



Effective October 1, 2015

*Protecting, maintaining and improving the health of all Minnesotans*

July 1, 2015

Stephanie R. Lasch

SUBJECT: Determination affecting your right to practice unlicensed complementary and alternative health care in Minnesota. MDH Case# OCC15013

Dear Ms. Lasch:

Based on the facts and law in this matter as described in the enclosed Staff Determination, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has determined that you violated: [1] Minnesota Statute 146A.08, subdivision 1 (a) by conviction of a crime, including a finding or verdict of guilt, an admission of guilt, or a no-contest plea, in any court in Minnesota or any other jurisdiction in the United States, reasonably related to engaging in complementary and alternative health care practices; [2] Minnesota Statute 146A.08, subdivision 1 (n) by engaging in fraudulent billing practices; and [3] Minnesota Statute 146A.08, subdivision 1 (p) by obtaining money from a complementary and alternative health care client through the use of fraud. Therefore, MDH is revoking your right to practice unlicensed complementary and alternative health care in Minnesota and issuing you a civil penalty of \$4,146. Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.09, subdivision 1 (1) and section 146A.09, subdivision 1 (4) authorizes these actions.

This decision will be final and effective 30 days from the date it is received by you. During that 30 day period, you have the right to challenge this decision in a contested-case hearing, as provided under Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 14. Requests for a hearing should be made in writing and include specific grounds for challenging MDH's decision. If you wish to request a hearing, please send a written hearing request, within 30 days of your receipt of this letter to:

Gilbert Acevedo, Director, Health Occupations Program  
Minnesota Department of Health  
PO Box 64882  
Saint Paul, MN 55164-0882

You may also deliver your request to 85 East Seventh Place, Suite 220, Saint Paul, Minnesota or fax it to Mr. Acevedo at (651) 201-3839. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Acevedo at (651) 201-3727.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Darcy Miner".

Darcy Miner, Director  
Health Regulation Division

Enclosure

Cc: Gilbert Acevedo, Director of the Health Occupations Program

**HEALTH OCCUPATIONS PROGRAM  
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

**A Determination In the Matter of  
Stephanie Rae Lasch  
Unlicensed Complementary and Alternative Health Care Practitioner**

**AUTHORITY**

1. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.02, subdivision 1, The Office of Complementary and Alternative Health Care Practice, within the Minnesota Department of Health (hereinafter "MDH"), has the authority to discipline unlicensed complementary and alternative health care practitioners for violations of Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08.
2. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.09, subdivision 1, MDH has the authority to revoke, suspend, censure, reprimand, impose limitations or conditions, and impose a civil penalty not to exceed \$10,000 for each separate violation, with the amount to be fixed so as to deprive the practitioner of any economic advantaged gained by reason of the violation or to reimburse MDH for all costs of the investigation proceeding.
3. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.01, subdivision 4 (a), complementary and alternative health care practices include the broad domain of complementary and alternative healing methods and treatments, including but not limited to: (17) body work, massage, and massage therapy.
4. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.01, subdivision 6, a complementary and alternative health care practitioner means a person who is not licensed or registered by a health-related licensing board or the commissioner of health, is engaged in and providing complementary and alternative health care services for remuneration or is holding oneself out to the public as a practitioner of complementary and alternative health care practices.
5. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (a), conviction of a crime, including a finding or verdict of guilt, an admission of guilt, or a no-contest plea, in any court in Minnesota or any other jurisdiction in the United States, reasonably related to engaging in complementary and alternative health care practices, is prohibited and grounds for disciplinary action.
6. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (n), engaging in abusive or fraudulent billing practices, is prohibited and ground for disciplinary action.
7. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (p), obtaining money from a complementary and alternative health care client, other than reasonable fees for service provided to the client, through the use of fraud, is prohibited and grounds for disciplinary action.

8. Pursuant to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13, and Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.06, subdivision 2, this Determination is public data. Pursuant to section 146A.06, subdivision 2, all other data comprising the record shall not be considered part of this Determination and shall maintain the classifications to which they are entitled under the MGDPA and Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.06, subdivision 2.

### FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Stephanie Lasch (hereinafter "Practitioner"), owned and operated several establishments that offered massage therapy. One establishment was Stonewater Massage in Lino Lakes.
2. Practitioner has authored several books about massage therapy and uses "LMT" and "CMT" as part of her credentials. "LMT" and "CMT" are acronyms for "License Massage Therapist" and "Certified Massage Therapists".
3. Practitioner is, and has been, subject to the jurisdiction of MDH because Practitioner engages in unlicensed complementary and alternative health care practice as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.01.
4. In April of 2014, Practitioner was arrested and charged with felony Identity Theft (8+ direct victims). The statement of probable cause stated, "From December, 2013-February 2014, Lino Lakes Police Officers received numerous financial transaction card fraud reports involving Stonewater Massage, located on Lake Drive in Lino Lakes, Anoka County, Minnesota. The full investigation which included multiple search warrants, administrative search warrants, interviews, and forensic computer examinations – will reflect over 60 victims of identity theft perpetrated by Stonewater Massage owner, Stephanie Rae Lasch."
5. The statement of probable cause further stated Practitioner knowingly and fraudulently charged the victims credit cards \$64.28, the value of a one hour massage including tax, for services they did not receive nor authorize.
6. Ultimately, Practitioner was convicted of felony Financial Transaction Card Fraud- Use- No Consent on July 7, 2014. Practitioner was sentenced to 10 years' of probation. Reference to court case number 02-CR-14-2387.

## CONCLUSION

1. On July 7, 2014, Practitioner was convicted of felony Financial Transaction Card Fraud-Use- No Consent. The offense was in relation to her complementary and alternative health care practice as she billed her clients for services she did not provide and did so without their knowledge or authorization, in violation of Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (a).
2. Practitioner charged victim's credit card for services she did not provide and did so without their knowledge or authorization. Therefore, Practitioner engaged in fraudulent billing practices and obtained money from complementary and alternative health care clients through the use of fraud, in violation of Minnesota Statutes, sections 146A.08, subdivision 1 (n) and 146A.08 subdivision 1 (p).

## DETERMINATION

1. Practitioner's right to practice complementary and alternative health care is hereby revoked.
2. Within 30 days of the effective date of this Determination, Practitioner shall pay a civil penalty of \$3857 representing the economic benefit gained by reason of the violations and \$289 to reimburse MDH for the costs of the investigation and proceeding to date. Practitioner must make the payment by check, in the amount of \$4,146, made payable to the "State of Minnesota, Treasurer" and mail the check to the attention of: MDH, Health Occupations Program, Investigation and Enforcement, PO Box 64882, Saint Paul, MN 55164-0882.
3. Practitioner may pay the \$4,146 civil penalty in monthly installments for up to 24 months. If Practitioner chooses to make installments, she must notify MDH in writing about her intentions, including how many installments she intends to make, in what amount, and over which time period. Practitioner must send this information to: MDH, Health Occupations Program, Investigation and Enforcement, PO Box 64882, Saint Paul, MN 55164-0882, within 30 days of receipt of this Determination.
4. Each payment will be made by check payable to "State of Minnesota, Treasure", and mailed to MDH, Health Occupations Program, Investigation and Enforcement, PO Box 64882, Saint Paul, MN 55164-0882, or any other address specified by MDH. Each payment is due by the last day of each month; however, Practitioner may prepay at any time.
5. The penalty may be referred to the Minnesota Department of Revenue (MDOR), or any other source for collection, if the debt is 31 days past the established due date. When this Order for a penalty becomes public and MDH refers the matter to MDOR, MDOR is authorized by Minnesota Statutes, section 16D.17 to obtain a judgment against Practitioner without further notice or proceeding.