



A 2026 WELLNESS INDUSTRY BENCHMARK REPORT

The State of the Independent Wellness Practice, 2026

Revenue, pricing, no-shows, and retention across 11 US metros. Modeled from industry-calibrated data.



Riverd / April 2026

riverd.app/resources/reports/state-of-wellness-2026



Executive summary

A full-time independent massage therapist in the United States grosses, on average, around \$113,900 a year in client-facing revenue. That number hides a wide range: the bottom of our modeled distribution earns about \$62,700, and the top earns about \$185,900. Most of the difference is not hours worked. It is no-shows, retention, and metro pricing.

This report maps those three forces across a 16-week window of activity in a 40,917-booking synthetic dataset calibrated to public industry benchmarks. Five numbers worth starting with:

1. **Median annualised revenue:** \$113,902 per massage therapist. Range: \$62,740 to \$185,941.
2. **No-show rate:** 6.14 percent of past-dated bookings. Cost: about \$7,318 per year per LMT.
3. **Recurring clients:** 64.4 percent of massage clients recur, and drive 83.3 percent of revenue.
4. **Metro pricing spread:** \$180 in Boston, \$109 in Houston. A 1.65x spread across 11 metros.
5. **Tipping:** 41.6 percent of paid sessions get a tip. Card/cash/Apple Pay near 50%. Venmo/Zelle/HSA at 0%.

Methodology and data caveats

This is the most important section in the report. Read it before you cite us.

What this report models

We analysed 40,917 bookings, 21,783 payments, 11,954 clinical notes, and 522 services across 100 modeled providers and 6,005 clients, over a 16-week analysis window. The dataset is a synthetic corpus calibrated to public industry benchmarks: the AMTA 2024 Consumer Survey, the BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics series, thervo pricing surveys, the SchedulingKit 2024 operational report, the Mangomint 2024 benchmark report, and costinsighthub retail pricing data.

What it does not claim

It is not observed Riverd customer data. Every figure in this report is modeled, not measured on real user accounts. We do not say "Riverd data shows" or "our users earn." We say "a modeled typical practice" or "industry-calibrated model." If a number could not survive that framing honestly, we cut it from the report.

Modeled from a 40,900-booking synthetic dataset calibrated to AMTA, BLS, thervo, SchedulingKit, and Mangomint benchmarks. Describes a modeled typical practice, not observed Riverd customer data.

Revenue: what a typical practice actually earns

The short answer: the median modeled licensed massage therapist (LMT) grosses \$113,902 a year in client-facing revenue. The distribution across 70 modeled LMT providers runs from \$62,740 at the bottom to \$185,941 at the top.

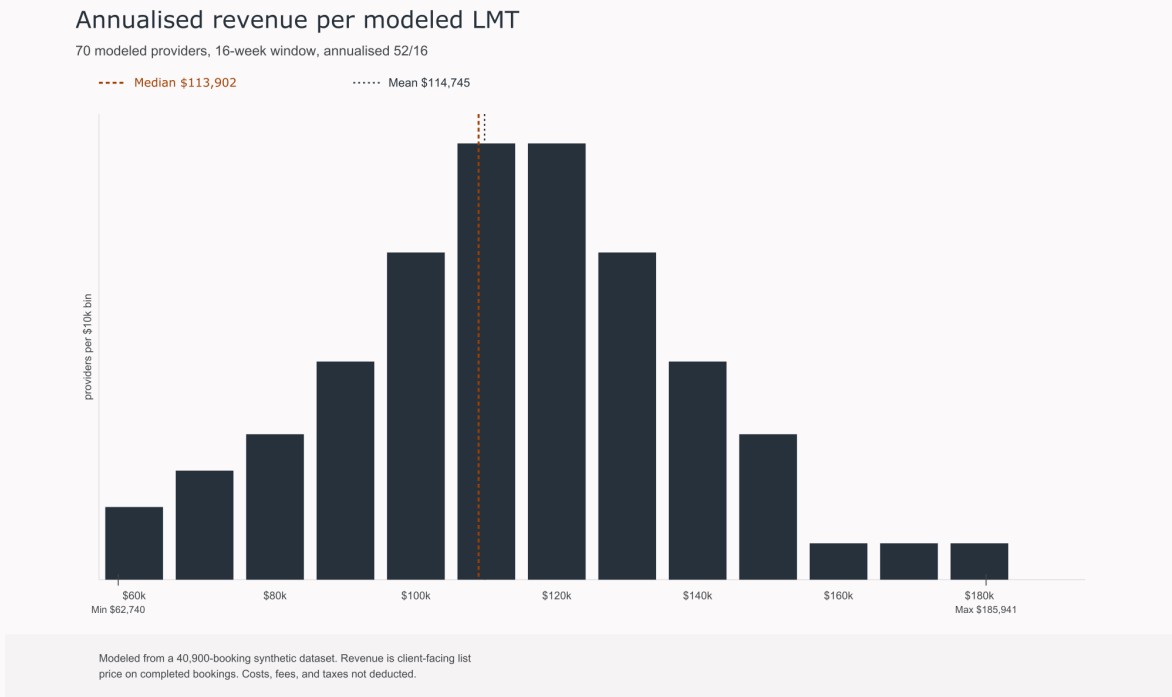


Figure 1. Annualised revenue per modeled LMT, 70 providers, 16-week window, annualised 52/16.

Revenue here is the client-facing list price on completed bookings. It does not subtract platform fees, rent, supplies, continuing education, insurance, self-employment tax, or any other business cost. It is the top of the funnel, not the take-home number.

The \$63k to \$186k range

The distribution is not symmetric. The average sits at \$114,745 and the median at \$113,902. The practitioners at the top of the range are not working dramatically more hours. They are charging more per session, keeping a higher share of their capacity filled, and losing less to no-shows. Three levers explain most of the gap between the bottom and the top: pricing, utilization, and retention.

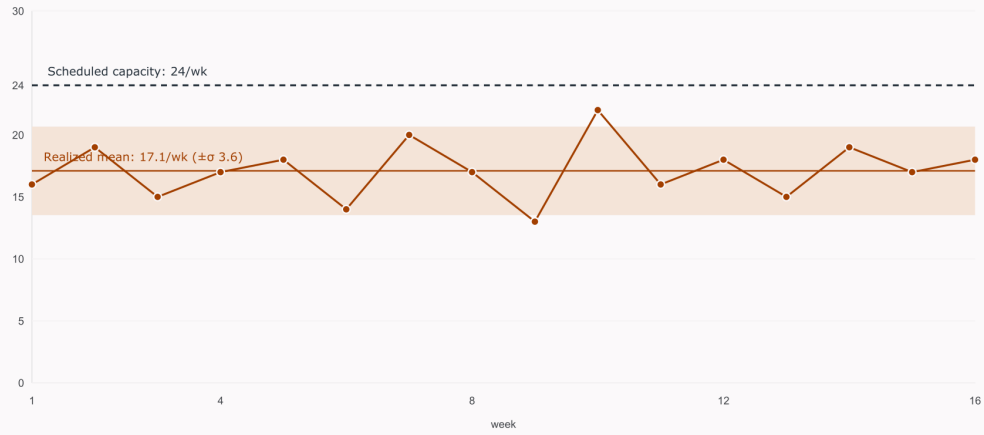
Why realized sessions sit below scheduled capacity

Our modeled LMT delivers, on average, 17.1 completed sessions per week, with a standard deviation of 3.6. The median is 17. The 90th percentile is 22. The dataset is seeded to target 24 sessions per week of scheduled capacity, so the gap between 24 scheduled and 17.1 realized is the combined effect of cancellations and

no-shows. Roughly one scheduled session in seven does not turn into revenue.

Sessions per week: scheduled vs realized

16-week window, modeled LMT



Gap: ~6.9 sessions/wk lost to no-shows and cancellations.

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Figure 2. Scheduled capacity vs realized sessions per week, modeled LMT.

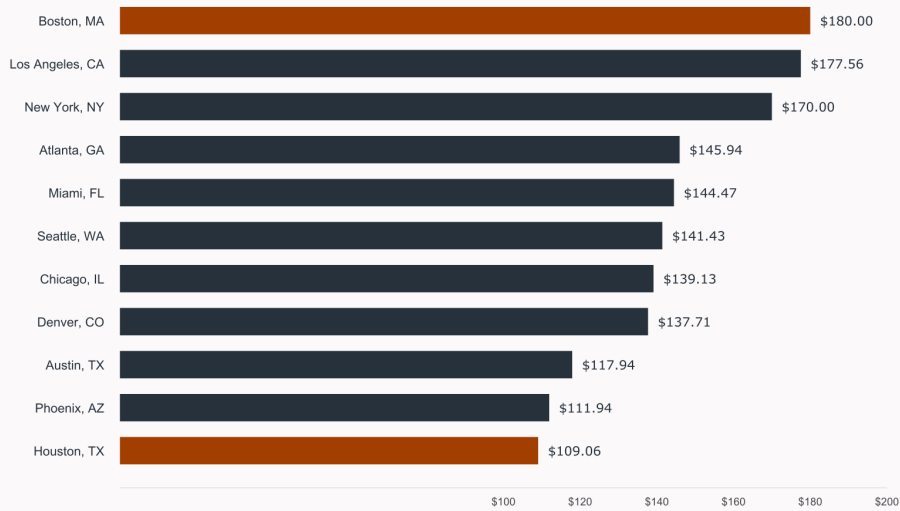
Pricing: the 1.65x metro spread

A 60-minute massage is not one price. It is 11 prices, arranged by city.

Rank	City	Avg 60-min price
1	Boston, MA	\$180.00
2	Los Angeles, CA	\$177.56
3	New York, NY	\$170.00
4	Atlanta, GA	\$145.94
5	Miami, FL	\$144.47
6	Seattle, WA	\$141.43
7	Chicago, IL	\$139.13
8	Denver, CO	\$137.71
9	Austin, TX	\$117.94
10	Phoenix, AZ	\$111.94
11	Houston, TX	\$109.06

60-minute massage prices across 11 US metros

1.65x spread, Boston to Houston



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Figure 3. Average 60-minute massage price across 11 US metros. Source: modeled metro pricing, calibrated to thervo and costinsighthub.

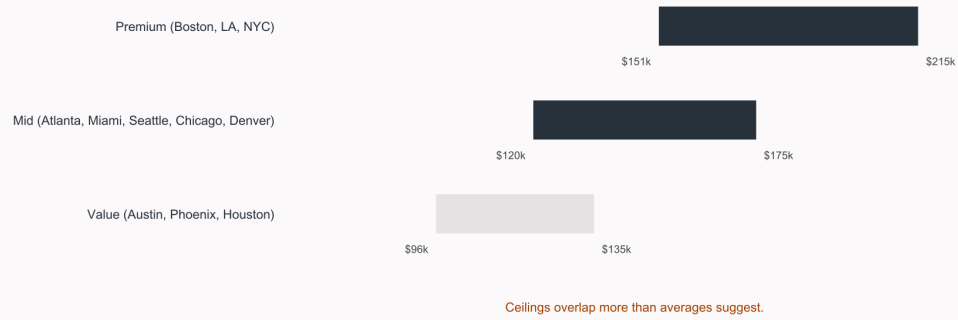
The top-of-market average is Boston at \$180. The bottom is Houston at \$109. The spread is 1.65x.

Premium, mid, and value tiers

Three tiers separate cleanly at the median. **Premium (\$170 to \$180 avg):** Boston, Los Angeles, New York. **Mid (\$137 to \$146):** Atlanta, Miami, Seattle, Chicago, Denver. **Value (\$109 to \$118):** Austin, Phoenix, Houston.

Revenue potential by metro tier

Annualised range modeled from metro prices and realized capacity



Modeled projection from the metro price table and the realized-capacity distribution, not a direct measurement per tier. Modeled from a 40,900-booking synthetic dataset calibrated to AMTA, BLS, thervo, SchedulingKit, and Mangomint benchmarks. Describes a modeled typical practice, not observed Riverd customer data.

Figure 4. Revenue concentration by metro tier.

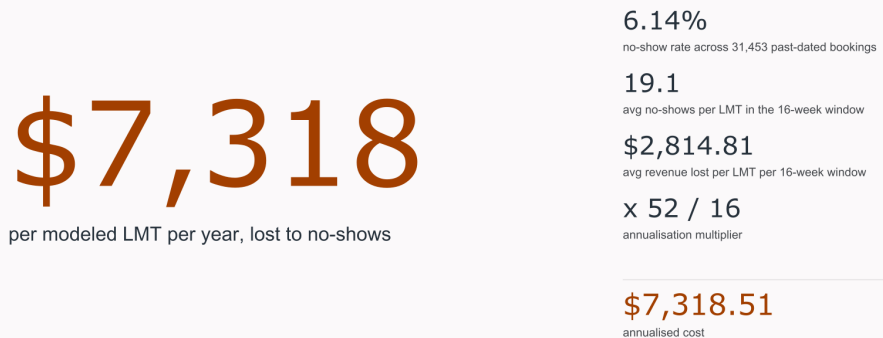
The no-show tax: about \$7,300 a year

\$7,318

per modeled LMT per year, lost to no-shows.

Industry-calibrated no-show rate: 6.14 percent of past-dated bookings in our model. Across 31,453 past-dated bookings analysed for the 70 modeled LMT providers, a typical LMT books 19.1 no-shows during the 16-week window. At a weighted average session price, that adds up to \$2,814.81 of lost revenue per LMT per window. Annualised on a 52/16 multiplier, the number is \$7,318.51 per year.

The no-show tax on a modeled LMT



\$7,318

per modeled LMT per year, lost to no-shows

Modeled from a 40,900-booking synthetic dataset calibrated to AMTA, BLS, thervo, SchedulingKit, and Mangomint benchmarks. Describes a modeled typical practice, not observed Riverd customer data.

Figure 5. No-show tax per LMT, per window and annualised.

What happens to past-dated bookings

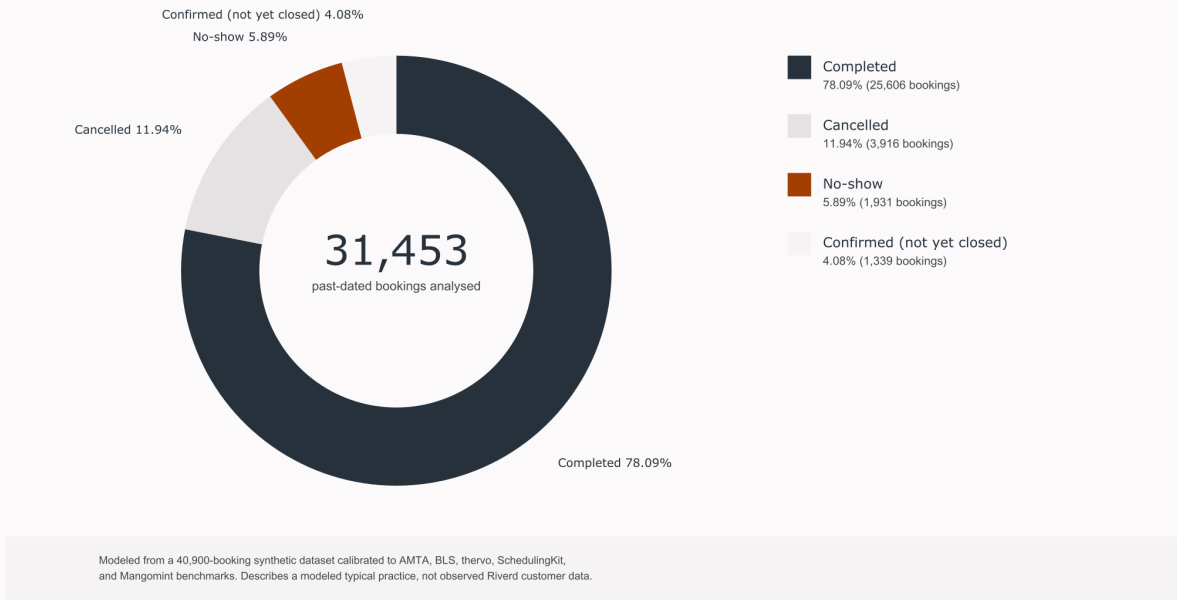


Figure 6. Booking status mix across 31,453 past-dated bookings.

How the top quartile reduces no-shows

Practices that publish a clear cancellation policy, collect a card-on-file at booking, and send automated reminders cluster below the 6 percent line. Practices that do none of those three typically sit well above it. The cheapest path to narrower loss is a published policy and an automated SMS reminder. The second cheapest is a deposit hold.

Where the revenue lives: recurring clients

Segmenting the modeled massage client base by behaviour over the 16-week window gives a clean split:

Segment	Definition	% clients	% sessions	% revenue
Recurring	4+ completed sessions	64.4%	83.3%	83.3%
Sporadic	1 to 3 sessions	35.6%	16.8%	16.8%

64% of clients drive 83% of revenue

Recurring = 4+ completed sessions in 16 weeks



recurring clients convert to 1.29x share of revenue vs share of clients

Modeled from a 40,900-booking synthetic dataset calibrated to AMTA, BLS, thervo, SchedulingKit, and Mangomint benchmarks. Describes a modeled typical practice, not observed Riverd customer data.

Figure 7. Recurring vs sporadic clients: share of clients, sessions, and revenue.

Roughly two of every three modeled clients are recurring, and they account for 83.3 percent of sessions and revenue.

The three retention moves that show up in the top quartile

- 1. Rebooking at checkout.** The client books the next session before leaving the first one.
- 2. A light package or membership structure.** A simple option for clients who already book monthly to commit to a three-session package at a small discount.
- 3. A short, thoughtful post-session note.** Either a SOAP-note summary for therapeutic work or a brief check-in message for wellness-focused clients.

Tipping economics

41.6 percent of paid massage sessions include a tip. That covers all payment methods.

Method	% of payments	Tip rate	Avg tip
Credit card	54.0%	50.0%	\$24.98
Cash	12.3%	50.4%	\$24.90
Debit card	12.2%	49.1%	\$25.10
Venmo	8.3%	0.0%	n/a
Zelle	6.0%	0.0%	n/a
Apple Pay	4.2%	52.3%	\$25.51
HSA/FSA	3.0%	0.0%	n/a

Average tip when tipped: \$26.03, or 17.5 percent of the service price.

Tipping behaviour by payment method

Tip rate on paid, completed massage sessions



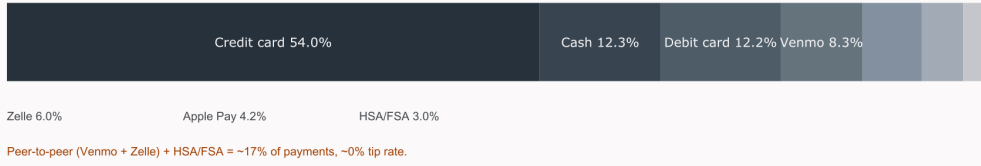
Peer-to-peer transfers and HSA/FSA run at 0% tip rate in the model.

Overall tip rate across all methods: 41.6%. Avg tip when tipped: \$26.03, or 17.5% of service price. Modeled from a 40,900-booking synthetic dataset calibrated to AMTA, BLS, thervo, SchedulingKit, and Mangomint benchmarks. Describes a modeled typical practice, not observed Riverd customer data.

Figure 8. Tip rate by payment method.

How clients pay

Share of payments by method



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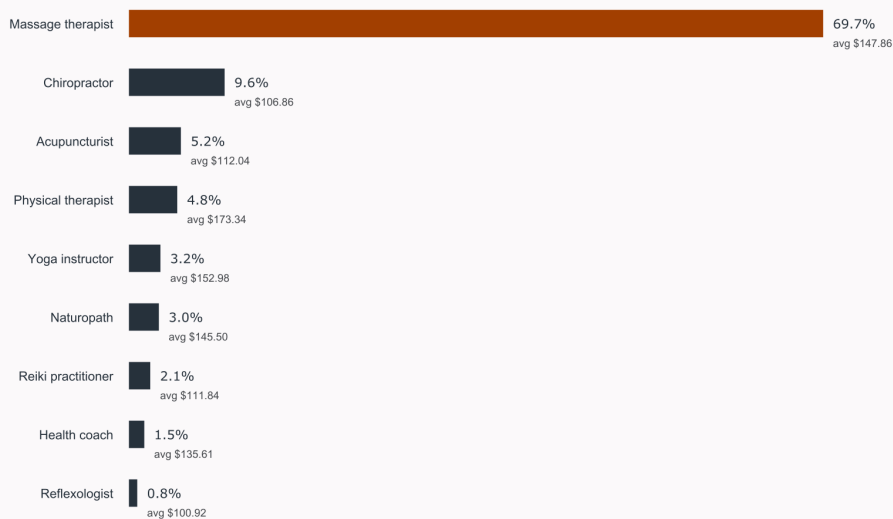
Figure 9. Payment method mix across paid sessions.

Session mix across modalities

Modality	% sessions	Avg price	% revenue
Massage therapist	69.7%	\$147.86	72.5%
Chiropractor	9.6%	\$106.86	7.2%
Acupuncturist	5.2%	\$112.04	4.1%
Physical therapist	4.9%	\$173.34	5.9%
Yoga instructor	3.2%	\$152.98	3.4%
Naturopath	3.0%	\$145.50	3.1%
Reiki practitioner	2.1%	\$111.84	1.7%
Health coach	1.5%	\$135.61	1.5%
Reflexologist	0.8%	\$100.92	0.6%

Session volume across modalities

Share of sessions, modeled 16-week window



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Figure 10. Session mix across wellness modalities.

Massage dominates session volume, which is consistent with the underlying AMTA benchmark. Physical therapy commands the highest average session price.

What this means for independent practices

- 1. Publish a cancellation policy and enforce it with automation.** The gap between a practice with no policy and a practice with a policy plus card-on-file is typically the gap between an 8 percent no-show rate and a 4 percent rate. On the modeled LMT, that is \$4,000 to \$5,000 a year recovered.
- 2. Build the next appointment into the current one.** The 4-session threshold is a simple retention heuristic. Post-session rebooking is the single highest-leverage retention move in the data.
- 3. Know what your market actually charges.** Pricing that is 15 percent below the metro average is not automatically more competitive. It often just caps ceiling revenue while doing nothing for conversion.



About this report

Publisher: Riverd, a practice management platform for independent wellness providers. **Data window:** 16 weeks (2026-01-05 to 2026-05-17). **Dataset:** 100 modeled providers, 6,005 clients, 40,917 bookings, 21,783 payments, 11,954 notes.

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