

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Committee Substitute

for

Senate Bill 486

BY SENATOR THORNE

[Reported February 26, 2026, from the Committee on
Government Organization]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §30-27-3 and §30-27-8 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as
2 amended; and to amend the code by adding a new section, designated §30-27-8c, relating
3 to the West Virginia Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists; adding the definition of "master
4 aesthetician" to persons licensed under this article; establishing a salon training program;
5 and exempting safe services from licensure.

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

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

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

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

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

34 (f) "Barber crossover" is a person who has completed 1,200 or 1,500 clock-hours of
35 training, is licensed as a barber, and completed additional hours of training in nails, aesthetics,
36 and/or chemical services, to the total amount of 2,100 clock-hours, to perform cosmetology.

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

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

40 (2) The permanent waving of hair.

41 (h) "Barber permanent wavist" means a person who has completed 2,000 clock-hours of
42 training and was licensed to perform barbering and barber permanent waiving enrolled by August
43 28, 2012.

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

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

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

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

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

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

59 (2) Nail care;

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

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

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

67 (6) Performing aesthetics.

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

71 (o) "General supervision" means:

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

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

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

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

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

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

86 (s) "Licensed school" means a facility which has been approved by the West Virginia
87 Council for Community and Technical College Education (CCTCE), Department of Education in
88 conjunction with CCTCE, or Department of Education in conjunction with the Department of
89 Corrections pursuant to §18B-2B-9 of this code to educate persons to be licensed or issued
90 certain permits under the provisions of this article.

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

93 (u) "Master aesthetician" means a person licensed under the provisions of this article who
94 engages in the practice of aesthetics and has completed a minimum of 900 clock-hours of training
95 and who is authorized to practice using laser technology, intense pulsed light (IPL) devices,
96 microneedling, and radiofrequency treatments.

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

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

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

103 (2) Performing artificial nail service; and

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

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

107 ~~(x)~~ (y) "Permit" means a work permit.

108 ~~(y)~~ (z) "Permittee" means a person holding a work permit.

109 ~~(z)~~ (aa) "Professional license" means a license to practice as an aesthetician, barber,
110 barber crossover, barber permanent waviest, cosmetologist, cosmetologist crossover, hairstylist,
111 or nail technician.

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

115 ~~(bb)~~ (cc) "Registrant" means a person who holds a registration under the provisions of this
116 article.

117 ~~(cc)~~ (dd) "Salon" means a shop or other facility where a person practices under a
118 professional license.

119 ~~(dd)~~ (ee) "Salon license" means a license to own and operate a salon.

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

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

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

126 (hh) "Hair braiding" means the service of twisting, locking, wrapping, weaving, cornrowing,
127 extending, or braiding hair by hand or with mechanical devices, including the use of natural or
128 synthetic hair extensions, natural or synthetic hair and fibers, decorative beads, or other hair
129 accessories, the minor trimming of natural hair or hair extensions incidental to twisting, locking,
130 wrapping, weaving, cornrowing, extending, or braiding hair, and the making and lacing of wigs
131 from natural hair, natural fibers, synthetic fibers, and hair extensions, as well as the use of topical
132 agents such as conditioners, gels, moisturizers, oils, pomades, and shampoos.

133 (ii) "Natural hair braiding" excludes the application of dyes, reactive chemicals, or other
134 preparations to alter the color of the hair or to straighten, curl, or alter the structure of the hair or
135 the use of chemical hair joining agents such as synthetic tape, keratin bonds, or fusion bonds,
136 and is distinct from aesthetics, barbering, barber permanent waving, cosmetology, hair styling,
137 and nail care.

138 (ij) "Threading" means a method of removing hair from the eyebrows, upper lip, or other
139 body parts by using a cotton thread to pull hair from follicles, including the use of over-the-counter
140 astringents, gels, powders, tweezers, and scissors incidental to threading. Threading is distinct
141 from aesthetics, barbering, barber permanent waving, cosmetology, hair styling, and nail care.

142 (kk) "Blow-dry styling" means the practice of shampooing, conditioning, drying, arranging,
143 curling, straightening, or styling hair using only mechanical devices, hair sprays, and topical
144 agents, such as balms, oils, and serums, including the use and styling of hair extensions, hair

145 pieces, and wigs. Blow-dry styling excludes cutting hair or the application of dyes, bleach, reactive
146 chemicals, keratin treatments, or other preparations to color or alter the structure of human hair,
147 and is distinct from aesthetics, barbering, barber permanent waving, cosmetology, hair styling,
148 and nail care.

149 (II) "Makeup application" means the application of a cosmetic to enhance the appearance
150 of the face or skin including powder, foundation, rouge, eyeshadow, eyeliner, mascara, and
151 lipstick, including the application of makeup applied using an airbrush. Makeup application
152 excludes the application of permanent makeup or tattooing, and is distinct from aesthetics,
153 barbering, barber permanent waving, cosmetology, hair styling, and nail care.

154 Hair braiding, threading, blow-dry styling, makeup application, and any other item not
155 spelled out are not regulated by the 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~~ 18 years of age;

5 (2) ~~Is of good moral character;~~ Does not have a criminal conviction that directly relates to
6 the applicant's ability to safely practice as an aesthetician, barber, barber crossover,
7 cosmetologist, hair stylist, cosmetologist crossover, or nail technician, as determined by the West
8 Virginia Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists;

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

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

15 board, or, for hair styling, has completed 1,000 clock-hours of supervised practice under a salon
16 training program established pursuant to §30-27-8c of this code;

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

21 (6) Has paid the applicable fee;

22 (7) Presents a certificate of health from a licensed physician;

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

24 (9) Has fulfilled any other requirement specified by the board.

25 (b) A license to practice issued by the board prior to July 1, 2016, shall for all purposes be
26 considered a professional license issued under this article: *Provided*, That a person holding a
27 license issued prior to July 1, 2016, must renew the license pursuant to the provisions of this
28 article.

29 (c) A person, who by education and experience qualifies to be a barber and a
30 cosmetologist, or a barber crossover, or cosmetologist crossover, may elect at any time to practice
31 solely as a barber and, after notice and application to the board, may be licensed as a barber
32 without other designation.

§30-27-8c. Salon training program.

1 A salon training program is hereby created. The board shall allow salons to register to
2 participate in the program. A salon licensed pursuant to §30-27-17 of this code, including a mobile
3 shop operating pursuant to §30-27-17a of this code, may participate in the program by registering
4 with the board.

5 A salon that registers with the board may employ persons, without regard to the person's
6 licensure status, to provide the services of shampooing, cutting, coloring, and styling hair under

7 the general supervision of a licensee who regularly provides the services. A person providing
8 services without a license shall first complete up to four hours of education related to the barbering
9 and cosmetology laws in this article and rules and sanitation, as approved by the board, before
10 offering services permitted under the program. The board shall ensure low cost and virtual options
11 for training are available. The salon and licensee are responsible for ensuring the education,
12 training, skills, and competence of persons who provide services in the salon.

13 A salon participating in the salon training program shall comply with all facility and
14 minimum equipment requirements, safety and infection control provisions, inspection
15 requirements, management requirements, and salon licensing renewal requirements. The board
16 may inspect any participating salon that the board deems necessary to ensure compliance with
17 these requirements.

18 The salon shall disclose in writing prior to the consumer's receipt of services from an
19 unlicensed provider that the salon is participating in the program and that the provider is not
20 licensed. The disclosure shall be clearly legible and state: "This licensed salon is registered to
21 participate in a salon training program. This salon employs unlicensed providers who work under
22 the general supervision of licensed providers. The services you are receiving are from an
23 unlicensed provider participating in this program."

24 In addition to any other remedy provided by law, in an action based on an injury alleged
25 to have occurred in a salon participating in the salon training program, a prevailing party may
26 recover reasonable attorney's fees and receive other equitable relief as determined by the court.

27 In addition to any other disciplinary powers established pursuant to this article, the board
28 may, when it has probable cause to believe that human health is endangered, order a salon
29 participating in the program to immediately cease participation in the program. The board may
30 conduct an investigation pursuant to §30-27-20 of this code, and upon finding probable cause
31 shall conduct a hearing pursuant to §30-27-21 of this code, to determine whether the problem has
32 been corrected, whether to deny, refuse to renew, suspend, revoke, or reinstate the salon's

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- 33 participation in the program, and whether to deny, refuse to renew, suspend, revoke, or reinstate
34 the salon's license.