

Memorandum

TO: City Council Workshop
FROM: Renee Eisenbeisz , Assistant City Manager
DATE: July 20, 2026
SUBJECT: Massage therapy ordinance updates
ITEM NUMBER: 1.d
SECTION: GENERAL BUSINESS

REQUESTED MOTION

INTRODUCTION

The city council is being asked to review and discuss possible updates to the city's massage therapy ordinance.

DISCUSSION

Earlier this year, Little Canada and Vadnais Heights approved updates to their massage therapy ordinances to address complementary and alternative health care (CAHC) practices and establishments. CAHC includes a broad range of healing or therapeutic practices that fall outside of traditional massage therapy practices.

Chapter 10, article VIII of the city code outlines regulations for massage therapists and establishments. Since CAHC falls outside of traditional massage therapy practices, our current city code does not regulate those practices or establishments. After reviewing state statutes and ordinances from Little Canada and Vadnais Heights, staff drafted the attached updates to regulate CAHC practices and establishments. Additionally, staff are recommending changes to chapter 10, article II regarding background checks.

Below is a summary of the changes:

Article II, section 10-32

This section outlines regulations for background checks on applicants. Under the current practice, Ramsey County Sheriff's Office just conducts background checks in Minnesota. Staff are recommending that language be added requiring applicants to submit a third-party background check if they have not lived in Minnesota for the preceding five years.

Article VIII

Many of the changes in this article are to add CAHC to the city's current regulations. Under the proposed changes, anyone practicing or opening a business in CAHC would need to get a license through the city. They would then be required to follow the same regulations that massage therapists and establishments need to follow such as hours of operation, clothing requirements, liquor and cannabis use, etc. Section 10-229 also includes additional regulations from Little Canada and Vadnais Heights' ordinances.

The city attorney has reviewed and approved the draft language.

RECOMMENDATION

The city council should discuss the possible updates and provide direction to staff on the proposed language. If the city council is comfortable with this direction, an ordinance will be brought forward in August for approval.

ATTACHMENTS

[Draft massage therapy updates](#)