

Outline of the state examinations and licenses for anma, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and moxibustion practitioners

1. Development of legislative regulations

The revision of laws pertaining to anma, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and moxibustion practitioners were implemented in May 1988. The authority for licensing and the conduction of the examinations was transferred from the governors of the prefectures to the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare. Designated examination institutions, a system of specified registration agencies and the like were also introduced. In October 1992 examinations were conducted and licenses issued on the authority of the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare. At the same time our foundation was appointed a designated examination institution and registration agency and thus conducted the first state examination in February 1993.

2 Examinations

(1) Conduction of examinations

The state examinations for anma, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and moxibustion practitioners are conducted according to paragraph 2, section 1 of the laws pertaining to these modalities.

(2) Examination

The examinations are held once a year (on one day the state examinations for anma, massage, shiatsu practitioners and on another day for acupuncture and moxibustion practitioners)

(3) Examination sites

For sighted persons – 6-10 sites

For visually impaired persons – in the individual prefectures (in some years some prefectures may be excluded).

(4) Examination subjects

Examinations for anma, massage and shiatsu practitioners (12 subjects)

Outline of medical care, hygiene, public hygiene, related laws, anatomy, physiology, pathology, clinical medicine, specialized clinical medicine, rehabilitation medicine, oriental medicine, theory of anma, massage, shiatsu and clinical oriental medical.

Examinations for acupuncture practitioners (13 subjects)

Outline of medical care, hygiene, public hygiene, related laws, anatomy, physiology, pathology, clinical medicine, specialized clinical medicine, rehabilitation medicine, oriental medicine, meridians and acupoints, acupuncture theory and clinical oriental medical.

Examinations for moxibustion practitioners (13 subjects)

Outline of medical care, hygiene, public hygiene, related laws, anatomy, physiology, pathology, clinical medicine, specialized clinical medicine, rehabilitation medicine, oriental medicine, meridians and acupoints, moxibustion theory and clinical oriental medical.

* The subjects for examinees taking the state examinations for acupuncture and moxibustion practitioners simultaneously are common except for the subjects acupuncture/moxibustion theory.

(5) Number of questions

State examinations for anma, massage, shiatsu practitioners: 150 questions

State examinations for acupuncture practitioners: 150 questions

State examinations for moxibustion practitioners: 150 questions

* For examinees taking the state examinations for both acupuncture and moxibustion

practitioners the number of questions is 160 (140 common questions and 10 questions each pertaining to acupuncture and moxibustion theory respectively).

(6) Examination method

Written examinations are utilized (objective 4-choice selection tests). For visually impaired persons, however, the following methods may also be approved, if requested.

- a) Taking the examination using ordinary letters, enlarged letters or Braille script.
- b) Use of a DAISY-CD that contains voice recordings of the examination questions either independently or in combination with the text.

This applies only to persons for who the principals of the schools or vocational schools approved by the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare have acknowledged this measure as necessary.

- c) Use of lighting equipment, reading aids, Braille typewriters etc. during the examination.
- d) If persons with marked visual, auditory or speech impairments wish to take the examination, it is possible to devise appropriate support measures for the specific impairment during the examination.

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(7) Required qualifications

- a) The examinees must meet the requirements for entering universities set out in paragraph 90, section 1 of the "School Education Act" (being a senior high school graduate), or who underwent proper education and training for more than 3 years in the knowledge and skills related to anma, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and moxibustion in one of the vocational schools approved by either the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology or the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare.
- b) Regarding anma, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and moxibustion practitioners with marked visual impairment, as laid out in paragraph 4 of the approval stipulations for vocational schools, these individuals must be eligible to enter senior high school (junior high school graduates etc.) as set out in paragraph 57 of the "School Education Act" and who underwent proper education and training for more than 3 years in the knowledge and skills related to anma, massage and shiatsu, or who underwent proper education and training for more than 5 years in the knowledge and skills related to anma, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and moxibustion in one of the vocational schools approved by either the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology or the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare.

(8) Examination fees

The fee for one certification examination is 11,600 Yen (as of September 1, 2011)

3. License

- a) Licenses for anma, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and moxibustion practitioners are issued by the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare to persons who have passed the relevant examinations.
- b) In order for anma, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and moxibustion practitioners to perform their work, these persons must have obtained their respective licenses. It is not possible to work only with a leaving certificate or a diploma.
- c) Persons who because of physical or mental impairments are not able to appropriately perform the work required of anma, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and moxibustion practitioners may, based on the stipulations provided in a Health, Labor and Welfare ministerial ordinance, be exempted from the eligibility to obtain a license on grounds of disqualifying reasons.
- d) If disqualifying reasons apply to persons who have obtained licenses, these licenses may be revoked or the person ordered to suspend his/her business for a specified period of time.

4 Limitations of the practice etc.

- a) Anma, massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and moxibustion practitioners are not allowed to

perform surgical procedures or administer medications.

b) If anma, massage and shiatsu practitioners treat the site of injury in cases of dislocations or fractures, they must obtain the approval of a physician and acupuncture practitioners must disinfect their hands and the local sites before the treatment.