



Board for Barbers and Cosmetology

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Effective: March 23, 2026

Implementation of Cosmetology, Barber, Master Barber, Dual Barber/Master Barber, Nail, Wax, Tattoo, Permanent Cosmetic Tattoo, and Master Permanent Cosmetic Tattoo Curricula

Background

On July 21, 2025, the Board for Barbers and Cosmetology (“Board”) approved the final stage of the General Review of Barbering and Cosmetology Regulations, which amended the Barbering and Cosmetology Regulations (18VAC41-20). The regulatory change (i) revised the cosmetology curricula while keeping the minimum training requirement of 1,000 hours; (ii) revised the barber curricula and reduced the minimum required training hours from 1,100 hours to 750 hours; (iii) revised the master barber curricula and reduced the minimum required training hours from 400 hours to 250 hours; and (iv) revised the dual barber/master barber curricula and reduced the minimum required training hours from 1,500 hours to 1,000 hours.

The Board also approved revised standards for performances for cosmetology, barber, master barber, dual barber/master barber, nail and waxing programs. The revised curricula ensures that training is no more burdensome than necessary while preparing students to be minimally competent practitioners.

The Barbers and Cosmetology regulatory changes became effective December 1, 2025. The Tattooing regulatory changes became effective on January 5, 2026. The Board adopted a guidance document for cosmetology, barber, nail, waxing, tattooing, and permanent cosmetic tattooing schools to follow for student training and meeting the new program requirements. Schools are not permitted to train students on the new curricula until their program has been approved by the Board.

Applicable Regulations

Schools are mandated by 18 VAC 41-20-200 to submit their curricula to the Board for approval. 18 VAC 41-20-210 amended the cosmetology, barber, master barber, dual barber/master barber, nail and waxing curricula in the regulations. The outline included the required courses that align with the respective scopes of practice outlined in the Code of Virginia definitions. The regulatory changes to 18 VAC 41-20-220 updated the mandatory minimum performances students must perform in the cosmetology, barber, master barber, dual barber/master barber, nail and waxing programs. 18 VAC 41-20-20.B.1 is relevant because any student enrolled in a Board approved program before December 1, 2025, is considered to have met the training requirements to qualify for the licensing examination. This applies to the 1,000-hour cosmetology program, the 1,100-hour barber program, the 400-hour master barber program and the 1,500-hour dual barber/master barber program. The guidance document outlines the timeline for

schools to discontinue the prior cosmetology, barber, master barber, dual barber/master barber, nail and waxing training and transition to offering the new training programs beginning December 1, 2025.

Schools are mandated by 18 VAC 41-50-230 to submit their curricula to the Board for approval. 18 VAC 41-50-280 amended the tattooing, permanent cosmetic tattooing, and master permanent cosmetic tattooing curricula in the regulations. The outline included the required courses that align with the respective scopes of practice outlined in the regulations and Code of Virginia definitions. The regulatory changes to 18 VAC 41-50-290 updated the mandatory minimum performances students must perform in the tattooing, permanent cosmetic tattooing, and master permanent cosmetic tattooing programs. 18 VAC 41-50-20.B.1 is relevant because any student enrolled in a Board approved program before January 5, 2026, is considered to have met the training requirements to qualify for the licensing examination. This applies to the 1,000-hour tattooing program, the 200-hour permanent cosmetic tattooing program, and the 200-hour master permanent cosmetic tattooing program. The guidance document outlines the timeline for schools to discontinue the prior tattooing, permanent cosmetic tattooing, and master permanent cosmetic tattooing training and transition to offering the new training programs beginning January 5, 2026.

Consideration of Board Policy

During the Board meeting on February 23, 2026, the Board for Barbers and Cosmetology approved the below guidance document for students completing 1500-hour cosmetology program effective prior to September 1, 2024; the 1000-hour program effective on September 1, 2024; the 1,100-hour barber program; the 400-hour master barber program; and the 1,500-hour dual barber/master barber program. The Board aims to establish protocols for students already enrolled in the above programs and outline school responsibilities in meeting the minimum hour program requirements.

Guidance Document

Implementation of Cosmetology, Barber, Master Barber Dual Barber/Master Barber, Nail and Wax Curricula

Cosmetology schools currently licensed by the Board must meet the new minimum standards for curriculum in 18 VAC 41-20-210.A and E and performances in 18 VAC 41-20-220.D. All cosmetology schools must submit updated school packets, including instructional hours, course syllabus, detailed course outline, and breakdown of hours and performances to the Board no later than March 1, 2026.

Students enrolled in the 1,500-hour cosmetology program prior to September 1, 2024, must complete the program no later than August 31, 2026, in order for the Board to accept this training.

Cosmetology schools approved by the Board to teach the 1,000-hour program effective September 1, 2024, may continue to enroll new students until November 30, 2025. Students taking a board-approved September 1, 2024, minimum 1,000-hour cosmetology program must complete the program no later than December 31, 2026.

Barber schools currently licensed by the Board must meet the new minimum standards for curriculum in 18 VAC 41-20-210.A and B and performances in 18 VAC 41-20-220.A. All barber schools must submit updated school packets, including instructional hours, course syllabus, detailed course outline, and breakdown of hours and performances to the Board no later than March 1, 2026.

Barber schools approved by the Board to teach the 1,100-hour barbering program may continue to enroll new students until November 30, 2025. Students taking the minimum 1,100-hour barber program must complete the program no later than December 31, 2026, in order for the Board to accept this training.

Licensed barber schools with a master barber program currently approved by the Board must meet the new minimum standards for curriculum in 18 VAC 41-20-210.A and C. and performances in 18 VAC 41-20-220.B. All barber schools must submit updated school packets, including instructional hours, course syllabus, detailed course outline, and breakdown of hours and performances to the Board no later than March 1, 2026.

Barber schools with a master barber program approved by the Board to teach the 400-hour master barber program may continue to enroll new students until November 30, 2025. Students taking the minimum 400-hour master barber program must complete the program no later than June 30, 2026, in order for the Board to accept this training.

Licensed barber schools with a dual barber/master barber program currently approved by the Board must meet the new minimum standards for curriculum in 18 VAC 41-20-210.A and D and performances in 18 VAC 41-20-220.C. All barber schools must submit updated school packets, including instructional hours, course syllabus, detailed course outline, and breakdown of hours and performances to the Board no later than March 1, 2026.

Barber schools with a dual barber/master barber program approved by the Board to teach the 1,500-hour dual barber/master barber program may continue to enroll new students until November 30, 2025. Students taking the minimum 1,500-hour program must complete the program no later than December 31, 2026, in order for the Board to accept this training.

Nail schools currently licensed by the Board must meet the new minimum standards for curriculum in 18 VAC 41-20-210.A and F and performances in 18 VAC 41-20-220.E. All nail schools must submit updated school packets, including instructional hours, course syllabus, detailed course outline, and breakdown of hours and performances to the Board no later than March 1, 2026.

Nail schools currently approved by the Board may continue to enroll new students until November 30, 2025. Students enrolled on or before November 30, 2025, must complete the program no later than June 30, 2026.

Wax schools currently approved by the Board must meet the new minimum standards for curriculum in 18 VAC 41-20-210.A and G and performances in 18 VAC 41-20-220.F. All wax schools must submit updated school packets, including instructional hours, course syllabus, detailed course outline, and breakdown of hours and performances to the Board by March 1, 2026.

Wax schools currently approved by the Board may continue to enroll new students until November 30, 2025. Students enrolled on or before November 30, 2025, must complete the program no later than June 30, 2026.

Tattoo schools currently approved by the Board must meet the new minimum standards for curriculum in 18 VAC 41-50-280.B and C and performances in 18 VAC 41-50-290.A. All tattooing schools must submit updated school packets, including instructional hours, course syllabus, detailed course outline, and breakdown of hours and performances to the Board by April 1, 2026.

Tattoo schools currently approved by the Board may continue to enroll new students until January 4, 2026. Students enrolled on or before January 4, 2026, must complete the program no later than December 31, 2026.

Permanent cosmetic tattoo schools currently approved by the Board must meet the new minimum standards for curriculum in 18 VAC 41-50-280.B and D and performances in 18 VAC 41-50-290.C and E. All permanent Cosmetic tattooing schools must submit updated school packets, including instructional hours, course syllabus, detailed course outline, and breakdown of hours and performances to the Board by April 1, 2026.

Permanent cosmetic tattoo schools currently approved by the Board may continue to enroll new students until January 4, 2026. Students enrolled on or before January 4, 2026, must complete the program no later than June 30, 2026.

Master permanent cosmetic tattoo schools currently approved by the Board must meet the new minimum standards for curriculum in 18 VAC 41-50-280.B and E and performances in 18 VAC 41-50-290.D and E. All master permanent cosmetic tattooing schools must submit updated school packets, including instructional hours, course syllabus, detailed course outline, and breakdown of hours and performances to the Board by April 1, 2026.

Master permanent cosmetic tattoo schools currently approved by the Board may continue to enroll new students until January 4, 2026. Students enrolled on or before January 4, 2026, must complete the program no later than June 30, 2026.

The programs for cosmetology and barbering outlined in the table below will no longer be authorized, however schools may continue to train existing students until the program deadline or until the program is completed, whichever date is the earliest.

Type of Program	Curriculum Hours	Deadline: All students must complete the training by the date listed below:
Cosmetology	1,500-hour program; 360 performance requirements (if enrolled prior to September 1, 2024)	August 31, 2026
Cosmetology	1,000-hour program; 367 performance requirements (if enrolled prior to November 30, 2025) *With straight razor shaving and body treatments	December 31, 2026
Barber	1,100-hour program; 370 performance requirements (if enrolled prior to November 30, 2025) *Without minimum hours of instruction requirements	December 31, 2026
Barber schools with a master barber program	400-hour program; 120 performance requirements (if enrolled prior to November 30, 2025) *Without minimum hours of instruction requirements	June 30, 2026
Barber schools with a dual barber/master barber program	1,500-hour program; 490 performance requirements (if enrolled prior to November 30, 2025) *Without minimum hours of instruction requirements	December 31, 2026
Nail	150-hour program; 275 performance requirements (if enrolled prior to November 30, 2025) *Without minimum hours of instruction requirements	June 30, 2026
Waxing	115-hour program; 36 performance requirements (if enrolled prior to November 30, 2025) *Without minimum hours of instruction requirements	June 30, 2026

Tattoo	1,000-hour program; 100 performance requirements (if enrolled prior to January 4, 2026) *Without minimum hours of instruction requirements	December 31, 2026
Permanent Cosmetic Tattoo	200-hour program; 60 performance requirements (if enrolled prior January 4, 2026) *Without minimum hours of instruction requirements	December 31, 2026
Master Permanent Cosmetic Tattoo	200-hour program; 55 performance requirements (if enrolled prior January 4, 2026) *Without minimum hours of instruction requirements	December 31, 2026

SCHEV Certified schools may receive preliminary approval of the new cosmetology, barber, master barber or dual barber/master barber curricula upon submission of the revised syllabus and detailed course outline showing conformance to the Board's regulatory requirements.

Schools may not teach the new cosmetology, barber, master barber, dual barber/master barber, nail and wax curricula until December 1, 2025. Schools may not teach the new tattooing, permanent cosmetic tattooing, and master permanent cosmetic tattooing curricula until January 5, 2026.

Schools may not teach the new minimum hour cosmetology, barber, master barber, dual barber/master barber nail, wax, tattooing, permanent cosmetic tattooing, and master permanent cosmetic tattooing curricula until approved by the Board.

The new program requirements for cosmetology, barber, nail, and waxing schools will become effective on December 1, 2025. These requirements are outlined below. Schools may begin teaching their new board-approved program no earlier than December 1, 2025.

Type of Program	Updated Curriculum Hours and Performances
Cosmetology	1,000-hour program; 365 performance requirements *Without straight razor shaving and body treatments
Barber	750-hour program; 332 performance requirements *With minimum hours of instruction requirements
Barber schools with a master barber program	250-hour program; 100 performance requirements *With minimum hours of instruction requirements

Barber schools with a dual barber/master barber program	1,000-hour program; 432 performance requirements *With minimum hours of instruction requirements
Nail	150-hour program; 255 performance requirements *With minimum hours of instruction requirements
Waxing	115-hour program; 30 performance requirements *With minimum hours of instruction requirements

The new program requirements for tattooing, permanent cosmetic tattooing, and master permanent cosmetic tattooing will become effective on January 5, 2026. These requirements are outlined below. Schools may begin teaching their new board-approved program no earlier than January 5, 2026.

Type of Program	Updated Curriculum Hours and Performances
Tattoo	1,000-hour program; 100 performance requirements *With minimum hours of instruction requirements
Permanent Cosmetic Tattoo	200-hour program; 60 performance requirements *With minimum hours of instruction requirements
Master Permanent Cosmetic Tattoo	200-hour program; 55 performance requirements *With minimum hours of instruction requirements

Schools failing to meet any of the required deadlines or follow other provisions established in this guidance will be out of compliance with the Board's regulations and may face disciplinary action.