



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation

Glenn A. Youngkin
Governor

James B. "Jeb" Wilkinson, Jr.
Director

G. Bryan Slater
Secretary of Labor

MEMORANDUM

TO: Licensed Tattoo Schools

FROM: Kelley Smith
Executive Director

PHONE: 804-367-8590

DATE: December 30, 2025

SUBJECT: Regulatory Changes to Tattoo Curriculum Requirements

The Board for Barbers and Cosmetology has updated the curriculum requirements for tattooing programs. **These new requirements will go into effect on January 5, 2026.** Tattooing schools must submit their updated curriculum documents by **April 1, 2026**. Schools that miss this deadline or fail to meet the new requirements will be considered out of compliance and will face administrative termination. Continuing to operate without an approved program may result in disciplinary action.

The following documents must be submitted to and approved by the Board in order to teach the updated curriculum:

1. A syllabus form (provided by the board)
OR

Updated syllabus complete with:

- Course of study and hours of program
- Textbooks used
- Schedule
 - Days and times classes are held
 - Breaks to be given, as they cannot be counted towards the 1000 hours
 - If the course is full or part time. If one or the other is not offered, this must be specified
 - How long the program will take to complete in weeks
- Online instruction information, if applicable
 - What topics are taught online — keep in mind only theory is allowed
 - What learning platform will be used
 - How long students will have to complete the online instruction
 - How student identity will be verified

2. Course outline curriculum form (provided by the board)

All of the above **MUST** be submitted in order to be approved by the board

The Board has created and included several forms to assist you with providing the necessary information to be approved as quickly as possible. The use of these forms is not mandatory but will assist you with getting approval. If you choose not to use the forms, you must submit the required updated information in your own format. If desired, you can use the Board supplied forms for efficient approval and, at a later date, submit documents that reflect your school branding.

For your reference, the new curriculum requirements and FAQs concerning the updated curriculum are enclosed. The tattooing curriculum changes will also be uploaded to the DPOR website, the Virginia LIS (legislative information system) website, and the Virginia Townhall website.

You may contact the Board office by telephone at (804) 367-8509, or by email at rr-bchopschoolroster@dpor.virginia.gov, with any questions that you may have pertaining to the information provided in this memo or any of the Board's programs.

18VAC41-50-280 Tattooing and permanent cosmetic tattooing school curriculum requirements

C. The outline for tattooing must include the following:

1. Microbiology - **minimum of 100 hours of instruction.**
 - a. Microorganisms, viruses, bacteria, fungus;
 - b. Transmission cycle of infectious diseases; and
 - c. Characteristics of antimicrobial agents.
2. Immunization - **minimum of 50 hours of instruction.**
 - a. Types of immunizations;
 - b. Hepatitis A through G transmission and immunization;
 - c. HIV/AIDS;
 - d. Tetanus, streptococcal, zoonotic, tuberculosis, pneumococcal, and influenza;
 - e. Measles, mumps, and rubella;
 - f. Vaccines and immunization; and
 - g. General preventative measures to be taken to protect the tattooer and client.
3. Sanitation and disinfection - **minimum of 150 hours of instruction.**
 - a. Definition of terms:
 - (1) Sterilization;
 - (2) Disinfection and disinfectant;
 - (3) Sterilizer or sterilant;
 - (4) Antiseptic;
 - (5) Germicide;
 - (6) Decontamination; and
 - (7) Sanitation.;
 - b. The use of steam sterilization equipment and techniques;
 - c. The use of chemical agents, antiseptics, disinfectants, and fumigants;
 - d. The use of sanitation equipment;
 - e. Preservice sanitation procedure; and
 - f. Postservice sanitation procedure.
4. Safety - **minimum of 50 hours of instruction.**
 - a. Proper needle handling and disposal;
 - b. How to avoid overexposure to chemicals;
 - c. The use of Safety Data Sheets;
 - d. Blood spill procedures;
 - e. Equipment and instrument storage; and
 - f. First aid.
5. Bloodborne pathogen standards - **minimum of 50 hours of instruction.**
 - a. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) bloodborne pathogen standards;
 - b. Control plan for bloodborne pathogens;
 - c. Exposure control plan for tattooers;
 - d. Overview of compliance requirements; and
 - e. Disorders and when not to service a client.
6. Professional standards - **minimum of 30 hours of instruction.**
 - a. History of tattooing;
 - b. Ethics;

- c. Recordkeeping:
 - (1) Client health history;
 - (2) Consent forms; and
 - (3) HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 Privacy Rule) Standards;
- d. Preparing station, making appointments, parlor ethics:
 - (1) Maintaining professional appearance, notifying clients of schedule changes; and
 - (2) Promoting services of the parlor and establishing clientele;
- e. Parlor management:
 - (1) Licensing requirements; and
 - (2) Taxes; and
- f. Supplies:
 - (1) Usages;
 - (2) Ordering; and
 - (3) Storage.

7. Tattooing - minimum of 500 hours of instruction. This section is to include a minimum of 100 performances

- a. Client consultation;
- b. Client health form;
- c. Client disclosure form;
- d. Client preparation;
- e. Sanitation and safety precautions;
- f. Implement selection and use;
- g. Proper use of equipment;
- h. Material selection and use;
- i. Needles:
 - (1) Groupings;
 - (2) Properties; and
 - (3) Making;
- j. Ink;
- k. Machine:
 - (1) Construction;
 - (2) Adjustment; and
 - (3) Power supply;
- l. Art, drawing; and
- m. Portfolio.

8. Anatomy - minimum of 60 hours of instruction.

- a. Understanding of skin; and
- b. Parts and functions of skin.

9. Virginia tattooing laws and regulations - minimum of 10 hours of instruction.



Tattooing & Permanent Cosmetic Tattooing Curriculum Update - Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What exactly is changing?

A: None of the curriculum *topics* are changing. However, each topic is now assigned a specific number of hours within the curriculum. Same topics, new hours of instruction. For permanent cosmetic tattooers, the performance requirements have increased and are now completely defined.

Q: When do these changes become effective?

A: January 5th, 2026

Q: I already have students enrolled, how will these changes affect them?

A: Students enrolled in one of the affected programs before January 5th, 2026, will have to either:

1. Finish the program they started:
 - a. Students must complete the tattoo program by December 31st, 2026
 - b. Students must complete the permanent cosmetic tattoo program by June 30th, 2026.
 - c. Students must complete the master permanent cosmetic tattoo program by June 30th, 2026.

OR

2. Transfer to the new program

Whether transferring will benefit the student or not must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For example, a student who is nearly done with their program would not benefit from a transfer compared to someone who just started, or who may need to take a leave of absence. If a student can reasonably finish by the deadline, they should be fine without a transfer.

Q: Will graduates trained under the requirements effective before January 5th, 2026, still be eligible to sit for the state board exams?

A: Yes, as long as the program they completed was board-approved and in effect when they started it.

Q: What happens if a school does not have the new program approved by the effective date?

A: Schools without a new program approved by the board will not be able to enroll new students after the effective date. This is because after the effective date, the old programs will not exist.

Q: I am a school, what do I need to do?

A: New documentation will be required. All schools will be receiving an update packet via USPS Certified Mail and email containing information about the update, as well as a complete list of what to submit.

Find that complete list below:

- A syllabus form (provided by the board)
OR
Updated syllabus complete with:
 - Course of study and hours of program
 - Textbooks used
 - Schedule
 - Days and times classes are held
 - Breaks to be given, as they cannot be counted towards the 1000 hours
 - If the course is full or part time. If one or the other is not offered, this must be specified
 - How long the program will take to complete in weeks
 - Online instruction information, if applicable
 - What topics are taught online — keep in mind only theory is allowed
 - What learning platform will be used
 - How long students will have to complete the online instruction
 - How student identity will be verified
- Course outline curriculum form (provided by the board)
- For permanent cosmetic tattoo and master permanent cosmetic tattoo programs ONLY: A performance evaluation document (sample form provided by the board)
- All of the above MUST be submitted in order to be approved by the board

Q: When do I need to submit the new required documentation?

A: New documentation must be submitted to the Board by April 1, 2026. Schools that miss this deadline or fail to meet the new requirements will be considered out of compliance and will face administrative termination. Continuing to operate without an approved program may result in disciplinary action.

Q: When may I begin teaching the new curriculum?

A: Schools may begin offering the new curricula once their required documents have been approved by the Board.

Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology
Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400
Richmond, Virginia 23233-1485
(804) 367-8509

Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology

www.dpor.virginia.gov

barbercosmo@dpor.virginia.gov



School Instructional Hours and Program Length
No Fee Required

This form is not mandatory, however, it will assist the Board in processing your application in a timely manner.

School Instructional Hours and Program Length

Instructional hours for full-time students (if applicable):

Please specify times as A.M. or P.M.

Monday: _____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break

Total instructional hours per day: _____

Tuesday: _____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break

Total instructional hours per day: _____

Wednesday: _____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break

Total instructional hours per day: _____

Thursday: _____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break

Total instructional hours per day: _____

Friday: _____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break

Total instructional hours per day: _____

Saturday: _____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break

Total instructional hours per day: _____

Sunday: _____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break

Total instructional hours per day: _____

Total instructional hours per week: _____

Total program hours divided by the total instructional hours for the week: _____ (this is the program length)

Approximate Program Length: _____ number of weeks

Instructional hours for part-time students (if applicable):

Please specify times as A.M. or P.M.

Monday:	_____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break	Total instructional hours per day: _____
Tuesday:	_____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break	Total instructional hours per day: _____
Wednesday:	_____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break	Total instructional hours per day: _____
Thursday:	_____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break	Total instructional hours per day: _____
Friday:	_____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break	Total instructional hours per day: _____
Saturday:	_____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break	Total instructional hours per day: _____
Sunday:	_____ to _____ – (minus) _____ Break	Total instructional hours per day: _____
		Total instructional hours per week: _____

Total program hours divided by the total instructional hours for the week: _____ (this is the program length)

Approximate Program Length: _____ number of weeks

Instructors may only teach one class at a given time. If you only have one instructor, you cannot have concurrent classes on your schedule.

Please list the holidays in which the school is closed

I certify that the information above is true and accurate, and the school will abide by the contents indicated above.

Responsible manager signature: _____ Date: _____

Responsible manager signature: _____ Date: _____

Responsible manager signature: _____ Date: _____

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Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology
Tattoo Curriculum
No Fee Required

This form is not mandatory, however, it will assist the Board in processing your application in a timely manner.

Course Syllabus

Description: The Tattoo course is _____ (*list the course hours here*) clock hours and meets the requirements of "The Virginia State Board for Barbers and Cosmetology."

This program is designed to equip you with the knowledge and skills necessary to become a licensed tattooer in Virginia. Through a combination of theory and hands-on practical, you will gain experience in safe practice of the art of tattooing.

Course Objectives:

- Master hygiene, sterilization, and bloodborne pathogen safety skills.
- Develop skills in tattoo design, equipment handling, and application techniques.
- Practice client consultation, health assessments, and consent procedures.
- Understand skin anatomy and its role in tattooing
- Apply professional standards in ethics, recordkeeping, and parlor management.
- Prepare for and successfully pass the state licensing exam.

Would your school like to ask for approval to teach certain sections of the course online, along with the classroom request? Schools may offer non-traditional or 'online' instruction on all theory topics in their approved curriculum. Check one: Yes* or No

*If you answered "Yes," you must adhere to the procedures outlined in 18VAC41-50-230.B

Textbooks & Materials:

A required textbook, "[_____](#) (*Textbook Title*)" will be used throughout the program. A list of additional recommended resources and any required supplies will be provided.

Grading Policy:

Your grade will be determined by a combination of factors, including:

- Class participation and attendance
- Performance in practical labs
- Written assignments and quizzes
- Final exams

Grading Scale:

A= _____ **to** _____ (list number grades)

B= _____ **to** _____ (list number grades)

C= _____ **to** _____ (list number grades)

D= _____ **to** _____ (list number grades)

F= _____ **to** _____ (list number grades)

Instructor:

List each **Instructor** who is currently employed by the school, their instructor license number, and the school license number. School license numbers are used to identify which instructors are at which locations. Instructors not given below will be removed from the license.

Instructor's Full Legal Name	Instructor License #	School License #	Signature*

*** As part of our commitment to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of the public, the board may reach out to verify employment. Please advise instructors that they may receive a call/email from the board.**

Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance is crucial to your success in the program. A detailed attendance policy will be outlined in the program handbook or contract.

Academic Integrity:

The program upholds a strict policy on academic integrity. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. More details will be provided by your school.

I certify that the information above is true and accurate, and the school will abide by the contents indicated above. I am aware that submitting false information, omitting pertinent or material information, or failing to update or provide supplemental information as requested in connection with this application will delay processing and may lead to license revocation or denial of license. I have read, understand, and complied with all the laws of Virginia related to this profession under the provisions of Title 54.1, Chapter 7, of the Code of Virginia and the Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology Regulations.

Responsible Manager Signature _____ **Date** _____

Responsible Manager Signature _____ **Date** _____

Responsible Manager Signature _____ **Date** _____

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Department of Professional and Occupational
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Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology
Tattoo Curriculum Form
No Fee Required
This form is not mandatory

Detailed Course Outline

According to Section 18VAC41-50-280 of the Tattoo Regulations, the curriculum of a licensed tattoo school must cover the minimum required topics and hours of instruction. 18VAC41-50-280.C outlines the minimum hours of instruction for the tattoo curriculum. Schools that provide additional hours of instruction and/or performances must specify the extra hours and topics for each section in the blank spaces provided below.

Curriculum Requirements

1. Microbiology:

- a. Microorganisms, viruses, bacteria, fungus;
- b. Transmission cycle of infectious diseases; and
- c. Characteristics of antimicrobial agents.

If you are adding additional topics, list them below:

Check this box if you are **ONLY** offering
the minimum 100 hours of instruction.

Check this box if you are offering **MORE**
than the minimum hours of instruction. List
the number of hours here _____.

2. Immunization:

- a. Types of immunizations;
- b. Hepatitis A through G transmission and immunization;
- c. HIV/AIDS;
- d. Tetanus, streptococcal, zoonotic, tuberculosis,
pneumococcal, and influenza;
- e. Measles, mumps, and rubella;
- f. Vaccines and immunization; and
- g. General preventative measures to be taken to protect
the tattooer and client.

If you are adding additional topics, list them below:

Check this box if you are **ONLY** offering
the minimum 50 hours of instruction.

Check this box if you are offering **MORE**
than the minimum hours of instruction. List
the number of hours here _____.

3. Sanitation and disinfection.

a. Definition of terms:

- (1) Sterilization;
- (2) Disinfection and disinfectant;
- (3) Sterilizer or sterilant;
- (4) Antiseptic;
- (5) Germicide;
- (6) Decontamination; and
- (7) Sanitation.

b. The use of steam sterilization equipment and techniques;

c. The use of chemical agents, antiseptics, disinfectants, and fumigants;

d. The use of sanitation equipment;

e. Preservice sanitation procedure; and

f. Postservice sanitation procedure.

If you are adding additional topics, list them below:

Check this box if you are **ONLY** offering the minimum 150 hours of instruction.

Check this box if you are offering **MORE** than the minimum hours of instruction. List the number of hours here _____.

4. Safety:

a. Proper needle handling and disposal;

b. How to avoid overexposure to chemicals;

c. The use of Safety Data Sheets;

d. Blood spill procedures;

e. Equipment and instrument storage; and

f. First aid.

If you are adding additional topics, list them below:

Check this box if you are **ONLY** offering the minimum 50 hours of instruction.

Check this box if you are offering **MORE** than the minimum hours of instruction. List the number of hours here _____.

5. Bloodborne pathogen standards:

a. OSHA and CDC bloodborne pathogen standards;

b. Control plan for bloodborne pathogens;

c. Exposure control plan for tattooers;

d. Overview of compliance requirements; and

e. Disorders and when not to service a client.

If you are adding additional topics, list them below:

Check this box if you are **ONLY** offering the minimum 50 hours of instruction.

Check this box if you are offering **MORE** than the minimum hours of instruction. List the number of hours here _____.

6. Professional standards.

- a. History of tattooing;
- b. Ethics;
- c. Recordkeeping:
 - (1) Client health history;
 - (2) Consent forms; and
 - (3) HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 Privacy Rule) Standards;
- d. Preparing station, making appointments, parlor ethics:
 - (1) Maintaining professional appearance, notifying clients of schedule changes; and
 - (2) Promoting services of the parlor and establishing clientele;
- e. Parlor management.
 - (1) Licensing requirements; and
 - (2) Taxes; and
- f. Supplies.
 - (1) Usages;
 - (2) Ordering; and
 - (3) Storage.

If you are adding additional topics, list them below:

Check this box if you are **ONLY** offering the minimum 30 hours of instruction.

Check this box if you are offering **MORE** than the minimum hours of instruction. List the number of hours here _____.

7. Tattooing. **This section is to include a minimum of 100 performances**

- a. Client consultation;
- b. Client health form;
- c. Client disclosure form;
- d. Client preparation;
- e. Sanitation and safety precautions;
- f. Implement selection and use;
- g. Proper use of equipment;
- h. Material selection and use;
- i. Needles:
 - (1) Groupings;
 - (2) Properties; and
 - (3) Making;
- j. Ink;
- k. Machine:
 - (1) Construction;
 - (2) Adjustment; and
 - (3) Power supply;
- l. Art, drawing; and
- m. Portfolio.

Check this box if you are **ONLY** offering the minimum 500 hours of instruction.

Check this box if you are **ONLY** offering the minimum 100 performances.

Check this box if you are offering **MORE** than the minimum hours of instruction. List the number of hours here _____.

Check this box if you are offering **MORE** than the minimum number of performances. List the number of performances here _____.

If you are adding additional topics, list them below:

8. Anatomy.

- a. Understanding of skin; and
- b. Parts and functions of skin.

If you are adding additional topics, list them below:

Check this box if you are **ONLY** offering the minimum 60 hours of instruction.

Check this box if you are offering **MORE** than the minimum hours of instruction. List the number of hours here _____.

9. Virginia tattooing laws and regulations.

If you are adding additional topics, list them below:

Check this box if you are **ONLY** offering the minimum 10 hours of instruction.

Check this box if you are offering **MORE** than the minimum hours of instruction. List the number of hours here _____.

Schools must adhere to the above curriculum and performance standards. Failure to comply with the information provided on this form may result in license revocation or suspension, denial of application, or imposition of a monetary penalty.

I certify that the information above is true and accurate, and the school's detailed course outline contains the information indicated above. I am aware that submitting false information or omitting pertinent or material information in connection with this application will delay processing and may lead to license revocation or denial of license. I have read, understand, and complied with all the laws of Virginia related to this profession under the provisions of Title 54.1, Chapter 7, of the Code of Virginia and the Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology Regulations.

Responsible Manager Signature _____ Date _____

Responsible Manager Signature _____ Date _____

Responsible Manager Signature _____ Date _____

School Name _____

School License Number(s): _____



PRACTICAL PERFORMANCE LOG

Add school name here: _____

Tattoo Performances (100)	Tattoo Performances (100)(cont'd)	Tattoo Performances (100)(cont'd)	Tattoo Performances (100)(cont'd)	Tattoo Performances (100)(cont'd)

Instructor signature: _____ Date: _____

Student signature: _____ Date: _____