



HOUSE BILL 122: North Carolina Board of Integrative Therapies.

This Bill Analysis reflects the contents of the bill as it was presented in committee.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Regulatory Reform. If favorable, re- refer to Finance. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	May 13, 2026
Introduced by:	Reps. Warren, Riddell	Prepared by:	Chris Saunders
Analysis of:	PCS to First Edition H122-CSTQf-51		Committee Co-Counsel

OVERVIEW: *The Proposed Committee Substitute (PCS) for House Bill 122 would establish the North Carolina Board of Integrative Therapies and create a licensure process for art therapists and music therapists.*

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1 of the PCS would create the Integrative Therapies Article (Article) within Chapter 90 of the General Statutes and establish the North Carolina Board of Integrative Therapies (Board) to regulate and oversee the practice and provision of integrative therapies in the State. The two initial integrative therapy professions that would be regulated under the Board are art therapy and music therapy.

The Article broadly defines "integrative therapies" as the "use of allopathic, complementary, or alternative approaches to the art and science of medicine for the prevention, identification, and treatment of human physical or mental conditions, diseases, ailments, illnesses, infirmities, pain, defects, or injuries and the promotion and restoration of health and wellness."

NORTH CAROLINA BOARD OF INTEGRATIVE THERAPIES

The Board would initially be comprised of seven duly qualified members appointed by the Governor and the General Assembly, as follows:

- Two art therapists (one appointed by the Governor, one by the Senate).
- Two music therapists (one appointed by the Governor, one by the House).
- Two physicians licensed under North Carolina Medical Board who have experience with integrative therapies (appointed by the Governor).
- One public member (appointed by the Governor).

If new integrative therapies professions were created, two practitioners of that profession would be added as members of the Board to serve three-year terms, one appointed by the Governor and the other appointed by the House and Senate on an alternating basis.

The Board could remove members for neglect of duty, incompetence, or unprofessional conduct, or by the Governor for good cause shown. Vacancies would be filled by the appointing authority.

The Board would have the authority to administer the provisions of the Article; adopt rules; appoint advisory committees to oversee each integrative therapies profession; issue, revoke, or deny North Carolina Integrative Therapies Licenses, discipline licensees; conduct any necessary administrative

Kara McCraw
Director



Legislative Analysis
Division
919-733-2578

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hearings; establish fees; authorize expenditures from those collected fees; and remit funds to the advisory committees.

The Board may establish fees for integrative therapies professions not exceeding the following amount:

- Issuance of a North Carolina Integrative Therapies License: \$300
- License application and examination: \$200
- North Carolina Integrative Therapies License renewal (annually): \$350
- Late renewal fee: \$200

Violations of the Article would result in a written warning for the first violation, a civil penalty of no more than \$200 for the second violation, and a civil penalty of no more than \$200 and a Class 1 misdemeanor for the third and each subsequent violation. The clear proceeds of any civil penalty would be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund.

ART THERAPY

Section 1 would also create **Part 2** of the Article which would provide that the practice of art therapy would be considered an integrative therapy profession and therefore regulated under the Article. The Article defines "art therapy" as a "a therapeutic profession that enriches the lives of individuals, families, and communities through active art-making, creative process, applied psychological theory, and human experience within a therapeutic relationship with the goal of restoring a client's functioning or sense of personal well-being."

Part 2 would create a North Carolina Art Therapy Advisory Committee (Art Therapy AC) comprised of two art therapists from a list of names submitted by the North Carolina Art Therapy Association and one public member. The Art Therapy AC would be responsible for:

- Administering the Part.
- Establishing and determining the qualifications for the Integrative Therapies License in art therapy.
- Making recommendations to the Board to:
 - Adopt, amend, or repeal rules to administer the Part.
 - Issue, renew, deny, suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue or renew a North Carolina Integrative Therapies License in art therapy.
 - Discipline North Carolina licensed art therapists.
 - Seek civil and criminal penalties against unlicensed individuals engaged in the practice of art therapy.
- Providing all licensed art therapists a wallet-sized card identifying the holder as an art therapist.
- Maintaining a list of licensed art therapists in the State.

To obtain an Integrative Therapies License in art therapy, an applicant must meet all the following criteria:

- The applicant must be at least 18 years of age.
- The applicant is of good moral character as determined by the Art Therapy AC.
- The applicant holds a national certification issued by the certifying entity.

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- The applicant has paid an application or renewal fee to the Board as required by this Article.

An Integrative Therapies License in art therapy issued by the Board must be renewed annually on or before a date established by rule.

Under this Article, compensation may only be received for art therapy services performed by an individual holding an Integrative Therapies license in art therapy. Unlicensed individuals who provide art therapy services would be subject to the injunctive and civil penalties of the Article, unless the individual is an art therapy student working to obtain a certification of completion from a nationally recognized art therapy education program.

No individual could use the title "North Carolina Licensed Art Therapist" unless that individual holds an art therapy license. Individuals holding themselves out as certified must always carry an Art Therapy AC-issued identification card when providing art therapy services. Individuals in violation of this subsection are subject to the injunctive and civil penalties of the Article.

Reciprocity would be available for individuals who are licensed or certified to practice art therapy in another State whose standards of competency are substantially equivalent to the requirements for licensure by the Board.

MUSIC THERAPY

Section 1.(a) would also create **Part 3** of the Article which would provide that the practice of music therapy would be considered an integrative therapies profession and therefore regulated under the Article. The Article defines "music therapy" as the "clinical and evidence based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program, including (i) assessment of a client's emotional, physical, and spiritual health, social functioning, communication abilities, and cognitive skills through the client's history and observation and interaction of the client in music and nonmusic settings; (ii) development and implementation of treatment plans, based on a client's assessed needs, using music interventions, including music improvisation, receptive music listening, song writing, lyric discussion, music and imagery, music performance, learning through music, and movement to music; and (iii) evaluation and documentation of the client's response to treatment."

Part 3 would create a Music Therapy Advisory Committee (Music Therapy AC) comprised of two music therapists from a list of names submitted by the Music Therapy Association of North Carolina and a public member. The Music Therapy AC would have similar responsibilities to the Art Therapy AC in Part 2.

To obtain an Integrative Therapies License in music therapy, an applicant must meet all the following criteria:

- The applicant must be at least 18 years of age.
- The applicant is of good moral character as determined by the Music Therapy AC.
- Proof of either:
 - Passing the examination for examination for board certification offered by the Certification Board for Music Therapists or its successor organizations.
 - Being transitioned into board certification by the Certification Board for Music Therapists or its successor organizations and currently holding the MT-BC credential as a board-certified music therapist.
- The applicant has paid an application or renewal fee to the Board as required by this Article.

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The provisions related to license renewal, compensation for music therapy services, reciprocity, and title protection generally mirror Part 2. This chapter would not prohibit or restrict the practice or activities of an individual who is licensed, certified, or regulated by another profession, or who is a student in an accredited music therapy program, provided that person does not represent himself or herself as a music therapist. Additionally, an unlicensed individual could provide music therapy under the supervision of a licensed professional music therapist for up to 180 days if the individual's application to obtain board certification is pending and the individual meets the other requirements for an Integrative Therapies License in music therapy.

Before providing music therapy services for an identified clinical or developmental need, a licensed music therapist would have to review the client's diagnosis, treatment needs, and treatment plan with the client's health care providers. Before a licensed music therapist could provide music therapy services to a student for an identified educational need in a special education setting, the licensed music therapist would have to review the student's diagnosis, treatment needs, and treatment plan with the individualized family service plan or individualized education program team. During the provision of music therapy services to a client, a licensed music therapist would be directed to collaborate with the client's treatment team. During the provision of music therapy services to a client with a communication disorder, a licensed music therapist would also have to collaborate with the client's audiologist or speech-language pathologist to address communication skills. When providing educational or health care services, a licensed music therapist could not replace the services provided by an audiologist or a speech-language pathologist.

Section 2.(a) would stagger the terms of the initial appointments to the Board.

Sections 2.(b) and 2.(c) would require the art therapists and music therapists appointed to the Board to have been North Carolina residents for at least two years prior to appointment, certified by a national certification entity, and eligible for licensure. The appointees must seek licensure by the Board upon appointment and must remain in good standing.

Section 2.(d) would require the appointments to the Board to be made by December 1, 2026, with initial terms to begin on January 1, 2027.

Section 2.(e) would make the statutes in Section 1 of this act become effective when they become law, except that the violations and enforcement provisions would become effective on the first day of the month that begins 180 days after the Chair of the Board certifies to the Revisor of Statutes that the Board has begun accepting applications for Integrative Therapies Licenses and would apply to acts committed on or after that date.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Except as otherwise provided, this act would be effective when it becomes law.

Aaron McGlothlin, Legislative Drafting, and Julianna Fedorich, Legislative Analysis, substantially contributed to this summary.