

We who teach and practice Reiki hold a deep conviction that it is a birthright, that anyone who has a sincere desire should be able to learn Reiki. Further, anyone who has a sincere desire to teach, the diligence to work faithfully with their own self-healing, and serious responsible intent, should be able to teach. Because Reiki is a gift from Divinity, and because there are so many varieties of Reiki being taught and practiced, we therefore celebrate its diversity, rather than try to regulate it under one set of rules. The manner in which it is taught, in one- or two-day workshops with small groups, keeps it affordable and accessible to all.

There was concern and worry in the Maine Reiki community when some Reiki Masters started to receive letters from the state Department of Education (DOE) the summer of 2004. They were asked if students were being taught how to open a Reiki business; the letters also pointed out that this kind of teaching required the teacher to obtain licensing from the DOE (at some considerable cost in fees and paperwork effort). In response to this, meetings were held, our committee was formed, and at the same time many individuals communicated with the DOE, trying to ascertain if and how the law applied to them.

There may be many Reiki people in Maine who are uncertain about their ability to practice or teach in integrity. From what we learned, we created this FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions), to bring clarity and lay fears to rest. The information in this FAQ was developed in conversations and correspondence with the DOE. If you have any further questions or comments about this topic, please get in touch with one of the committee members listed below.

Thank you all for your dedication to sharing Reiki!

This FAQ has been compiled with the assistance of the Maine Department of Education. To the best of their knowledge, it is in line with current Maine state law.

Do Reiki *practitioners* have to be licensed in Maine?

No. By state law (32 M.R.S.A. 14307), as long as you don't use the title "massage therapist" or "massage practitioner", you are not required to obtain a license to practice. Reiki is specifically exempted in this law, along with "rolfing, Trager, reflexology, Shiatsu, ... and polarity".

Practitioners are not affected in any way by this issue. The remaining questions apply to Reiki Master Teachers.

Do Reiki Master Teachers have to be licensed in Maine?

No – if, like most Reiki Master Teachers, you are teaching *avocationally*, there is *no* requirement to be licensed.

But, if you are teaching *vocationally*, you *must* be licensed by the DOE.

What do “avocationally” and “vocationally” mean?

“Vocationally” means you are teaching people Reiki for the primary purpose of *qualifying them to practice professionally*. Students expect to be able to open a business after they complete your class. If you are teaching *vocationally*, you are *required* to be licensed by the DOE.

“Avocationally” means you are *not* explicitly or implicitly promising to teach people how to earn a living with Reiki. In your Reiki class, you are simply teaching Reiki, and not including any material or instruction on opening or running a business.

What does it mean to be licensed by the DOE in this way?

The DOE has regulations that must be followed, so that your students are assured their learning environment is safe, their tuition money will be refunded if you go out of business, and you are clear with them about what they will learn from you. See the DOE website at <http://www.maine.gov/education/highered/ProprietarySchools/PropSchools.htm>, for more details on licensing requirements. If you don't have a computer, contact Harry Osgood, Higher Education Specialist, Higher Education, Maine Department of Education, 23 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333; phone (207) 624-6842, fax (207) 624-6841.

Again, licensing is only required *if* you are promising to teach your students how to open a Reiki business.

So, if I am a Reiki Master Teacher, and I teach Reiki at a weekend workshop, and I *don't* promise that I will teach the attendees how to open a business as part of the workshop, then I *don't* have to be licensed by the DOE?

That is correct.

Does that mean I can't put anything in my workshop literature about opening a business?

Yes, that's correct, don't include information about opening a business in your workshop literature.

It is best to be clear in your intent. Reiki students should work on their Reiki skills in your workshop(s) – then they may, if they so choose on their own, open a business to offer Reiki to others. If you promise training in opening a business *as part of the Reiki training*, then you must be licensed.

What if I offer business or marketing training *separately* from my Reiki workshops?

As long as the business workshop is *separate* from the Reiki training, you are allowed to hold that workshop without becoming licensed.

The manual I use in my classes has a chapter on opening your own business. Do I have to take that chapter out or use a different manual?

No, the manual is a reference and you may continue to use it without deleting anything from it. Just don't teach from that chapter.

Should I have some kind of disclaimer on my class literature?

As long as you don't imply you're offering training for setting up a business, you should be fine without an explicit disclaimer.

What if a student asks me in class about setting up a business?

You must defer answering to another time. You may separately schedule training or group discussion on opening a business, or you may answer the student's questions by phone, as long as it's outside of the Reiki class.

We suggest you print or copy this FAQ, and make it part of your class handouts.

I'm worried about regulation of Reiki overall, I keep hearing about restrictive rules in other states. What if Maine goes the same way?

This topic of vocational licensing came up under an existing regulation of the DOE. We have not heard of any attempt to introduce new legislation specific to Reiki in Maine, so we are not worrying.

In our meetings leading up to creating this FAQ, we agreed that this was a wonderful opportunity to build community among Reiki people in Maine, and to create wider awareness of the benefits of Reiki. This is starting to happen, a beautiful flowering.

Our advice, if you're still worried? Make new connections, keep in touch with other Reiki practitioners, and self-treat when you struggle, as we all do, with worry, anger or fear. Above all, keep doing Reiki!

Conclusion

It is a joy and an honor to be able to share Reiki. Those who teach and practice Reiki are bound by the promise to every day let go of anger and worry, be thankful, be kind to all, and to do our work honestly. We have the good fortune to live in a place that lets Reiki grow and thrive, bringing great healing to all who share in it. Let us always be mindful of that good fortune, and honor the gift of Reiki.

Blessings to all!

Committee Members:

Lindsley Field, heartpth@midcoast.com, (207) 563-5889

Ernie Glabau, ernie2003@entwoodnursery.com, (207) 948-3281

Jeffrey Hotchkiss, jefreiki@maine.rr.com, Yarmouth, ME, (207) 318-1362

Robert Leins, robert@qigongstudio.com, QiGong Studio, Bangor, ME (207) 945-4545

Kathleen Soreide, ksoreide@hotmail.com

Martha Spruce, heartsandhands@yahoo.com, Hearts & Hands Reiki, Bath, ME, (207) 443-5907

Arlene B. Thurston, mumacat@hotmail.com

Jan Warren, jgwarren@adelphia.net, Rockport, ME, (207) 236-6775

Diane Webster, heartsandhands@yahoo.com, Hearts & Hands Reiki, Bath, ME, (207) 443-5907

Margaret Woodcock, reikipartners@yahoo.com, (207) 318-2184

Committee members are Reiki Master Teachers and Practitioners, living and practicing Reiki in our daily lives.