

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Committee Substitute

for

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for

House Bill 4793

By Delegates T. Howell, White, Leavitt, Dittman,

Petitto, Kyle, Mazzocchi, Foggin, Funkhouser, J.

Cannon, and Dillon

[Reported February 25, 2026, from the Committee on

Government Organization]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §30-27-3, §30-27-8, §30-27-8a, and §30-27-8b of the Code of West
2 Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to the West Virginia Board of Barbers and
3 Cosmetologists; providing a definition; lowering the minimum age to obtain licensure in
4 certain professions from 18 to 16 years of age; removing good moral character
5 requirements; revising certain licensure requirements; lowering the minimum age for
6 receiving an apprenticeship from 16 to 14 years of age; providing for the development of
7 additional apprenticeship programs; requiring the West Virginia Department of Education
8 to assist the board in developing and administering apprenticeships for 14- and 15-year
9 olds to the extent necessary to receive any requisite federal authorization; providing
10 program guidance; providing that an apprentice in an apprenticeship program shall be
11 issued a license or certification if the apprentice completes the requisite hours and meets
12 all other applicable requirements.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 27. BOARD OF BARBERS AND COSMETOLOGISTS.

§30-27-3. Definitions.

1 As used in this article, the following words and terms have the following meanings, unless
2 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

3 (a) "Aesthetics" or "esthetics" means any one or any combination of the following acts
4 when done on the human body for compensation and not for the treatment of disease:

5 (1) Administering cosmetic treatments to enhance or improve the appearance of the skin,
6 including cleansing, toning, performing effleurage or other related movements, stimulating,
7 exfoliating, or performing any other similar procedure on the skin of the human body or scalp;

8 (2) Applying, by hand or with a mechanical or electrical apparatus, any cosmetics,
9 makeups, oils, powders, clays, antiseptics, tonics, lotions, creams, or chemical preparations
10 necessary for the practice of aesthetics to another person's face, neck, back, shoulders, hands,
11 elbows and feet up to and including the knee;

12 (3) The rubbing, cleansing, exercising, beautifying, or grooming of another person's face,
13 neck, back, shoulders, hands, elbows, and feet, up to and including the knee;

14 (4) The waxing and tweezing of hair on another person's body;

15 (5) The wrapping of another person's body in a body wrap;

16 (6) Applying artificial eyelashes and eyebrows; and

17 (7) The lightening of hair on the body except the scalp.

18 (b) "Aesthetician" or "esthetician" means a person licensed under the provisions of this
19 article who engages in the practice of aesthetics and has completed 600 clock hours of training.

20 (c) "Applicant" means a person making application for a professional license, license,
21 certificate, registration, permit, or renewal under the provisions of this article.

22 "Apprentice" means someone who is enrolled in an apprenticeship program for barbers,
23 cosmetologists, aestheticians, hair stylists, or nail technicians pursuant to this article.

24 (d) "Barber" means a person licensed under the provisions of this article who engages in
25 the practice of barbering and has completed a 1,200 clock-hour barber training program without
26 chemical services, or a 1,500 clock-hour barber training program with chemical services, or has
27 successfully completed the barber apprenticeship program.

28 (e) "Barbering" means any one or any combination of the following acts when done on the
29 head and neck for compensation and not for the treatment of disease:

30 (1) Shaving, shaping, and trimming the beard, or both;

31 (2) Cutting, singeing, arranging, dressing, tinting, bleaching, or applying lotions or tonics
32 on human hair, or a wig or hairpiece; and

33 (3) Applications, treatments, or rubs of the scalp, face, or neck with oils, creams, lotions,
34 cosmetics, antiseptics, powders, or other preparations in connection with the shaving, cutting, or
35 trimming of the hair or beard.

36 (f) "Barber crossover" is a person who has completed 1,200 or 1,500 clock hours of
37 training, is licensed as a barber, and completed additional hours of training in nails, aesthetics,

38 and/or chemical services, to the total amount of 2,100 hours, to perform cosmetology.

39 (g) "Barber permanent waving" means the following acts performed on the head and neck
40 for compensation and not for the treatment of disease:

41 (1) The bleaching or tinting of hair; and

42 (2) The permanent waving of hair.

43 (h) "Barber permanent waviest" means a person who has completed 2,000 clock hours of
44 training and was licensed to perform barbering and barber permanent waving enrolled by August
45 28, 2012.

46 (i) "Board" means the West Virginia Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists.

47 (j) "Certificate" means an instructor certificate to teach in a school under the provisions of
48 this article or a document issued by the board for certification obtained pursuant to §30-27-8b of
49 this code.

50 (k) "Certificate holder" means a person certified as an instructor to teach in a school under
51 the provisions of this article, or who has obtained a certification pursuant to §30-27-8b of this code.

52 (l) "Cosmetologist" means a person licensed under the provisions of this article who
53 engages in the practice of cosmetology and who has completed 1,800 clock hours of training.

54 (m) "Cosmetology" means any one or any combination of the following acts when done on
55 the human body for compensation and not for the treatment of disease:

56 (1) Cutting, styling, shaping, arranging, braiding, weaving, dressing, adding extensions,
57 curling, waving, permanent waving, relaxing, straightening, cleansing, singeing, bleaching, tinting,
58 coloring, waxing, tweezing, or similarly, work on human hair, or a wig or hairpiece, by any means,
59 including hands, mechanical, or electrical devices or appliances;

60 (2) Nail care;

61 (3) Applying by hand or with a mechanical or electrical device or appliance, any cosmetics,
62 makeups, oils, powders, clays, antiseptics, tonics, lotions, creams or chemical preparations
63 necessary for the practice of aesthetics to another person's face, neck, shoulders, hands, elbows,

64 and feet, up to and including the knee;

65 (4) The rubbing, cleansing, exercising, beautifying, or grooming of another person's face,
66 neck, shoulders, hands, elbows, and feet, up to and including the knee;

67 (5) The wrapping of another person's body in a body wrap; and

68 (6) Performing aesthetics.

69 (n) "Cosmetology crossover" is a person who has completed 1,800 clock hours of training,
70 is licensed as a cosmetologist, and completes an additional 300 hours of training in clipper cuts
71 and face shaving to perform barbering, for a total of 2,100 hours.

72 (o) "General supervision" means:

73 (1) For schools, a master or certified instructor is on the premises and is quickly and easily
74 available; or

75 (2) For salons, a professional licensee is on the premises and is quickly and easily
76 available.

77 (p) "Hair styling" means any one or any combination of the following acts when done on the
78 head and neck for compensation and not for the treatment of disease:

79 Cutting, styling, shaping, arranging, braiding, weaving, dressing, adding extensions,
80 curling, facial hair trimming, scalp treatments, waving, permanent waving, relaxing, straightening,
81 singeing, bleaching, tinting, coloring, or similar, work on human hair, or a wig or hairpiece, by any
82 means, including hands, mechanical or electrical devices, or appliances.

83 (q) "Hair stylist" means a person licensed under the provisions of this article who engages
84 in the practice of hair styling and who has completed 1,000 clock hours of training, effective July 1,
85 2016.

86 (r) "License" means a professional license, a salon license, or a school license.

87 (s) "Licensed school" means a facility which has been approved by the West Virginia
88 Council for Community and Technical College Education (CCTCE), Department of Education in
89 conjunction with CCTCE, or Department of Education in conjunction with the Department of

90 Corrections pursuant to §18B-2B-9 of this code to educate persons to be licensed or issued
91 certain permits under the provisions of this article.

92 (t) "Licensee" means a person, corporation, or firm holding a license issued under the
93 provisions of this article.

94 (u) "Mobile shop" means any self-contained, self-supporting, enclosed unit which is
95 constructed in either a motorized vehicle or a towable trailer as a portable facility for providing any
96 of the professional services set forth in this article to the public.

97 (v) "Nail care" means any one or any combination of the following acts when done on the
98 human body for compensation and not for the treatment of disease:

99 (1) The cleansing, dressing, or polishing of nails of a person;

100 (2) Performing artificial nail service; and

101 (3) The cosmetic treatment of the feet up to the knee and the hands up to the elbow.

102 (w) "Nail technician" or "manicurist" means a person licensed under the provisions of this
103 article who engages in the practice of nail care and has completed 400 clock hours of training.

104 (x) "Permit" means a work permit.

105 (y) "Permitee" means a person holding a work permit.

106 (z) "Professional license" means a license to practice as an aesthetician, barber, barber
107 crossover, barber permanent waviest, cosmetologist, cosmetologist crossover, hairstylist, or nail
108 technician.

109 (aa) "Registration" means a registration issued by the board to a person who rents or
110 leases a booth or chair from a licensed salon owner and operator, or both, or a registration issued
111 by the board to a person who is a student in a school.

112 (bb) "Registrant" means a person who holds a registration under the provisions of this
113 article.

114 (cc) "Salon" means a shop or other facility where a person practices under a professional
115 license.

116 (dd) "Salon license" means a license to own and operate a salon.

117 (ee) "Student registration" means a registration issued by the board to a student to study at
118 a school licensed under the provisions of this article.

119 (ff) "Waxing specialist" means a person certified under the provisions of this article who
120 engages in the practice of waxing and tweezing of hair on another person's body.

121 (gg) Hair braiding, threading, and any other item not spelled out are not regulated by the
122 West Virginia Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists.

§30-27-8. Professional license requirements.

1 (a) An applicant for a professional license to practice as an aesthetician, barber, barber
2 crossover, cosmetologist, hair stylist, cosmetologist crossover or nail technician shall present
3 satisfactory evidence that he or she:

4 (1) Is at least ~~eighteen~~ sixteen years of age and has completed at least the tenth grade of
5 education;

6 ~~(2) Is of good moral character;~~

7 ~~(3)(2) Has a high school diploma, a GED, or has passed the "ability to benefit test"~~
8 ~~approved by the United States Department of Education;~~

9 ~~(4)(2) Has graduated from a licensed school which has been approved by the West~~
10 ~~Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education (CCTCE), Department of~~
11 ~~Education in conjunction with CCTCE or Department of Education with the Department of~~
12 ~~Corrections or has completed education requirements in another state and meets the licensure~~
13 ~~provisions of the board;~~

14 ~~(5)(3) Has passed an examination that tests the applicant's knowledge of subjects~~
15 ~~specified by the board: *Provided*, That the board may recognize a certificate or similar license in~~
16 ~~lieu of the examination or part of the examination that the board requires: *Provided, however*, That~~
17 ~~any examination meets national standards;~~

18 ~~(6)(4) Has paid the applicable fee;~~

19 ~~(7)~~(5) Presents a certificate of health from a licensed physician;

20 ~~(8)~~(6) Is a citizen of the United States or is eligible for employment in the United States; and

21 ~~(9)~~(7) Has fulfilled any other requirement specified by the board.

22 (b) A license to practice issued by the board prior to July 1, 2016, shall for all purposes be

23 considered a professional license issued under this article: *Provided*, That a person holding a

24 license issued prior to July 1, 2016, must renew the license pursuant to the provisions of this

25 article.

26 (c) A person, who by education and experience qualifies to be a barber and a

27 cosmetologist or a barber crossover or cosmetologist crossover, may elect at any time to practice

28 solely as a barber and, after notice and application to the board, may be licensed as a barber

29 without other designation.

§30-27-8a. ~~Barber and cosmetologist apprentice~~ Apprenticeship Program.

1 (a) The board may establish an apprenticeship program to become a ~~barber or~~

2 ~~cosmetologist~~ barber, cosmetologist, aesthetician, nail technician, or hair stylist. Upon request of

3 the board, the West Virginia Department of Education shall assist the board in developing and

4 administering any apprenticeship program established under this section for individuals who are

5 14 or 15 years of age: *Provided*, That the department is required to provide such assistance only to

6 the extent necessary to obtain any requisite federal authorization for the program. ~~A barber or~~

7 ~~cosmetologist~~ An apprentice shall work at all times under the direct supervision of a ~~licensed~~

8 ~~barber or cosmetologist~~ licensed or certified practitioner, and any permit issued by the board to

9 work as a ~~barber or cosmetologist~~ an apprentice does not allow a person to practice individually as

10 a ~~barber or cosmetologist~~ an apprentice.

11 (b) An applicant for a ~~barber or cosmetologist~~ an apprenticeship shall present satisfactory

12 evidence that he or she:

13 (1) Is at least ~~sixteen~~ 14 years of age;

14 ~~(2)~~ Is of good moral character;

15 ~~(3)~~(2) Is in high school or has a high school diploma, a GED, or has passed the “ability to
16 benefit test” approved by the United States Department of Education;

17 ~~(4)~~(3) Has paid the applicable fee;

18 ~~(5)~~(4) Has a certificate of health from a licensed physician;

19 ~~(6)~~(5) Is a citizen of the United States or is eligible for employment in the United States; and

20 ~~(7)~~(6) Has fulfilled any other requirement specified by the board.

21 (c) An applicant for a sponsor of a ~~barber or cosmetologist~~ an apprentice shall present
22 satisfactory evidence that he or she:

23 (1) Is licensed or certified as a ~~barber or cosmetologist~~ under the provisions of this article in
24 the profession that the apprentice is studying;

25 (2) Has paid the applicable fee; and

26 (3) Has fulfilled any other requirement specified by the board.

27 (d) A sponsor of a ~~barber or cosmetologist~~ an apprentice shall be a current licensed ~~barber~~
28 ~~or cosmetologist~~ licensee with at least five years’ experience and ~~has~~ have worked in a shop for
29 the last five years.

30 (e) The board may propose emergency rules and rules for legislative approval, in
31 accordance with the provisions of §29A-3-1 *et seq.*, to implement the provisions of this section,
32 including:

33 (1) The requirements for:

34 (A) The ~~barber or cosmetologist~~ apprenticeship program;

35 (B) The ~~barber or cosmetologist~~ apprentice permit; and

36 (C) A licensed or certified ~~barber or cosmetologist~~ practitioner to sponsor a ~~barber or~~
37 ~~cosmetologist~~ an apprentice;

38 (2) Procedures for an examination;

39 (3) A fee schedule; and

40 (4) Any other rules necessary to effectuate the provisions of this section.

§30-27-8b.

Certifications.

1 (a) The board shall issue a certification to an applicant who obtains training at a licensed
2 school or continuing education provider, in West Virginia, in the following area:

3 *Waxing Specialist.* —

4 An applicant for a waxing specialist shall present satisfactory evidence that he or she:

5 (A) Is at least 18 years of age;

6 ~~(B) Is of good moral character;~~

7 (C) Has a high school diploma, a GED, or has passed the “ability to benefit test” approved
8 by the United States Department of Education;

9 (D) Has paid the applicable fee;

10 (E) Has a certificate of health from a licensed physician;

11 (F) Is a citizen of the United States or is eligible for employment in the United States;

12 (G) Has completed a 100-hour class that consists of: Professional requirements, safety
13 and health, skin structure, disorders and diseases, removal of superfluous hair and 25 hours on
14 the clinic floor, supervised, for a total of 125 hours;

15 (H) If not currently licensed, must take the West Virginia state law test; and

16 (I) Has fulfilled any other requirement specified by the board.

17 (b) The board shall issue to any barber the 1500 clock-hour level licensure who has
18 previously completed a 1200 clock-hour training program, and who subsequently completes a 300
19 clock-hour certification program in chemical services.

20 (c) ~~A cosmetologist~~ An apprentice who obtains the necessary hours of training in an
21 apprenticeship program outlined in §30-27-8a of this code shall be issued the necessary
22 certification as if the apprentice had completed ~~beauty~~ the applicable school, so long as the
23 apprentice has completed the necessary requirements outlined in that section. The apprenticeship
24 program established by the board may allow individuals to participate in ~~beauty~~ any appropriate

25 school to the extent necessary to obtain any other classroom instruction or technical training that is
26 not otherwise provided in the apprenticeship.

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NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to revise various requirements pertaining to the Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists, including lowering two minimum age requirements and expanding the types of available apprenticeships.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.