



**Healers Act No. 34/2005,
as amended by Act No. 88/2008, No. 34/2012 and No. 90/2018.**

Where mention is made in this Act of ‘the minister’ or ‘the ministry’ without further definition, the reference intended is to the Minister of Health or to the Ministry of Health, which is responsible for the implementation of this Act. Information on the division of responsibilities between ministries according to a presidential decree may be found [here](#).

Article 1

Objectives and scope.

The objective of this Act is to conduce to the quality of healers’ health-related services and the safety of those who seek or use such services. This objective shall be achieved by, among other things, establishing a voluntary registration system for healers.

The Act covers registered healers and, as applicable, other healers, even if unregistered.

Article 2

Definitions.

The word *healer* in this Act refers to those who provide health-related services outside the general health system.

Healers’ health-related services means services generally practised outside the general health system, based more upon tradition and experience than on empirical scientific findings. Such service includes, among other things, treatment with the aim of improving health, relieving pain, reducing discomfort and promoting healing.

Article 3

Registration system.

A voluntary registration system shall be established for healers. The registration system shall be under the supervision of the Federation of Icelandic Healers. The Federation may collect a registration fee to meet the costs of registering each healer and of operating and maintaining the register. The Federation shall determine the amount of the fee, which is subject to approval by the Minister. The Federation shall ensure that the public has easy access to information on which healers are registered at any time, and on their field of work.

A registered healer must display his/her certificate of registration in a prominent place in his/her place of work, so that it is certainly visible to those who utilise the services of the relevant healer.

Healers may be registered who are members of a professional association affiliated to the registration system. Should a healer who is not a member of a professional association request registration, he/she may be registered provided that he/she fulfils the standards of training for the professional association to which he/she would belong, and other conditions of registration, and submits to monitoring by the Federation of

Icelandic Healers. Should a healer no longer meet the criteria for registration, the Federation of Icelandic Healers shall remove him/her from the register.

The Minister determines, having received recommendations from the Medical Director of Health and the Federation of Icelandic Healers, whether a professional association is to be granted affiliation to the voluntary registration system for healers.

The Minister shall specify in regulations¹⁾ the criteria which a professional association must meet in order to be granted affiliation to the registration system. The regulations shall also specify arrangements for registration, information required on the healer's field of work, public access to the register of healers, the archiving of the registration system, monitoring of its maintenance, and the criteria a healer must fulfil for registration.

Should a professional association no longer fulfil the criteria stated in the regulations, the Minister may revoke the association's affiliation to the registration system.

¹⁾ Regulation No. 877/2006.

Article 4

Indemnity insurance.

A healer is liable to pay compensation with regard to his/her work, in accord with the general rules.

Registered healers must hold valid indemnity insurance with an insurance company licensed here in Iceland for damages which may result from negligence in their work. A healer may, however, instead of insurance, submit a guarantee from a bank or savings bank or another guarantee deemed by the Minister to provide equivalent indemnity. The Minister will issue regulations¹⁾ on the minimum insurance coverage required and the implementation of the insurance requirement. He/she shall confer with the Federation of Icelandic Healers and the Medical Director of Health with regard to the determination of the insurance coverage required.

¹⁾ Regulation No. 876/2006.

Article 5

Confidentiality.

Healers must maintain the utmost confidentiality with regard to all personal matters of which they become aware in their work, unless otherwise provided by law. The duty of confidentiality persists after a healer ceases work, and also after the death of a person who has been treated by the relevant healer. Healers' obligation to give legal testimony is subject to the provisions of [the Healthcare Practitioners Act].¹⁾

¹⁾ Act No. 34/2012, Article 34.

Article 6

Registration of data on healers' health-related services.

After consultation with the Medical Director of Health and the Federation of Icelandic Healers, the Minister will in regulations issue conditions for recording and handling of information on healers' health-related services provided outside the general health system. Otherwise handling of data, including protection of data, shall be subject to the Act on Data Protection and the [Processing]¹⁾ of Personal Data, and regulations issued on authority provided in that Act.

¹⁾ Act No. 90/2018, Article 54.

Article 7

Restrictions on healers' health-related services.

Treatment for serious diseases shall be provided only by licensed health workers. This does not apply, however, if a patient requests the services of a healer after consultation with a physician. The healer shall in such cases ascertain that consultation has taken place.

Healers may not perform procedures or provide treatment which entail grave risk to the patient's health. The same applies to treatment of diseases which are subject to the provisions of the Communicable Diseases Act and entail a risk to the public.

Healers must not advise people to cease taking medication, or other treatment they have commenced under the care of licensed health workers.

Should a healer become aware that a client has a problem which falls outside the healer's field of work, or that treatment has not yielded the expected results, he/she must refer the client to a physician.

Health institutions may agree to the requests of patients who wish to utilise at the institution the health-related services of healers, if this is consistent with the policy of the institution. Provision of such services must be recorded in the patient's medical record.

The Minister can, in regulations, after consultation with the Federation of Icelandic Healers and the Medical Director of Health, make further provisions regarding the diseases, procedures and treatments provided in paragraphs 1 and 2.

Article 8

Job title and publicity.

Only a person who is registered as a healer under Article 3 is entitled to use the title registered in connection with his/her field of work.

The Minister may issue regulations restricting promotion and advertising of the activities of those who practise health-related services, taking account of the legal provisions applying to health professionals.

Article 9

Penalties.

Violations of this Act or of rules issued under the Act, committed with intent or culpable negligence, entail fines or imprisonment for up to three months, unless more stringent penalties are provided in other legislation. Complicity in an offence is subject to Article 22 of the General Criminal Code.

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¹⁾ Act No. 88/2008, Article 233.

Article 10

Review.

This Act shall be reviewed not later than five years after it takes effect.

Article 11

Entry into force.

This Act shall take effect immediately.

*[This translation is published for information only.
The original Icelandic text is published in the Law Gazette.
In case of a possible discrepancy, the original Icelandic text applies.]*