.

AMTA: Requirements include a bachelor’s degree or higher from an AMTA approved institution, or its equivalent, from a program approved by the AMTA within an accredited educational institution that is approved by the committee; a minimum of 1200 hours of clinical training, with not less than 180 hours of pre-internship experience, and not less than 900 hours of internship. The internship must be approved by an approved or accredited educational institution or the AMTA.

CBMT: Requirements further include proof of passing the CBMT examination for board certification, or proof of being transitioned into board certification, and proof that the applicant is currently a board certified music therapist in good standing.

Registry: The applicant must provide proof of professional designations registered music therapist, certified music therapist, or advanced certified music therapist, and be in good standing with the National Music Therapy Registry.

Other: General qualifications are that an individual must be at least 18 years old and of good moral character.

Anyone may qualify as a licensed professional music therapist for 360 days after the date procedures are established by the Music Therapy Advisory Committee upon application for licensure, payment of the appropriate fee along with evidence of board certification or national registry designation in good standing. **(This is the grace period to continue practicing music therapy without a license. After 360 days, you must have obtained the LPMT to practice music therapy in New Jersey.)**

Music Therapy Advisory Committee

The Music Therapy Advisory Committee will serve as an advisory body to the Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs for the licensing of music therapists. The Governor will officially appoint the members of the committee with the advice and consent of the Senate.

There will be five members who are residents of New Jersey: three music therapists, one licensed health care practitioner, and one public member. The music therapists will have been actively practicing for at least five years preceding their appointment. For the first committee, the music therapists will not be licensed; but subsequent appointments will require the LPMT.

Each member will serve for a term of three years, except for first appointment. The first committee will have staggered terms, two members for three years, two members for two years, and one member for one year.

Members of the committee will be compensated and reimbursed for expenses, and provided with office and meeting facilities. **(NJSTF requested no compensation or office space for the committee members; but it is common practice in NJ to provide these. It is not expected to be cost prohibitive. A state initiated cost assessment will be done as a matter of protocol and NJSTF will have the opportunity at that time to assess how this might impact license fees. Other options could be considered.)**

Duties and Powers of the Committee:

The committee will issue and renew licenses per this act; suspend, revoke or fail to renew the license of a music therapist not complying with this act; maintain a record of every music therapist licensed in the state, including their place of business, place of residence, and the date and number of their license.

They will further establish the charges for licenses, renewal and other services performed within their duties. They will establish rules and regulations to carry out their duties in compliance with established state procedures.

Requirements for License Renewal

Licenses will be issued for two-year periods and may be renewed under the following conditions: a) filing a renewal application; b) paying a licensure fee; c) providing evidence that in the period since the license was issued you have completed at least 40 continuing education credit hours approved by CBMT; and d) providing proof of status as a board certified music therapist in good standing. **(Upon renewal all music therapists applying for the license will be required to show proof of current board certification. Annual fee requirements for CBMT will remain for LPMTs. Those who hold registry designations must be board certified by CBMT prior to license renewal.)**

Music Therapist Licenses from Other States

Upon payment to the director of a fee and the submission of a written application provided by the director, the director shall issue a music therapy license to any person who holds a valid license issued by another state or possession of the United States or the District of Columbia which has standards substantially equivalent to those of this State, as determined by the committee.

What Music Therapists May Do Under the LPMT

The license **does not allow for diagnosis** of any physical, mental, or communication disorder. The **definition of “music therapy”** means the clinical and evidence based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship through an individualized music therapy treatment plan for the client that identifies the goals, objectives, and potential strategies of the music therapy services appropriate for the client using music therapy interventions, which may include music improvisation, receptive music listening, song writing, lyric discussion, music and imagery, music performance, learning through music, and movement to music.

Within the music therapy practice the following may apply.

- 1) We may accept referrals from medical, developmental, mental health or education professionals, family members, clients, or caregivers. When applicable the LPMT shall collaborate with a client’s treatment team before and during the provision of music therapy services.
- 2) We may conduct music therapy assessments;
- 3) develop an individualized music therapy treatment plan;

- 4) carry out an individualized music therapy treatment plan consistent with other medical, developmental, mental health, or educational services being provided to the client;
- 5) evaluate the client's response to music therapy and suggest modifications to the plan if necessary;
- 6) develop a plan for termination of music therapy services in collaboration with the client, any physician, or other provider of health care or education, appropriate family member, and any other appropriate person upon whom the client relies for support;
- 7) minimize any barriers so that the client may receive music therapy services in the least restrictive environment; and
- 8) collaborate with and educate the client, family, caregiver or any other appropriate person about the needs of the client that are being addressed in music therapy and how that is being done.

Impact on Other Professions

There are no restrictions with this act on activities and services of qualified members of other professions, including physicians, psychologists, psychoanalysts, registered nurses, marriage and family therapists, social workers, occupational therapists, professional or rehabilitation counselors or any other licensed profession in New Jersey as long as they are acting within the scope of their profession and doing work consistent with their training.

No other professional is allowed to represent themselves as a music therapist or LPMT. Music therapy interns are allowed to provide music therapy services under the title of "music therapy intern" indicating their training status, as long as they are supervised and in a recognized training program.

There are no restrictions on the activities and services of any person whose training and national certification attests to the individual's preparation and ability to practice his certified profession or occupation, as long as that person does not represent himself by the titles of LPMT or music therapist, or as practicing music therapy. (For example, Drama, Dance/Movement and Art Therapists, Certified Clinical Musicians, Certified Music Practitioners or those practicing Music Thanatology are represented here).