



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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HAIRDRESSER LICENSURE

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You asked for information regarding Connecticut's hairdresser and cosmetologist licensure, including (1) licensing requirements, (2) requirements for transferring licenses from other jurisdictions, and (3) bills considered by the legislature since 2003 regarding hairdresser apprenticeship programs or similar initiatives.

SUMMARY

By law, hairdressers and cosmeticians must be licensed by the Department of Public Health (DPH) ([CGS Chapter 387](#)). Hairdressers and cosmeticians are one licensure category. In general, initial licensure applicants must have successfully completed (1) eighth grade or passed an equivalency exam and (2) at least 1,500 hours of study in an approved hairdressing and cosmetology school. They must also pass a DPH-prescribed examination and pay a \$100 fee.

The law generally allows a person licensed in another state or U.S. territory or possession to become licensed by endorsement (i.e., without examination) if the other jurisdiction required an exam, education, and training for a license. The fee for such applicants is \$50. Applicants trained in other countries must show that they have similar training to Connecticut's requirements and pass an exam.

We did not find any bills considered by the legislature since 2003 regarding hairdresser apprenticeship programs. ([Special Act 13-12](#) requires the Connecticut State Apprenticeship Council, in consultation with the DPH commissioner, to study the feasibility of establishing a barbershop apprenticeship program within the Labor Department.) There have been numerous bills affecting hairdressers considered since 2003, including bills in 2003, 2004, and 2010 concerning hairdressers who are licensed or trained outside of Connecticut. Each of these was enacted into law; we summarize the relevant provisions below.

HAIRDRESSER LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

Below, we summarize the licensure requirements for hairdressers and cosmeticians. More information is available on DPH's [website](#).

Definition

The law defines “hairdressing and cosmetology” as, for pay:

1. dressing, arranging, curling, waving, weaving, cutting, singeing, bleaching, and coloring the hair and treating the scalp of any person;
2. massaging, cleansing, stimulating, manipulating, exercising, or beautifying with the use of the hands, appliances, cosmetic preparations, antiseptics, tonics, lotions, creams, powders, oils, or clays; and
3. doing similar work on the face, neck, and arms, and manicuring fingernails.

But nothing in this definition prohibits an unlicensed person from performing facials, eyebrow arching, shampooing, manicuring the fingernails, braiding hair, or for cosmetic purposes only, trimming, filing, and painting healthy toenails, excluding cutting nail beds, corns, and calluses or other medical treatment involving the foot or ankle ([CGS § 20-250](#)).

Licensure Requirements

By law, hairdressers and cosmeticians must be licensed by DPH. (While some provisions of the law refer to the profession as “registered hairdresser and cosmetician,” these individuals must be licensed.)

In order to obtain a license, an applicant must:

1. have graduated eighth grade or its equivalent (DPH's [website](#) explains how a person can show equivalency, including passing the General Educational Development (GED) test or other specified examinations);
2. have successfully completed at least 1,500 hours of study in a hairdressing and cosmetology school meeting specified requirements, under the supervision of the State Board of Education, or if trained outside of the state, in a school with equivalent requirements to those of a Connecticut school;
3. pass a written examination, prescribed by DPH with the advice and assistance of the Examining Board for Barbers, Hairdressers, and Cosmeticians; and
4. pay a \$100 fee ([CGS § 20-252, 20-253](#)).

The application form is available [online](#).

Licenses must be renewed every two years for the same fee ([CGS § 20-253](#)).

Licensure By Endorsement, Foreign-Trained Applicants, and Guest Permits

A person licensed as a hairdresser and cosmetician or to perform similar services in another state, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. commonwealth or territory can be licensed without examination, if the other jurisdiction required education, training, and an exam for licensure. The applicant must pay a \$50 fee. This option is not available to an applicant against whom professional disciplinary action is pending or who is the subject of an unresolved complaint ([CGS § 20-254](#)).

According to DPH's [website](#), foreign trained applicants may qualify for licensure if they meet the requirements for licensure by examination or by endorsement. According to a representative of DPH's licensing division, an applicant licensed in another country would have to provide information verifying his or her training or education; if it was determined to be inadequate compared to Connecticut's requirements, the applicant would need to take additional training or education. The applicant must also complete a Connecticut exam.

The law also allows someone licensed by another state, the District of Columbia, a U.S. territory, or another country to obtain a temporary guest permit to work at a hairdressing or cosmetology educational show or demonstration limited to Connecticut licensees. The permit is valid for the duration of the show or demonstration and cannot exceed one week. The permit fee is \$25 ([CGS § 20-255a](#)).

Other Provisions; Disciplinary Action and Penalties

The hairdresser and cosmetician law contains provisions on other matters, such as license renewal by armed forces members ([CGS § 20-256](#)); inspections of hairdressing shops ([CGS § 20-258](#)); and approval of hairdressing and cosmetology schools ([CGS § 20-262](#)). (PA [13-208](#) (§ 64) adds to the requirements for such schools.)

Anyone who practices without a license, or violates other provisions of the hairdresser and cosmetician law for which no other penalty is provided, is subject to a \$100 fine for a first offense. A subsequent offense is a class D misdemeanor, punishable by up to 30 days in prison, a fine of up to \$250, or both ([CGS § 20-265](#)).

DPH can revoke the license of a person convicted of violating any provision of the hairdresser and cosmetician law. The department can also take its full range of disciplinary action against a licensee for (1) fraud or deception in obtaining a license; (2) drug or alcohol abuse; (3) fraud or material deception in professional services or activities; (4) physical, emotional, or mental illness or loss of motor skill; and (5) illegal, incompetent, or negligent conduct in professional activities. DPH must give notice and an opportunity for a hearing before revoking or suspending a license ([CGS § 20-263](#)).

BILLS CONCERNING HAIRDRESSERS LICENSED OR TRAINED OUT-OF-STATE

There were three bills introduced since 2003 concerning hairdressers licensed or trained out-of-state; all three were enacted into law. In 2003, proposed bill [HB 6359](#) allowed cosmeticians licensed in a U.S. commonwealth to be licensed without examination. The bill was drafted as a committee bill and enacted into law as [PA 03-32](#). The act allowed currently practicing hairdressers and cosmeticians licensed in any U.S. commonwealth or territory to obtain a Connecticut license without taking the state's licensing exam if the commonwealth or territory (1) had licensing requirements at least equivalent to Connecticut's and (2) provided reciprocal privileges to Connecticut licensees.

In 2004, [PA 04-221](#) (SB 569) changed the requirements for hairdressers and cosmeticians licensed out-of-state seeking licensure by endorsement. If the test the applicant took in the other jurisdiction was not in English, the act required him or her to pass an English proficiency exam DPH prescribed. It allowed applicants who trained in a jurisdiction that required fewer than the 1,500 hours that Connecticut requires to substitute up to 500 hours of licensed work.

The act also removed requirements that (1) a licensure by endorsement applicant be currently practicing and competent and (2) the other jurisdiction extend licensure by endorsement to Connecticut hairdressers and cosmeticians.

The act specified that, for applicants who were trained out-of-state and seeking licensure by examination, the school's requirements had to at least equal those required by Connecticut schools. It repealed a provision that granted license applicants who trained in out-of-state schools equivalent to Connecticut's credit for that training and for their licensed work.

In 2010, SB 429 was enacted into law as [PA 10-117](#). The act removed the requirement that applicants currently licensed as a hairdresser and cosmetician in another state, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. commonwealth or territory complete at least 1,500 hours of formal education and training in order to obtain a Connecticut license. It instead required these applicants to have successfully completed a hairdressing and cosmetician education and training program. It retained the existing requirement that applicants also successfully pass an examination in the jurisdiction in which they are currently licensed.

LINKS

DPH, Hairdresser Licensure (last visited August 13, 2013):
http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3121&q=389338&dphNav_GID=1821

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