

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 654

By Senator Rucker

[Introduced January 29, 2026; referred
to 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 practice of barbering and cosmetology; defining terms; establishing a salon training
4 program; 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.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(1) The bleaching or tinting of hair; and

(2) The permanent waving of hair.

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

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

(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 code.

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

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

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

58 (2) Nail care;

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

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

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

66 (6) Performing aesthetics.

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

70 (o) "General supervision" means:

71 (1) For schools, a master or certified instructor is on the premises and is quickly and easily

72 available; or

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(2) Performing artificial nail service; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Hair braiding" means the service of twisting, locking, wrapping, weaving, cornrowing, extending, or braiding hair by hand or with mechanical devices, including the use of natural or synthetic hair extensions, natural or synthetic hair and fibers, decorative beads or other hair

accessories, the minor trimming of natural hair or hair extensions incidental to twisting, locking, wrapping, weaving, cornrowing, extending, or braiding hair, and the making and lacing of wigs from natural hair, natural fibers, synthetic fibers and hair extensions, as well as the use of topical agents such as conditioners, gels, moisturizers, oils, pomades and shampoos. "Natural hair braiding" excludes the application of dyes, reactive chemicals or other preparations to alter the color of the hair or to straighten, curl or alter the structure of the hair or the use of chemical hair joining agents such as synthetic tape, keratin bonds or fusion bonds, and is distinct from aesthetics, barbering, barber permanent waving, cosmetology, hair styling, and nail care.

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

"Blow-dry styling" means the practice of shampooing, conditioning, drying, arranging, curling, straightening or styling hair using only mechanical devices, hair sprays and topical agents, such as balms, oils and serums, including the use and styling of hair extensions, hair pieces and wigs. "Blow-dry styling" excludes cutting hair or the application of dyes, bleach, reactive chemicals, keratin treatments or other preparations to color or alter the structure of human hair, and is distinct from aesthetics, barbering, barber permanent waving, cosmetology, hair styling, and nail care.

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

Hair braiding, threading, blow-dry styling, makeup application, and any other item not spelled out are not regulated by the West Virginia Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists.

§30-27-8. Professional license requirements.

1 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 Is at least 18 years of age;

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

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

11 Has graduated from a licensed school which has been approved by the West Virginia
12 Council for Community and Technical 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 hours of supervised practice under a salon training
16 program established pursuant to §30-27-8c of this code;

17 Has passed an examination that tests the applicant's knowledge of subjects specified by
18 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 Has paid the applicable fee;

22 Presents a certificate of health from a licensed physician;

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

24 Has fulfilled any other requirement specified by the Board.

25 A license to practice issued by the board prior to July 1, 2016, shall for all purposes be

considered a professional license issued under this article: *Provided*, That a person holding a license issued prior to July 1, 2016, must renew the license pursuant to the provisions of this article.

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

§30-27-8c. Salon training program.

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

A salon that registers with the board may employ persons, without regard to the person's licensure status, to provide the services of shampooing, cutting, coloring, and styling hair under the general supervision of a licensee who regularly provides the services. A person providing services without a license shall first complete up to four hours of education related to the barbering and cosmetology laws in this article and rules and sanitation, as approved by the board, before offering services permitted under the program. The board shall ensure low cost and virtual options for training are available. The salon and licensee are responsible for ensuring the education, training, skills, and competence of persons who provide services in the salon.

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

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 to
25 have occurred in a salon participating in the salon training program, a prevailing party may recover
26 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
33 participation in the program, and whether to deny, refuse to renew, suspend, revoke, or reinstate
34 the salon's license.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to clarify that hair braiding and threading are not regulated by the West Virginia Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists, further provide that blow-dry styling and makeup application are also not regulated, and create a salon training program allowing licensed salons to employ trainees to cut and color hair and, after 1,000 hours, sit for the hair styling exam.

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