

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2026 REGULAR SESSION**

### **Introduced**

## **House Bill 4793**

By Delegates T. Howell, White, Leavitt, Dittman,  
Petitto, Kyle, Mazzocchi, Foggin, Funkhouser, J.  
Cannon, and Dillon

[Introduced January 23, 2026; referred to the  
Committee on Government Organization]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact 30-27-8a of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to  
2 lowering the age for a person to work as a barber or cosmetologist apprentice from 16 to 14  
3 years old.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 27. BOARD OF BARBERS AND COSMETOLOGISTS.**

**§30-27-8a. Barber and cosmetologist apprentice.**

1 (a) The board may establish an apprenticeship program to become a barber or  
2 cosmetologist. A barber or cosmetologist apprentice shall work at all times under the direct  
3 supervision of a licensed barber or cosmetologist, and any permit issued by the board to work as a  
4 barber or cosmetologist apprentice does not allow a person to practice individually as a barber or  
5 cosmetologist.

6 (b) An applicant for a barber or cosmetologist apprenticeship shall present satisfactory  
7 evidence that he or she:

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

9 (2) Is of good moral character;

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

12 (4) Has paid the applicable fee;

13 (5) Has a certificate of health from a licensed physician;

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

15 (7) Has fulfilled any other requirement specified by the board.

16 (c) An applicant for a sponsor of a barber or cosmetologist apprentice shall present  
17 satisfactory evidence that he or she:

18 (1) Is licensed as a barber or cosmetologist under the provisions of this article;

19 (2) Has paid the applicable fee; and

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

21 (d) A sponsor of a barber or cosmetologist apprentice shall be a current licensed barber or  
22 cosmetologist with at least five years' experience and has worked in a shop for the last five years.

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

26 (1) The requirements for:

27 (A) The barber or cosmetologist apprenticeship program;

28 (B) The barber or cosmetologist apprentice permit; and

29 (C) A licensed barber or cosmetologist to sponsor a barber or cosmetologist apprentice;

30 (2) Procedures for an examination;

31 (3) A fee schedule; and

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

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to

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