



Board for Barbers and Cosmetology

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Effective: September 1, 2024

Cosmetology licensees completing training prior to straight razor requirement

I. Background

According to § 54.1-700, the definition of cosmetology includes the practice of shaving, allowing cosmetologists to perform straight razor shaving within their scope of practice as defined in the Code of Virginia. Prior to September 1, 2024, straight razor shaving was not covered in the curriculum of cosmetology schools and individuals were not required by regulation to receive training in straight razor shaving to qualify for licensure. Any cosmetologist who wanted to perform straight razor shaving prior to September 1, 2024 was required to obtain proper instruction prior to performing the service. Without the proper instruction, a cosmetologist could have faced disciplinary action if they performed the straight razor shaving services incompetently or negligently. During the regulatory process to reduce the cosmetology training hours to 1,000, the Board incorporated straight razor shaving into the cosmetology curriculum to ensure that cosmetologists going forward are competent in this area.

The requirement for straight razor shaving in the cosmetology curriculum will take effect on September 1, 2024. Cosmetologists licensed before September 1, 2024, must currently ensure that they have been appropriately trained and are competent to perform straight razor shaving. To address these issues, on July 8, 2024, the Board for Barbers and Cosmetology established a guidance document for cosmetology licensees who completed their training prior to the Board implementing the straight razor curriculum requirements. The primary objective of the curriculum change was to clarify the prerequisites for performing straight razor shaving and provide cosmetology schools with the option to employ a barber or master barber instructor for training on straight razor shaving within a cosmetology school setting.

II. Applicable Statute

According to § 54.1-700 of the Code of Virginia, the practice of cosmetology includes straight razor shaving. The guidance document specifies the prerequisites that cosmetologists must meet before conducting straight razor shaving. Cosmetologists must ensure competence in this skill before offering the service.

III. Consideration of Board Policy

During the Board meeting on July 8, 2024, the Board for Barbers and Cosmetology approved a guidance document for cosmetology licensees who completed training before the straight razor requirement. This initiative aims to protect the safety and welfare of the public. The guidance document clarifies the criteria for cosmetologists to perform straight razor shaving, particularly for those licensed before it became a curriculum requirement. Cosmetologists must ensure they are competent in straight razor shaving before offering this service to the public.

IV. Guidance Document

Cosmetologist performing straight razor shaving without completing the minimum 1000-hour curricula requirements.

Cosmetologists who obtained their license before September 1, 2024, are eligible to perform straight razor shaving since it falls within the scope of practice, but cosmetologists without formal instruction in straight razor shaving should ensure they have proper instruction prior to performing the service. "Cosmetology" includes, but is not limited to, the following practices: administering cosmetic treatments; manicuring or pedicuring the nails of any person; arranging, dressing, curling, waving, cutting, shaping, singeing, waxing, tweezing, shaving, bleaching, coloring, relaxing, straightening, or similar work, upon human hair, or a wig or hairpiece, by any means, including hands or mechanical or electrical apparatus or appliances." According to 18VAC41-20-280.1, cosmetologists who performs straight razor shaving without the appropriate training may be subject to disciplinary action. No further action is needed for a cosmetologist that became licensed prior to the change in the cosmetology curriculum if the individual does not intend on performing straight razor shaving.

Licensed cosmetology schools may employ licensed and certified barber or master barber instructors to provide training on straight razor shaving on face and neck in a cosmetology school.