

Teachers

License and Registration

Nurses need one. Manicurists need one. And soon yoga teachers in New Jersey may need one—a state-issued license to practice. Legislation introduced last October would require aspiring “fitness professionals” to complete at least 300 hours of training and pass a state exam. The Fitness Professionals Licensing Act, sponsored by Democratic State Senator Paul Sarlo, counts yoga as a fitness regimen, along with Pilates, spinning, and kickboxing.



That doesn't sit well with some teachers. “Somehow we've sold yoga as an exercise in America, and really it's not that,” says Deborah Metzger, founder of the Princeton Center for Yoga and Health. “We haven't done a good enough job of communicating to people that yoga is a system of understanding. So it's not surprising that somebody might want to regulate it as exercise.” Metzger is urging fellow teachers in New Jersey to contact legislators and lobby against government regulation of yoga. Currently, no state requires licensure of yoga teachers. Yoga Alliance, the U.S. professional association, recognizes teachers who have completed at least 200 hours of training. —Anna Dubrovsky >>