

Response from Massachusetts

Stone, Kristen (DHE) <KStone@dhe.mass.edu>

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Dr. Santos,

Thank you for your inquiry. Massachusetts does not offer a religious exemption for degree-granting authorization. Rather, all out-of-state institutions are held to our physical presence policy, which I have included below. As long as your institution does not engage in the activities listed, Massachusetts Board of Higher Education authorization would not be required for your institution to offer 100% distance education programs.

At this time, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education's (BHE) definition of physical presence does not include 100% distance education or experiential learning activities, such as internships, externships, clinical, or practical within the Commonwealth. However, if an institution also engages in the one of the following activities, BHE approval is required:

- 1. Occupying, regardless of ownership, an actual physical location for instructional purposes, whether synchronous or asynchronous instruction;*
- 2. Maintaining an administrative office to facilitate instruction in the Commonwealth, or for purposes of providing information to prospective students or the general public about the institution, or enrolling students or providing services to enrolled students;*
- 3. Providing office space to instructional or non-instructional staff;*
- 4. Establishing an institutional mailing address, street address or phone number in the Commonwealth.*

Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Best,

Kristen

Kristen Stone, MPP

Assistant Director for Academic & Veterans Affairs
Massachusetts Department of Higher Education
One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: (617) 994-6959
Fax: (617) 727-0955

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