

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEE ON ACUPUNCTURE

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FULL ACUPUNCTURE LICENSE APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

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PLEASE MAKE A COPY OF ALL SUBMITTED FORMS FOR YOUR RECORDS

Before mailing your full license application, please make a copy of your application and supplement for your records. The COA charges a fee for a copy of the full license application and you may experience a significant delay in receiving the copy.

THE COMMITTEE ON ACUPUNCTURE

The Committee on Acupuncture (COA) is comprised of seven members: a licensed physician member of the COA; a licensed physician who is actively involved in the practice of acupuncture; a public member; and four acupuncture practitioners. The role of the Committee on Acupuncture is to work collaboratively with the COA to regulate the practice of acupuncture. The COA establishes the standards for acupuncture licensure and scope of practice, including approval of acupuncture schools, training programs and continuing acupuncture education activities.

The COA's primary function is to protect the safety of the public by ensuring that applicants applying for licensure to practice acupuncture are qualified, competent and possess the education, examination and training requirements established by the COA. The Committee is also responsible for interpreting the existing laws (M.G.L. c.112, §148-162) and regulations relating to the practice of acupuncture and disciplinary process for acupuncturists who engage in misconduct. The COA meetings are held every three months at the Board of Registration in Medicine and are open to the public.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR A FULL ACUPUNCTURE LICENSE

NOTE: *If you ever held a Massachusetts full acupuncture license in the past, do not use this application form. You must complete a lapsed application to revive your lapsed license. Please contact the Licensing Division at (781) 876-8210 for instructions.*

*Please do not send your full acupuncture license application to the Board until you have collected all of the following documents in **sealed envelopes**.*

- *Moral Character form*
- *National Practitioner Data Bank Profile*
- *State License Verifications from each state in which you have **ever** held an active or inactive or lapsed acupuncture license or a license in any healing art*

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ACUPUNCTURE LICENSE

The COA regulations require the following education requirements for a full acupuncture license:

1. The applicant has completed two full years of undergraduate study (60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours or the equivalent) at an accredited college or university, (this accredited college or university cannot be your acupuncture school) or foreign institution, which the COA deems the equivalent.
2. The applicant has successfully completed, at an accredited college or at a COA approved acupuncture school, a three (3) semester hour course in each of the following: general biology, human physiology, and human anatomy. As of July 1 2009, applicants entering acupuncture school must have completed a laboratory course requirement for at least one of the science courses listed above.
3. As of January 1, 2009, an applicant for a full acupuncture license must, a) be a graduate of a COA approved acupuncture school, and b) have a minimum of 1905 hours of clinical and didactic instruction in acupuncture related courses, of which a minimum of 100 hours must be in the supervised diagnosis and treatment of patients for whom the applicant is solely responsible. Coursework in general biology, human physiology, and human anatomy are excluded from the 1905 hours of required acupuncture education. The Committee, in its discretion, may grant a waiver of this requirement for applicants who are licensed acupuncturists in another state.
4. The acupuncture school must be a COA approved school on the date the applicant graduates from the school. A list of approved acupuncture schools is available at the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM) website at http://www.acaom.org/accdtd_cndtdschls.htm.
5. An applicant for a full acupuncture license must have received a minimum of 30 hours of herbal medicine training from a COA approved school or COA program in order to be licensed.
6. Initial licensees after January 1, 2009 may obtain Committee approval to employ herbal therapy including patent or raw herbs, by submitting evidence of one of the following:
 1. completion of an ACAOM accredited or candidate status oriental medicine program with a minimum of 1,905 hours of clinical/didactic training, of which at least 660 hours were training hours in herbs and at least 210 of those were clinical hours in acupuncture and herbs; and
 2. certification by NCCAOM in Chinese Herbology
7. Foreign applicants must have a minimum of five (5) academic years of study, of which three (3) academic years must consist of acupuncture training in a COA approved school. All transcripts must be in English and must state the number of hours for each class, the number of hours for the entire program, the number of months in attendance and the date the diploma was awarded.
8. The COA will recognize only foreign schools that are government approved. As of January 1, 2009, educational institutions outside the United States, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia and the territories of the United States will be approved by the Committee on a case by case basis, according to the standards set by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). Graduates of a foreign school must submit a completed AACRAO credentials review report to the committee and the Committee will determine whether to approve the

acupuncture school on the basis of the report and any other additional information it may deem necessary. You may access the AACRAO website at <http://www.aacrao.org/international/foreignEdCred.cfm> to obtain information on verification of foreign medical schools.

9. Applicants who received either their undergraduate and/or acupuncture education outside of the United States must submit both the original and a notarized copy of their diplomas or their certificates.

NCCAOM BOARD CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

As of January 1, 2009, an applicant for initial licensure must be NCCAOM board certified in Acupuncture, Oriental Medicine or Chinese Herbology or be licensed in another state or foreign nation with which Massachusetts has a reciprocal agreement.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR A FULL ACUPUNCTURE LICENSE

If you are a *U.S. graduate*, do not apply for your undergraduate education transcripts or transcripts from your acupuncture training until you are ready to send your acupuncture license application to the COA.

If you are an *international medical graduate* please contact your acupuncture school as soon as possible to ensure that the documents will be received. Please do not request your acupuncture examination scores, legal or malpractice documents (if applicable) until after you receive all of the documents that you need to send to the COA with your complete acupuncture license application. This includes Massachusetts and other state license verifications, moral character form and the National Practitioner DataBank profile in sealed envelopes, which must be sent to the COA with your full acupuncture application in the original envelope.

The Massachusetts licensing examination is administered by National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) and consists of four parts; 1) the NCCAOM comprehensive Written Examination (CWE) and/or The Foundations of Oriental Medicine Module (FOMM) and The Acupuncture Module (AM); 2) NCCAOM practical Examination of Point Location Skills (PEPLS) and/or The Point Location Module (PLM), 3) The Biomedicine Module (for graduates after January 1, 2007) and, 4) the CCAOM Clean Needle Technique/Practical (CNT) course. A detailed description of the education and examination requirements is available in the Committee on Acupuncture Requirements and Instructions for Applying for a Full License in Massachusetts.

The acupuncture full license application packet consists of the forms required for completing the application process. You may download additional forms at the Board of Registration in Medicine Acupuncture website at <http://www.massmedboard.org>, select "Acupuncture" and "Downloadable Forms." Failure to comply with the instructions may delay processing of your acupuncture license application.

- Print information in blue or black ballpoint pen. Illegible information will result in delayed processing.
- Provide a response to each applicable piece of information that is asked of you in the application packet.

- Include all components of the requested information, especially complete names and addresses of medical schools and hospitals. Failure to submit full addresses will result in delayed processing.
- Provide complete dates (both month and year) as indicated on the acupuncture license application and attach a separate sheet of paper if necessary.
- Account for any gaps longer than three months following your graduation from acupuncture school.

PROCESSING OF FULL ACUPUNCTURE LICENSE APPLICATIONS

The processing time for a full acupuncture license application is dependent upon receipt of all supporting documents. Routine processing of a full license application usually requires a minimum of twelve (12) weeks for U.S. graduates if there are no legal or medical issues. Acupuncture license applications with malpractice or legal issues will require more time to process. International acupuncture graduate full license applications may take up to six months to process depending on the length of time to receive documentation from the acupuncture training program. After reviewing your file, we will establish a tracking number and a pending file will be established for documents sent to the Board from primary sources. These documents include transcripts from your undergraduate and graduate education, confirmation of acupuncture training and examination results. You will be notified if additional documents are required. If you wish acknowledgement of receipt of your full acupuncture license application, please mail your application by certified mail, return receipt requested.

Completed acupuncture applications are presented to the COA in January, March, June and September. A list of meeting dates is included in the full acupuncture license kit. Following approval of your full acupuncture license, your wallet-sized card will be mailed to you within eight (8) business days and your acupuncture certificate of licensure will be mailed within six (6) weeks. The COA strongly recommends that you do not make any commitments in Massachusetts on home purchases, loans, etc., until you have been granted a license to practice acupuncture in Massachusetts.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Throughout this application, the following terms apply:

U.S. graduates refer to graduates of medical schools in the United States.

International graduates refers to graduates of all medical schools not located in the United States.

Also, the names of required forms are underlined. (example: Massachusetts and/or Out of State License Verification form, Supplement form, and Exam Results/Status Report Request form).

APPLICATION FEE

The application-processing fee for a full acupuncture license is \$300.00 and is a non-refundable fee. Please make your check payable to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. A certified check or money order is preferred, but personal checks are accepted. Applications received without the \$300.00 fee will not be processed and will be returned to the sender.

FULL ACUPUNCTURE APPLICATION

Legal Name:

Print your full legal name, as it should appear on your license.

Other Names Used:

List any names that may appear on your undergraduate transcripts or other any legal documents. If the name on the first line of the application does not correspond with the name on accompanying credentials, you must submit a notarized copy of a document explaining the name change (either a court order or a marriage certificate). If the credential certificate is written in a foreign language, you must submit an officially notarized translation.

Mailing, Home and Business Addresses:

Provide your mailing address, business and home addresses and telephone numbers. The COA will send all correspondence to your mailing address. A post office box cannot be used for your business or home address, only the mailing address. Your mailing and business addresses are public record.

Social Security Number:

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A §13A, each applicant must provide the COA with a United States Social Security number in order for a license to be issued. Your social security number may be used to facilitate the authorized sharing of information among designated agencies to expedite processing of your application. Your number may be shared to identify: any reports of disciplinary action filed in national data repositories; tax default status; student loan default status; child support arrearages; Medicaid provider eligibility; Massachusetts controlled substance registration; and collection of fines from COA disciplinary cases. The COA considers this information highly confidential and not subject to release unless specifically authorized. A copy of your Social Security card is required.

Acupuncture Education:

List colleges and universities attended chronologically along with the dates of your attendance, and any degrees that you received from the school. An official transcript with signature and the registrar's official seal is required to be sent **directly** to the COA.

Human Anatomy, Human Physiology, General Biology and Laboratory Requirement

List the school(s) where you completed three (3) semester hour courses, or the equivalent, in general biology, human physiology and human anatomy. Indicate which course(s) had a laboratory component. As of July 1, 2009, at least one of the required undergraduate science courses must have a laboratory component. An official transcript with the signature and the registrar's official seal is required to be **directly** to the COA. (See the attached COA's letter describing the course requirements and instructions for substituting a course).

Acupuncture Licenses:

List all states where you ever had a full acupuncture license, whether the license is active or inactive or not renewed.

Other State Licenses:

List all states and countries in which you are or were licensed, registered or otherwise practiced a healing art, other than acupuncture. Please include active, inactive and any licenses that were not renewed.

Acupuncture Examinations:

Acupuncture licensure and certifications examinations must be listed. Include the name of the examination, the date attempted and the examination results.

Chronology of Activities:

List all acupuncture and other work related activities from the date of graduation from acupuncture school to the date that you sign your full acupuncture license application. List your activities in chronological order with the most recent activity first.

Affidavit of Applicant:

By signing the full acupuncture license application, under the penalties of perjury, you are confirming that the information provided is accurate.

SUPPLEMENT TO APPLICATION FORM

Instructions for answering the questions on the Supplement form are provided on the first two pages of the Supplement. All of the questions on the Supplement form must be answered "yes" or "no" and failure to report accurate information to the COA will delay the application process. Please be careful in matching your answers to questions. Pages 5-10 of the application form must be completed if you answer "yes" to any question. If you answered "yes" to questions #1 or #8, you are required to request copies of additional documentation from either the court or your attorney. The COA will not accept court documents from you. If you answered "yes" to questions #15-A or #15-B, you must contact your liability carrier or attorney to provide the COA with a copy of the complaint for any open case. If any of the cases are closed, a copy of the complaint and a document recording the final disposition of the case and monies paid on your behalf, even if none were paid, will be required. The completed Supplement form must be enclosed with your full license application.

Authorization For Release Of Information

The Authorization for Release of Information must be completed and returned to the COA with your full acupuncture application.

The following documents must be requested from the primary source and sent directly to the Committee On Acupuncture:

IMPORTANT: You will be requesting that certain documents be returned directly to your address. **The majority of the documents will have the signature of the sender on the seal of the envelope. Do not open the envelopes. The COA will not accept any opened envelopes and will return them to you.** If the envelopes are opened, you will have to request the documents again and this will delay processing your full acupuncture license application. Please note that the National Practitioner Data Bank will not have a signature across the seal of the envelope. However, if you or any other person opens the envelope, you will have to repeat the process to obtain this information and processing of your full acupuncture license application may be significantly delayed.

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

A copy of the transcripts from the undergraduate school confirming completion of two full years of undergraduate study (60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours or the equivalent) at an accredited college or university, (this accredited college or university cannot be your acupuncture school) or foreign institution that the COA deems the equivalent. The COA requires that the applicant must have successfully completed a three (3) semester hour course in each of the following: general biology, human physiology, and human anatomy at an accredited college or at a COA approved acupuncture school. **As of July 1, 2009, at least one of the required undergraduate science courses must have a laboratory component.** If your transcript does not list these courses or if you wish to substitute another course as an equivalent for the required courses, the applicant must submit one of the following:

1. A detailed course description,
2. A course syllabus, or
3. A letter from the professor who either taught the course or who currently teaches the course. The letter must state that the course is equivalent to a 3 semester hour course in General Biology, or a 3 semester hour course in Human Anatomy, or a 3 semester hour course in Human Physiology.

NOTE: The COA must receive all requests for substitutions of required coursework at least two (2) months prior to a scheduled Licensing Subcommittee for Undergraduate and/or Acupuncture Educational Requirements meeting. The COA will not accept correspondence, self-study courses or equivalency examinations for any of the required courses.

ACUPUNCTURE EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

An official transcript, with the signature and official registrar's seal, must be requested and sent directly to the COA from each school listed on the full acupuncture license application. The transcript must include the number of classroom hours of didactic or clinical instructions.

ACUPUNCTURE LICENSE EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Full acupuncture applicants who meet the educational and other requirements of the COA must complete the Massachusetts licensure examination administered by the NCCAOM. For instructions and

an examination application, please go to the NCCAOM website at <http://nccaom.org/exams/index.html>. The examination consists of four (4) parts:

1. Comprehensive Written Examination (CWE) and/or The Foundations of Oriental Medicine Module (FOMM) and The Acupuncture Module (AM)
2. Practical Examination of Point Location Skills (PEPLS) and/or The Point Location Module (PLM)
3. Biomedicine Module (BIO) (required for graduates after January 1, 2007)
4. CCAOM Clean Needle Technique/Practical (CNT) Course

You must apply directly to the Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (CCAOM) to take the Clean Needle Technique (CNT) Course component on the Massachusetts Licensure Examination. You may access the CCAOM website for an application for the Clean Needle Technique (CNT) course at <http://www.ccaom.org/cntprogram.asp>

PLEASE REQUEST AND SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS AND SEND THEM TO THE BOARD IN THEIR ORIGINAL SEALED ENVELOPES WITH YOUR FULL ACUPUNCTURE LICENSE APPLICATION.

MORAL CHARACTER OF APPLICANT

The *Moral Character of Applicant* form must be completed and signed by the applicant and attested to by someone who is unrelated to the applicant and who has known the applicant for a minimum of three (3) years, preferably an acupuncturist licensed to practice in Massachusetts.

- Attach a 2" x 2" color photograph of yourself taken within the past sixty days and the photograph must be adequate for positive identification. A black and white photograph will not be accepted.
- The photograph must have the description and signature of the applicant and the date and the signature and seal of a Notary Public.
- The photograph must be original and not a photocopy taken from a book.
- The *Moral Character of Applicant* form must be signed and dated in the presence of a notary public and placed in an envelope, sealed and included with your acupuncture license application to be sent to the Board.

VERIFICATION OF ACUPUNCTURE OR OTHER STATE LICENSES

Please submit the Verification of Acupuncture or Other State License form to every state or country where you ever held an acupuncture license or registration to practice acupuncture or any other healing art. Most states charge a fee for verification of a state license. Contact the licensing board prior to sending your request for license verification. When you receive the state license verification(s) do not open the envelope(s).

Please do not send your full acupuncture license application to the COA until you have received all state license verification forms from every state in which you ever held an acupuncture license, registration or license to practice any other healing art. If the seal on any state license verification envelope is broken, it will be returned to you and you will be required to repeat the process.

NATIONAL PRACTITIONER DATA BANK

Full license acupuncture applicants must request a self-query profile from the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB). You may access the NPDB at <http://www.npdb-hipdb.com/queryrpt.html> and complete the self-query form online. After completing the self-query form, you must print a hard copy, have it notarized and then forward it to the NPDB.

Please note that the date of your signature and notary date must be the same, otherwise the NPDB will return the self-query form to you which will result in delaying the completion of your full license application. The self-query fee of \$16.00 is payable by credit card only (Visa, MasterCard, Discover). Please remember to include your credit card number and expiration date on your query form.

When you receive your National Practitioner Data Bank profile, do not open the envelope. You must mail it directly to the COA with your full license application. If the envelope is opened, it will be returned to you and a new National Practitioner Data Bank profile request must be submitted. The National Practitioner Data Bank requires up to 4 weeks to process a new profile. If you have questions, contact the Data Bank at 1-800-767-6732.

MALPRACTICE HISTORY FORM

Please note that liability coverage is not required for acupuncturists and therefore you are required to complete the Malpractice History form only if a claim was filed against you in the past ten years.

If you had any malpractice claims filed against you in the past ten years, you must complete the Malpractice History form listing all of your malpractice carriers for the past ten (10) years. The original Malpractice History form must be returned to the COA with your full license application and a copy must be sent to all your liability carriers for the past ten years.

To obtain your liability history, forward a copy of the Malpractice History form to each liability carrier. The signed Malpractice History form authorizes the liability carrier to provide information to the COA. Please indicate the beginning and end dates of your liability coverage with each carrier. The liability carrier must confirm and document the beginning and end dates of your coverage, whether there were any cases filed against you and if any monies were paid on your behalf. The liability carrier must forward the malpractice history information directly to the COA.

International Graduates - Additional Documentation Requirements

International medical graduates must have a minimum of five (5) academic years of study, of which three (3) academic years must consist of acupuncture training in a COA approved school. All transcripts must be in English and must state the number of hours for each class, the number of hours for the entire program, the number of months in attendance and the date the diploma was awarded.

The COA will recognize only foreign schools that are government approved. In addition, the COA may verify the authenticity of the documents submitted by contacting the appropriate issuing institution.

Applicants who received either their undergraduate and or acupuncture education outside of the United States must submit both the original and a notarized copy of their diplomas and/or certificates or bachelor degrees. As of January 1, 2009, educational institutions outside the United States, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia and the territories of the United States will be approved by the Committee

on a case by case basis, according to the standards set by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). Graduates of a foreign school must submit a completed AACRAO credentials review report to the committee and the Committee will determine whether to approve the acupuncture school on the basis of the report and any other additional information it may deem necessary. You may access the AACRAO website at <http://www.aacrao.org/international/foreignEdCred.cfm> to obtain information on verification of foreign medical schools.

TOEFL EXAMINATION

Effective December 13, 2001, all applicants for licensure whose native language is not English must submit proof of passing the TOEFL Exam with a score of 550 or better for the paper based score, 213 for the computer based score and 80 for the Internet passing score. The TOEFL examination must have been taken within two (2) years prior to date that the full acupuncture application was signed. The results of the TOEFL examination must be **sent directly** to the COA from the agency administering the examination.

FOREIGN SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Applicants who received either their undergraduate and/or acupuncture education outside of the United States must submit both the original and a notarized copy of their diploma and/or their certificate. If the original document is submitted to the COA, include a self-addressed envelope.

FOREIGN CERTIFICATE OF BACHELOR DEGREE

Applicants who received either their undergraduate and/or acupuncture education outside of the United States must submit both the official and a notarized copy of their certificate or bachelor degree.

NOTARIZATION OF DOCUMENTS

Any copies of original documents submitted by an applicant must be notarized. The COA may at any time request that an applicant submit an original document for its inspection.

An applicant should request that the notary public affix his seal to copies of the document.

TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS

All documents that are in a language other than English must be translated, at the applicant's expense, by a U.S. translation service or a translation service approved by the COA. The translator must attest to the accuracy of the translation under penalty of perjury.

MALPRACTICE CASES

If you have had a malpractice case brought against you in the past ten (10) years, you will need to request that your liability carrier or your attorney forward documents listed below directly to the COA.

Open case – a copy of the complaint and a letter from the attorney or the liability carrier that includes the name or initials of the patient and that the case is pending.

Closed case – a copy of the complaint and final judgment, settlement and release or other final disposition of each claim, even if you were dismissed from the case by the court and/or the case was closed with or without prejudice and the amount of monies, if any, paid on your behalf.

Dismissed case – a copy of the dismissal if you were dismissed after the case was reviewed by a tribunal or jury. The dismissal must include the name or initials of the patient and confirmation that no monies were paid on your behalf.

Please note that if you were dismissed from the case before it was reviewed by a tribunal or court, the only documentation required is a letter from the liability carrier or the attorney stating the status of the case (which must include the claimant's name or at least his initials), and that no monies were paid on your behalf. A separate Supplement form must be completed for each case. The Malpractice History authorization to release information in the license application packet must be completed and forwarded to each of your liability carriers for the past ten (10) years. The original Malpractice History Authorization must be forwarded to the COA for your license file.

Please note that you must complete question #15 on the Supplement Form even if a claim was filed against you but did not result in any action.

LEGAL ISSUES

For each criminal proceeding in which you were named as a defendant, certified copies of the complaint, judgment or other disposition and a copy of the police report must be sent to the COA by your lawyer, the court or other appropriate agency. You must also provide a detailed explanation of the incident, including date, time, place, who was with you and the court action.

ADDRESS CHANGE

The Board's regulations require that you must notify the COA within thirty (30) days, in writing, when you change your address. Your wallet card will be sent to the mailing address that you provide on your full acupuncture license application.

BIRTHDAY RENEWAL

Renewal of your full acupuncture license will be the second year following the year in which the full license was granted, unless that date is within 15 months of the date that the license was originally granted, in which case the first renewal date is the third year following the year in which the license was granted. Thereafter the full acupuncture license must be renewed every two years on your birthday.

PRACTICE OF ACUPUNCTURE

Please be advised that pursuant to Massachusetts laws and regulations, you may not practice acupuncture in an independent practice until you have received an acupuncture license. The applicant is responsible for determining that the COA has issued a license prior to practicing acupuncture.

DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED WITH YOUR FULL ACUPUNCTURE LICENSE APPLICATION

1. Full Acupuncture License Application – dates, addresses, training programs, certifications and state licenses are completed
2. Supplement form – all questions answered and supplement pages completed for “yes” answers

3. Authorization for Release form – signed with current date
4. Moral Character form (in a sealed envelope).
5. State License Verifications (in sealed envelopes).
6. National Practitioner Data Bank (sealed envelope).
7. Original diploma with a notarized copy of the diploma and a self addressed envelope (International Graduates only)
8. Malpractice History form – listing all liability carriers listed for the past ten (10) years (not required if you have not had any claims filed against you in the past ten (10) years).

S/FULL.ACUPUNCTURE.INSTRUCTIONS 6.02.09