



ADA Supplement

Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards

fsmtb.org • Effective August 2026

Please direct questions to FSMTB's Testing Accommodations Team

ada@fsmtb.org • 913-681-0380



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Effective August 2026

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Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards

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Contents

- ADA Supplement 2
 - Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards . 2
- Introduction. 4
- Standard Testing Conditions 4
 - Comfort Aids 4
 - Service Animals 4
- Who Should Apply for Testing 5
- Accommodations? 5
 - Covered Disabilities 5
 - Available Testing Accommodations 6
- Testing Accommodations Process . . . 6
 - Requirements for Supporting Documentation . 7
 - Specific Requirements for Learning or Cognitive Disabilities 7
 - Testing Accommodations Approval 8
- Confidentiality and Authorization to Release Information 8
- Retaking the Examination 8
- Applicability of FSMTB Policies 9

Introduction

The Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB®) complies with applicable federal and state laws regarding testing accommodations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. FSMTB will consider accommodation requests from qualified candidates with a diagnosed disability to take the Massage & Bodywork Licensing Examination (MBLEx®) if the requests are reasonable, properly documented, and do not fundamentally alter the examination or jeopardize exam security. Exam candidates are not charged additional fees for testing accommodations.

Standard Testing Conditions

Candidates taking the MBLEx schedule a two (2) hour appointment. Of this time, 110 minutes is allotted to complete a 100-item, three (3) or four (4) answer options, multiple-choice examination on a computer; a maximum of five (5) minutes is allotted to the security and confidentiality agreement; and an additional five (5) minutes is allotted to a brief survey.

Standard testing conditions allow all test takers to enlarge the font size (up to 24 pt.) and change the font color and/or background to increase legibility and contrast.

All candidates may request an unscheduled restroom or food break during the examination; however, the clock does not stop.



Comfort Aids

Additionally, Pearson VUE test centers have a list of items considered as “comfort aids” that do not require an accommodation.

Please note that these “comfort aid” items are subject to a visual inspection by the test center staff before they are allowed into the testing room.

[View Pearson VUE’s Comfort Aid List.](#)



Service Animals

Testing accommodations are not required for licensed and certified service animals at the testing center.

However, FSMTB and Pearson VUE request advance notice as a courtesy to ensure test center staff (including any reader/recorder) are aware.

Who Should Apply for Testing Accommodations?

You should apply for testing accommodations if you are an individual with a diagnosed disability (physical or mental impairment) that limits a major life activity and requires accommodations beyond the standard testing conditions.

You will need to provide diagnosis documentation from a licensed health care provider.

The applicant must initiate the request for testing accommodations. Requests from third parties (e.g., massage schools, instructors, caretakers, or relatives) are not accepted.



Covered Disabilities

If you are requesting any deviation from standard testing conditions because you are disabled, your disability must be covered by the ADA. That is, you must have a documentable physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Given the wide variety of possible disabilities, neither the law itself nor the regulations list all of the specific diseases or conditions that might constitute physical or mental impairments.

The ADA defines a physical impairment as:

Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, hemic, and lymphatic, skin, and endocrine.

The ADA defines a mental impairment as:

Any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.

Stress or depression may or may not be considered impairments, depending on whether they result from a documented physiological or mental disorder.

Nonspecific diagnoses such as “academic problems,” “learning style differences,” “slow reader,” “test difficulty,” or “test anxiety” do not by themselves constitute a learning disability.

Limited English language proficiency is not a covered disability.

Some disabilities, such as blindness or deafness, are substantially limiting. The determination as to whether the impairment is substantially limiting must be documented by a licensed professional based on the effect of the impairment on that individual’s life activities.



Available Testing Accommodations

Examples of testing accommodations that may be provided include:

- Extended testing time
- Reader/recorder
- Separate room

Some testing accommodations require additional support and resources, depend on availability, and may take more time to arrange. Please plan accordingly.

Testing accommodations that FSMTB cannot provide include:

- Paper and pencil/pen examinations
- Braille paper examinations
- Multi-day and untimed tests
- Translation for candidates for whom English is not a native language.

Testing Accommodations Process

For general information about accommodations at Pearson VUE test centers, visit [Pearson VUE Testing Accommodations](#). Follow FSMTB's application and documentation requirements in this supplement when requesting accommodations for the MBLEx.

1. When completing your online MBLEx application, choose "yes" when asked if you need testing accommodations.
2. New dialogue boxes will open with prompts that require responses:
 - You must describe your diagnosed disability
 - You must specify the testing accommodations that the qualified professional has recommended for your disability.
3. To support your request, you must provide documentation applicable to your diagnosis, which may be:
 - Be uploaded during the application process or
 - Be submitted by email to ada@fsmtb.org after you submit your MBLEx application.
4. FSMTB will notify you when it has completed its review. FSMTB may communicate requests for additional information or the decision through your FSMTB Exam Account, by email, or both.
5. You must sign and email both pages of the Agreement to ada@fsmtb.org.

Submitting an accommodations request does not guarantee that testing accommodations will be granted. FSMTB reviews each request and professional recommendations individually to determine whether the accommodations are reasonable and appropriate for the testing environment. Accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature of the examination or jeopardize exam security will not be granted.

Only testing accommodations approved in advance by FSMTB will be honored at the test center. Requests for testing accommodations cannot be considered or approved at the test center or on the day of testing.



Requirements for Supporting Documentation

For all accommodations requests, the information and documentation submitted by the licensed professional must:

1. State the diagnosed disability
2. Fully explain the current functional limitations resulting from the disability on the applicant's daily life
3. Explain any treatments or measures taken to mitigate its impact
4. Describe the specific testing accommodation(s) requested
5. Appear on official letterhead and be dated and signed by the evaluator or professional qualified to make the diagnosis (including information about licensure, certification, credentials, and area of specialization)
6. Include the date of the most recent evaluation or assessment and test results (if applicable; see below)
7. Be dated within three (3) years of the date of the MBLEx application submission. (Note: Permanent physical or sensory-related impairments, such as blindness and deafness, only require a record of permanent disability.)

Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans from an educational setting are not acceptable as primary supporting documentation to establish a diagnosed disability.

FSMTB reserves the right to request additional information at any time from applicants requesting testing accommodations. If the documentation is insufficient, FSMTB will notify the applicant through the FSMTB Exam Account, by email, or both.



Specific Requirements for Learning or Cognitive Disabilities

If you have a specific learning or cognitive disability, processing deficiency, or a physical or psychological impairment that affects cognitive function (e.g., dyslexia, ADHD, processing deficiency), you must also submit a comprehensive psychoeducational and/or neuropsychological assessment conducted within the previous three (3) years that confirms all diagnoses.

This assessment must be conducted by an evaluator with comprehensive training and direct experience with adults, and the report must be submitted on the evaluator's letterhead. The diagnostic report, which can be an existing report or one specifically prepared to support your accommodations request, must provide objective evidence of a substantial limitation in cognition or learning. At a minimum, it must include the following elements:

1. A description and evaluation of the presenting problem, including DSM-5 symptoms.
2. Relevant educational or medical histories.
3. Description of the assessment and evaluative instruments used to establish that a cognitive disability exists and rule out alternative conditions, including, but not limited to, actual test scores on aptitude, achievement, information processing, and other measures that are reliable, valid, and standardized for use with adults.
4. A specific differential diagnosis that is supported by the test data, history, and/or clinical observations that shows that the applicant's functional limitations are due to the diagnosed disability and that rules out alternative conditions.
5. Specific recommendations for testing accommodations, including an explanation of why each recommended accommodation is necessary, with references to test results or clinical observations.

FSMTB reserves the right to request additional information at any time from applicants requesting testing accommodations. If the documentation is insufficient, FSMTB will notify the applicant through the FSMTB Exam Account, by email, or both.



Testing Accommodations Approval

If FSMTB approves your request, it will notify Pearson VUE of the approved accommodations and issue your Authorization to Test (ATT). Review the approval information and ATT carefully before scheduling your examination appointment.

In certain cases, specific equipment or personnel may need to be arranged for the examination appointment, which may require additional time to schedule. FSMTB and Pearson VUE will make every effort to minimize delays.

FSMTB will communicate the approved testing accommodation(s) to Pearson VUE. You will receive an Authorization to Test (ATT) that will provide you with a telephone number and website address to schedule your examination appointment. Please note there are restrictions on which accommodations can be scheduled online. If there are any questions about scheduling your examination appointment, please contact the Pearson VUE Accommodations Scheduling Team at 800-466-0450.

Confidentiality and Authorization to Release Information

When you request testing accommodations, you authorize FSMTB to contact the health care provider or evaluating professional(s) who treated you and authorize the professional(s) to communicate with FSMTB about your eligibility for testing accommodations. All information related to your testing accommodations will remain confidential and be used solely for the purpose of determining eligibility for reasonable testing accommodations in the administration of the MBLEx.

Retaking the Examination

If you are retaking the MBLEx, you may or may not need to resubmit supporting documentation for a testing accommodations request.

You do not have to resubmit supporting documentation if:

1. You are requesting the same accommodations, and
2. Your previously submitted documentation is dated within three (3) years of the date of the new MBLEx application submission.

You must submit new supporting documentation if:

1. You are requesting additional or different accommodations; or
2. Your previously submitted documentation is more than three (3) years old.

Applicability of FSMTB Policies

All FSMTB policies and procedures outlined in the [MBLEx Candidate Handbook](#) apply to test takers using testing accommodations, including, but not limited to, the policies regarding eligibility for testing, exam result invalidations, and disqualification or suspension from the MBLEx and FSMTB services for cheating and misconduct.

After six (6) months, incomplete MBLEx applications expire without further notice to the applicant. You will need to submit a new application and pay the application fee, and you must comply with all examination policies and fees in place at that time.

Please do not submit your MBLEx application if you know that you will need more than six (6) months to secure and submit your supporting documentation.



FSMTB is a fully autonomous, nonprofit organization established in 2005. It operates under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All revenue collected by the organization is used to enhance FSMTB programs, improve the quality of its examinations and services, and provide support to its Member Boards in fulfilling their responsibility of protecting the public.

Our mission is to support our Member Boards in their work to ensure that the practice of massage therapy is provided to the public safely and competently.

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