

**Chapter 18.16 RCW**  
**COSMETOLOGISTS, HAIR DESIGNERS, BARBERS, MANICURISTS, AND ESTHETICIANS**  
(Formerly: Cosmetologists, barbers, and manicurists)

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**RCW 18.16.010 Intent.** The legislature recognizes that the practices of cosmetology, hair design, barbering, manicuring, and esthetics involve the use of tools and chemicals which may be dangerous when mixed or applied improperly, and therefore finds it necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare to regulate those practices in this state. [2015 c 62 s 13; 2002 c 111 s 1; 1984 c 208 s 1.]

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** "This act takes effect June 1, 2003."  
[2002 c 111 s 18.]

**RCW 18.16.020 Definitions.** As used in this chapter, the following terms have the meanings indicated unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

(1) "Apprentice" means a person who is engaged in a state-approved apprenticeship program and who must receive a wage or compensation while engaged in the program.

(2) "Apprentice monthly report" means the apprentice record of daily activities and the number of hours completed in each course of a curriculum that is prepared monthly by the approved apprenticeship program and provided to the apprentice, audited annually by the department, and kept on file by the approved apprenticeship program for three years.

(3) "Apprentice trainer" means a person who gives training to an apprentice in an approved apprenticeship program and who is approved under RCW 18.16.280.

(4) "Apprenticeship program" means a state-approved apprenticeship program pursuant to chapter 49.04 RCW and approved under RCW 18.16.280 for the training of cosmetology, hair design, barbering, esthetics, master esthetics, and manicuring.

(5) "Apprenticeship training committee" means a committee approved by the Washington apprenticeship and training council established in chapter 49.04 RCW.

(6) "Approved apprenticeship shop" means a salon/shop that has been approved under RCW 18.16.280 and chapter 49.04 RCW to participate in an apprenticeship program.

(7) "Approved security" means surety bond.

(8) "Barber" means a person licensed under this chapter to engage in the practice of barbering.

(9) "Board" means the cosmetology, hair design, barbering, esthetics, and manicuring advisory board.

(10) "Cosmetologist" means a person licensed under this chapter to engage in the practice of cosmetology.

(11) "Crossover training" means training approved by the director as training hours that may be credited to current licensees for similar training received in another profession licensed under this chapter.

(12) "Curriculum" means the courses of study taught at a school, online training by a school, in an approved apprenticeship program established by the Washington state apprenticeship and training council and conducted in an approved salon/shop, or online training by an approved apprenticeship program, set by rule under this chapter, and approved by the department. After consulting with the board, the director may set by rule a percentage of hours in a curriculum, up to a maximum of ten percent, that could include hours a student receives while training in a salon/shop under a contract approved by the department. Each curriculum must include at least the following required hours:

(a) School curriculum:

(i) Cosmetologist, one thousand six hundred hours;

(ii) Hair design, one thousand four hundred hours;

(iii) Barber, one thousand hours;

(iv) Manicurist, six hundred hours;

- (v) Esthetician, seven hundred fifty hours;
- (vi) Master esthetician either:
  - (A) One thousand two hundred hours; or
  - (B) Esthetician licensure plus four hundred fifty hours of training;
- (vi) [(vii)] Instructor-trainee, five hundred hours, except that an instructor-trainee may submit documentation that provides evidence of experience as a licensed cosmetologist, hair designer, barber, manicurist, esthetician, or master esthetician for competency evaluation toward credit of not more than three hundred hours of instructor-training.
  - (b) Apprentice training curriculum:
    - (i) Cosmetologist, two thousand hours;
    - (ii) Hair design, one thousand seven hundred fifty hours;
    - (iii) Barber, one thousand two hundred hours;
    - (iv) Manicurist, eight hundred hours;
    - (v) Esthetician, eight hundred hours;
    - (vi) Master esthetician, one thousand four hundred hours.
- (13) "Department" means the department of licensing.
- (14) "Director" means the director of the department of licensing or the director's designee.
- (15) "Esthetician" means a person licensed under this chapter to engage in the practice of esthetics.
- (16) "Hair design" means the practice of arranging, dressing, cutting, trimming, styling, shampooing, permanent waving, chemical relaxing, straightening, curling, bleaching, lightening, coloring, mustache and beard design, and superficial skin stimulation of the scalp.
- (17) "Hair designer" means a person licensed under this chapter to engage in the practice of hair design.
- (18) "Individual license" means a cosmetology, hair design, barber, manicurist, esthetician, master esthetician, or instructor license issued under this chapter.
- (19) "Instructor" means a person who gives instruction in a school, or who provides classroom theory training to apprentices in locations other than in a school, in a curriculum in which he or she holds a license under this chapter, has completed at least five hundred hours of instruction in teaching techniques and lesson planning in a school, or who has documented experience as an instructor for more than five hundred hours in another state in the curriculum of study, and has passed a licensing examination approved or administered by the director. An applicant who holds a degree in education from an accredited postsecondary institution shall upon application be licensed as an instructor to give instruction in a school, or to provide classroom theory training to apprentices in locations other than in a school, in a curriculum in which he or she holds a license under this chapter. An applicant who holds an instructional credential from an accredited community or technical college and who has passed a licensing examination approved or administered by the director shall upon application be licensed as an instructor to give instruction in a school, or to provide classroom theory training to apprentices in locations other than in a school, in a curriculum in which he or she holds a license under this chapter. To be approved as an "instructor" in an approved apprenticeship program, the instructor must be a competent instructor as defined in rules adopted under chapter 49.04 RCW.

(20) "Instructor-trainee" means a person who is currently licensed in this state as a cosmetologist, hair designer, barber, manicurist, esthetician, or master esthetician, and is enrolled in an instructor-trainee curriculum in a school licensed under this chapter.

(21) "Location license" means a license issued under this chapter for a salon/shop, school, personal services, or mobile unit.

(22) "Manicurist" means a person licensed under this chapter to engage in the practice of manicuring.

(23) "Master esthetician" means a person licensed under this chapter to engage in the practice of master esthetics.

(24) "Mobile unit" is a location license under this chapter where the practice of cosmetology, barbering, esthetics, master esthetics, or manicuring is conducted in a mobile structure. Mobile units must conform to the health and safety standards set by rule under this chapter.

(25) "Online training" means theory training provided online, by a school licensed under this chapter or an approved apprenticeship program established by the Washington state apprenticeship and training council, in the areas of cosmetology, hair design, master esthetics, manicuring, barbering, esthetics, and instructor-training.

(26) "Person" means any individual, partnership, professional service corporation, joint stock association, joint venture, or any other entity authorized to do business in this state.

(27) "Personal services" means a location licensed under this chapter where the practice of cosmetology, hair design, barbering, manicuring, esthetics, or master esthetics is performed for clients in the client's home, office, or other location that is convenient for the client.

(28) "Practice of barbering" means the cutting, trimming, arranging, dressing, curling, shampooing, shaving, and mustache and beard design of the hair of the face, neck, and scalp.

(29) "Practice of cosmetology" means arranging, dressing, cutting, trimming, styling, shampooing, permanent waving, chemical relaxing, straightening, curling, bleaching, lightening, coloring, waxing, tweezing, shaving, and mustache and beard design of the hair of the face, neck, and scalp; temporary removal of superfluous hair by use of depilatories, waxing, or tweezing; manicuring and pedicuring, limited to cleaning, shaping, polishing, decorating, and caring for and treatment of the cuticles and nails of the hands and feet, excluding the application and removal of sculptured or otherwise artificial nails; esthetics limited to toning the skin of the scalp, stimulating the skin of the body by the use of preparations, tonics, lotions, or creams; and tinting eyelashes and eyebrows.

(30) "Practice of esthetics" means the care of the skin for compensation by application, use of preparations, antiseptics, tonics, essential oils, exfoliants, superficial and light peels, or by any device, except laser, or equipment, electrical or otherwise, or by wraps, compresses, cleansing, conditioning, stimulation, superficial skin stimulation, pore extraction, or product application and removal; temporary removal of superfluous hair by means of lotions, creams, appliance, waxing, threading, tweezing, or depilatories, including chemical means; and application of product to the eyelashes and eyebrows, including extensions, design and treatment, tinting and lightening of the hair, excluding the scalp. Under no circumstances does the practice of esthetics include the administration of injections.

(31) "Practice of manicuring" means the cleaning, shaping, polishing, decorating, and caring for and treatment of the cuticles and the nails of the hands or feet, and the application and removal of sculptured or otherwise artificial nails by hand or with mechanical or electrical apparatus or appliances.

(32) "Practice of master esthetics" means the care of the skin for compensation including all of the methods allowed in the definition of the practice of esthetics. It also includes the performance of medium depth peels and the use of medical devices for care of the skin and permanent hair reduction. The medical devices include, but are not limited to, lasers, light, radio frequency, plasma, intense pulsed light, and ultrasound. The use of a medical device must comply with state law and rules, including any laws or rules that require delegation or supervision by a licensed health professional acting within the scope of practice of that health profession.

(33) "Salon/shop" means any building, structure, or any part thereof, other than a school, where the commercial practice of cosmetology, barbering, hair design, esthetics, master esthetics, or manicuring is conducted; provided that any person, except employees of a salon/shop, who operates from a salon/shop is required to meet all salon/shop licensing requirements and may participate in the apprenticeship program when certified as established by the Washington state apprenticeship and training council established in chapter 49.04 RCW.

(34) "School" means any establishment that offers curriculum of instruction in the practice of cosmetology, hair design, barbering, esthetics, master esthetics, manicuring, or instructor-trainee to students and is licensed under this chapter.

(35) "Student" means a person sixteen years of age or older who is enrolled in a school licensed under this chapter and receives instruction in any of the curricula of cosmetology, barbering, hair design, esthetics, master esthetics, manicuring, or instructor-training with or without tuition, fee, or cost, and who does not receive any wage or commission.

(36) "Student monthly report" means the student record of daily activities and the number of hours completed in each course of a curriculum that is prepared monthly by the school and provided to the student, audited annually by the department, and kept on file by the school for three years. [2015 c 62 s 1. Prior: 2013 c 187 s 1; 2008 c 20 s 1; 2003 c 400 s 2; 2002 c 111 s 2; 1991 c 324 s 1; 1984 c 208 s 2.]

**Effective date—2003 c 400:** See note following RCW 18.16.280.

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**RCW 18.16.030 Director—Powers and duties.** In addition to any other duties imposed by law, including RCW 18.235.030 and 18.235.040, the director shall have the following powers and duties:

- (1) To set all license, examination, and renewal fees in accordance with RCW 43.24.086;
- (2) To adopt rules necessary to implement this chapter;
- (3) To prepare and administer or approve the preparation and administration of licensing examinations;

(4) To establish minimum safety and sanitation standards for schools, instructors, cosmetologists, barbers, hair designers, manicurists, estheticians, master estheticians, salons/shops, personal services, and mobile units;

(5) To establish curricula for the training of students and apprentices under this chapter;

(6) To maintain the official department record of applicants and licensees;

(7) To establish by rule the procedures for an appeal of an examination failure;

(8) To set license expiration dates and renewal periods for all licenses consistent with this chapter; and

(9) To make information available to the department of revenue to assist in collecting taxes from persons required to be licensed under this chapter. [2019 c 442 s 7; 2015 c 62 s 2; 2013 c 187 s 2; 2008 c 20 s 2; 2004 c 51 s 7. Prior: 2002 c 111 s 3; 2002 c 86 s 213; 1991 c 324 s 2; 1984 c 208 s 7.]

**Notice of chapter 51, Laws of 2004—Effective date—2004 c 51:** See notes following RCW 18.16.060.

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**Effective dates—2002 c 86:** See note following RCW 18.08.340.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2002 c 86:** See RCW 18.235.902 and 18.235.903.

**RCW 18.16.050 Advisory board—Members—Compensation.** (1) There is created a state cosmetology, hair design, barbering, esthetics, and manicuring advisory board consisting of a maximum of ten members appointed by the director. These members of the board shall include: A representative of private schools licensed under this chapter; a representative from an approved apprenticeship program conducted in an approved salon/shop; a representative of public vocational technical schools licensed under this chapter; a consumer who is unaffiliated with the cosmetology, hair design, barbering, esthetics, master esthetics, or manicuring industry; and six members who are currently practicing licensees who have been engaged in the practice of manicuring, esthetics, master esthetics, barbering, hair design, or cosmetology for at least three years. Members shall serve a term of three years. Any board member may be removed for just cause. The director may appoint a new member to fill any vacancy on the board for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(2) Board members shall be entitled to compensation pursuant to RCW 43.03.240 for each day spent conducting official business and to reimbursement for travel expenses as provided by RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

(3) The board may seek the advice and input of officials from the following state agencies: (a) The workforce training and education coordinating board; (b) the employment security department; (c) the department of labor and industries; (d) the department of health; (e) the department of licensing; and (f) the department of revenue. [2015 c 62 s 3; 2013 c 187 s 3; 2008 c 20 s 3; 2002 c 111 s 4. Prior: 1998 c

245 s 5; 1998 c 20 s 1; 1997 c 179 s 1; 1995 c 269 s 402; 1991 c 324 s 3; 1984 c 208 s 9.]

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**Findings—1995 c 269:** "The legislature finds that the economic opportunities for cosmetologists, barbers, estheticians, and manicurists have deteriorated in this state as a result of the lack of skilled practitioners, inadequate licensing controls, and inadequate enforcement of health standards. To increase the opportunities for individuals to earn viable incomes in these professions and to protect the general health of the public, the state cosmetology, barbering, esthetics, and manicuring advisory board should be reconstituted and given a new charge to develop appropriate responses to this situation, including legislative proposals." [1995 c 269 s 401.]

**Effective date—1995 c 269:** "Sections 101, 201, 302, 303, 401, 402, 501 through 505, 601, 701, 801, 901, 1001, 1101, 1201 through 1203, 1301, 1302, 1401 through 1407, 1501, 1601, 1701, 1801, 1901, 1902, 2001, 2101, 2102, 2201 through 2204, 2301, 2302, 2401, 2501, 2601 through 2608, 2701, 2801 through 2804, 2901 through 2909, 3001, 3101, 3201, 3301, 3401, and 3501 of this act are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect July 1, 1995." [1995 c 269 s 3604.]

**Part headings not law—1995 c 269:** "Part headings as used in this act do not constitute any part of the law." [1995 c 269 s 3601.]

**Severability—1995 c 269:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1995 c 269 s 3602.]

**RCW 18.16.060 License required—Penalty—Exemptions.** (1) It is unlawful for any person to engage in a practice listed in subsection (2) of this section unless the person has a license in good standing as required by this chapter. A license issued under this chapter shall be considered to be "in good standing" except when:

(a) The license has expired or has been canceled and has not been renewed in accordance with RCW 18.16.110;

(b) The license has been denied, revoked, or suspended under RCW 18.16.210, \*18.16.230, or 18.16.240, and has not been reinstated;

(c) The license is held by a person who has not fully complied with an order of the director issued under RCW 18.16.210 requiring the licensee to pay restitution or a fine, or to acquire additional training; or

(d) The license has been placed on inactive status at the request of the licensee, and has not been reinstated in accordance with RCW 18.16.110(3).

(2) The director may take action under RCW 18.235.150 and 18.235.160 against any person who does any of the following without first obtaining, and maintaining in good standing, the license required by this chapter:

(a) Except as provided in subsections (3) and (4) of this section, engages in the commercial practice of cosmetology, hair design, barbering, esthetics, master esthetics, or manicuring;

(b) Instructs in a school;

(c) Operates a school; or

(d) Operates a salon/shop, personal services, or mobile unit.

(3) A person who receives a license as an instructor may engage in the commercial practice for which he or she held a license when applying for the instructor license without also renewing the previously held license. However, a person licensed as an instructor whose license to engage in a commercial practice is not or at any time was not renewed may not engage in the commercial practice previously permitted under that license unless that person renews the previously held license.

(4) An apprentice actively enrolled in an apprenticeship program for cosmetology, barbering, hair design, esthetics, master esthetics, or manicuring may engage in the commercial practice as required for the apprenticeship program. [2015 c 62 s 4; 2013 c 187 s 4; 2008 c 20 s 4; 2004 c 51 s 1. Prior: 2002 c 111 s 5; 2002 c 86 s 214; 1991 c 324 s 4; 1984 c 208 s 3.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 18.16.230 was repealed by 2018 c 199 s 101.

**Notice of chapter 51, Laws of 2004—2004 c 51:** "The department of licensing shall:

(1) Within ninety days after March 22, 2004, notify each person who held a cosmetology, barber, manicurist, or esthetician license between June 30, 1999, and June 30, 2003, of the provisions of this act by mailing a notice as specified in this section to the licensee's last known mailing address;

(2) Include in the notice required by this section:

(a) A summary of this act, including a summary of the requirements for (i) renewing and obtaining additional licenses; and (ii) requesting placement on inactive status;

(b) A telephone number within the department for obtaining further information;

(c) The department's internet address; and

(d) On the outside of the notice, a facsimile of the state seal, the department's return address, and the words "Notice of Legislative Changes — Cosmetology, Barbering, Manicuring, and Esthetics Licensing Information Enclosed" in conspicuous boldface type." [2004 c 51 s 6.]

**Effective date—2004 c 51:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 22, 2004]." [2004 c 51 s 11.]

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**Effective dates—2002 c 86:** See note following RCW 18.08.340.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2002 c 86:** See RCW 18.235.902 and 18.235.903.



**RCW 18.16.070 Licensing—Persons to whom chapter inapplicable.**

This chapter shall not apply to persons licensed under other laws of this state who are performing services within their authorized scope of practice and shall not be construed to require a license for students enrolled in a school or an apprentice engaged in a state-approved apprenticeship program as defined in RCW 18.16.020. [2003 c 400 s 3; 1984 c 208 s 4.]

**Effective date—2003 c 400:** See note following RCW 18.16.280.

**RCW 18.16.080 Licensing—Other persons to whom chapter inapplicable.** Nothing in this chapter prohibits any person authorized under the laws of this state from performing any service for which the person may be licensed, nor prohibits any person from performing services as an electrologist if that person has been otherwise certified, registered, or trained as an electrologist.

This chapter does not apply to persons employed in the care or treatment of patients in hospitals or employed in the care of residents of nursing homes and similar residential care facilities. [1984 c 208 s 19.]

**RCW 18.16.090 Examinations.** Examinations for licensure under this chapter shall be conducted at such times and places as the director determines appropriate. Examinations shall consist of tests designed to reasonably measure the applicant's knowledge of safe and sanitary practices and may also include the applicant's knowledge of this chapter and rules adopted pursuant to this chapter. The director may establish by rule a performance examination in addition to any other examination. The director shall establish by rule the minimum passing score for all examinations and the requirements for reexamination of applicants who fail the examination or examinations. The director may allow an independent person to conduct the examinations at the expense of the applicants.

The director shall take steps to ensure that after completion of the required course or apprenticeship program, applicants may promptly take the examination and receive the results of the examination. The director may allow an applicant to register for or take an examination before the applicant has completed the required hours of course instruction, if the applicant is within 100 hours of completion, but the applicant must complete the required hours of course instruction before licensure. [2023 c 55 s 1; 2003 c 400 s 4; 2002 c 111 s 6; 1991 c 324 s 5; 1984 c 208 s 10.]

**Effective date—2003 c 400:** See note following RCW 18.16.280.

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**RCW 18.16.100 Issuance of licenses—Requirements.** (1) Upon completion of an application approved by the department and payment of the proper fee, the director shall issue the appropriate license to any person who:

- (a) Is at least seventeen years of age or older;

(b) (i) Has completed and graduated from a school licensed under this chapter in a curriculum approved by the director consisting of the hours of training required under this chapter for a school curriculum, or has met the requirements in RCW 18.16.020 or 18.16.130; or

(ii) Has successfully completed a state-approved apprenticeship program consisting of the hours of training required under this chapter for the apprentice training curriculum; and

(c) Has received a passing grade on the appropriate licensing examination approved or administered by the director.

(2) A person currently licensed under this chapter may qualify for examination and licensure, after the required examination is passed, in another category if he or she has completed the crossover training course.

(3) Upon completion of an application approved by the department, certification of insurance, and payment of the proper fee, the director shall issue a location license to the applicant.

(4) The director may consult with the state board of health and the department of labor and industries in establishing training, apprenticeship, and examination requirements. [2008 c 20 s 5; 2003 c 400 s 5; 2002 c 111 s 7; 1991 c 324 s 6; 1984 c 208 s 5.]

**Effective date—2003 c 400:** See note following RCW 18.16.280.

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**RCW 18.16.110 Issuance of licenses—Renewals—Reinstatement—Duplicates.** (1) The director shall issue the appropriate license to any applicant who meets the requirements as outlined in this chapter.

(2) Except as provided in RCW 18.16.260:

(a) Failure to renew a license by its expiration date subjects the holder to a penalty fee and payment of each year's renewal fee, at the current rate; and

(b) A person whose license has not been renewed within one year after its expiration date shall have the license canceled and shall be required to submit an application, pay the license fee, meet current licensing requirements, and pass any applicable examination or examinations, in addition to the other requirements of this chapter, before the license may be reinstated, provided that a person whose license expired on or after March 1, 2020, may renew the license, including if the license was canceled, until June 30, 2023.

(3) In lieu of the requirements of subsection (2)(a) of this section, a license placed on inactive status under RCW 18.16.290 may be reinstated to good standing upon receipt by the department of: (a) Payment of a renewal fee, without penalty, for a two-year license commencing on the date the license is reinstated; and (b) if the license was on inactive status during any time that the board finds that a health or other requirement applicable to the license has changed, evidence showing that the holder of the license has successfully completed, from a school licensed under RCW 18.16.140, at least the number of curriculum clock hours of instruction that the board deems necessary for a licensee to be brought current with respect to such changes, but in no case may the number of hours required under this subsection exceed four hours per year that the license was on inactive status.

(4) Nothing in this section authorizes a person whose license has expired or is on inactive status to engage in a practice prohibited under RCW 18.16.060 until the license is renewed or reinstated.

(5) Upon request and payment of an additional fee to be established by rule by the director, the director shall issue a duplicate license to an applicant. [2022 c 35 s 2; 2004 c 51 s 3; 2002 c 111 s 8; 1991 c 324 s 7; 1984 c 208 s 12.]

**Intent—2022 c 35:** "It is the intent of the legislature to help resolve issues relating to professional licensing for cosmetologists, hair designers, barbers, manicurists, estheticians, master estheticians, and instructors. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all Washingtonians in different ways, and many people licensed to instruct or practice cosmetology, hair design, barbering, manicuring, and esthetics may not have renewed their license within the one year expiration window and, as a result, had their license canceled. The legislature intends to allow individuals whose licenses were canceled for failure to renew within the expiration period during the pandemic an opportunity to renew their license. Moving forward, the legislature intends to study barriers to maintaining a professional cosmetologist license in order to address this issue in a comprehensive way in the 2023 legislative session." [2022 c 35 s 1.]

**Notice of chapter 51, Laws of 2004—Effective date—2004 c 51:** See notes following RCW 18.16.060.

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**RCW 18.16.130 Issuance of licenses—Persons licensed in other jurisdictions.** (1) Any person who is properly licensed in any state, territory, or possession of the United States, or foreign country shall be eligible for examination if the applicant submits the approved application and fee and provides proof to the director that he or she is currently licensed in good standing as a cosmetologist, hair designer, barber, manicurist, esthetician, master esthetician, instructor, or the equivalent in that jurisdiction. Upon passage of the required examinations the appropriate license will be issued.

(2) (a) The director shall, upon passage of the required examinations, issue a license as master esthetician to an applicant who submits the approved application and fee and provides proof to the director that the applicant is currently licensed in good standing in esthetics in any state, territory, or possession of the United States, or foreign country and holds a diplomate of the comite international d'esthetique et de cosmetologie diploma, or an international therapy examination council diploma, or a certified credential awarded by the national coalition of estheticians, manufacturers/distributors & associations.

(b) The director may upon passage of the required examinations, issue a master esthetician license to an applicant that is currently licensed in esthetics in any other state, territory, or possession of the United States, or foreign country and submits an approved application and fee and provides proof to the director that he or she is licensed in good standing and:

(i) The licensing state, territory, or possession of the United States, or foreign country has licensure requirements that the

director determines are substantially equivalent to a master esthetician license in this state; or

(ii) The applicant has certification or a diploma or other credentials that the director determines has licensure requirements that are substantially equivalent to the degree listed in (a) of this subsection. [2015 c 62 s 5; 2013 c 187 s 5; 1991 c 324 s 10; 1984 c 208 s 11.]

**RCW 18.16.140 School licenses—Application—Approved security—Issuance—Changes in application information—Changes in controlling interest—Posting of licenses.** (1) Any person wishing to operate a school shall, before opening such a school, pay the license fee and file with the director for approval a license application containing the following information:

(a) The names and addresses of all owners, managers, and instructors;

(b) A copy of the school's curriculum satisfying the curriculum requirements established by the director;

(c) A sample copy of the school's catalog, brochure, enrollment contract, and cancellation and refund policies that will be used or distributed by the school to students and the public;

(d) A surety bond in an amount not less than ten thousand dollars, or ten percent of the annual gross tuition collected by the school, whichever is greater. The approved security shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars and shall run to the state of Washington for the protection of unearned prepaid student tuition. The school shall attest to its gross tuition at least annually on forms provided by the department. When a new school license is being applied for, the applicant will estimate its annual gross tuition to establish a bond amount. This subsection shall not apply to community colleges and vocational technical schools.

Upon approval of the application and documents, the director shall issue a license to operate a school.

(2) Changes to the information provided by schools shall be submitted to the department within fifteen days of the implementation date.

(3) A change involving the controlling interest of the school requires a new license application and fee. The new application shall include all required documentation, proof of ownership change, and be approved prior to a license being issued.

(4) School and instructor licenses issued by the department shall be posted in the reception area of the school. [2002 c 111 s 9; 1991 c 324 s 11; 1987 c 445 s 1; 1984 c 208 s 6.]

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**RCW 18.16.150 Schools—Compliance with chapter.** Schools shall be audited and inspected by the director or the director's designee for compliance with this chapter at least once a year. If the director determines that a licensed school is not maintaining the standards required according to this chapter, written notice thereof shall be given to the school. A school which fails to correct these conditions to the satisfaction of the director within a reasonable time may be

subject to penalties imposed under RCW 18.235.110. [2002 c 86 s 215; 1997 c 178 s 1; 1991 c 324 s 12; 1984 c 208 s 8.]

**Effective dates—2002 c 86:** See note following RCW 18.08.340.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2002 c 86:** See RCW 18.235.902 and 18.235.903.

**RCW 18.16.160 Schools—Claims against—Procedure.** In addition to any other legal remedy, any student or instructor-trainee having a claim against a school may bring suit upon the approved security required in RCW 18.16.140(1)(d) in the superior or district court of Thurston county or the county in which the educational services were offered by the school. Action upon the approved security shall be commenced by filing the complaint with the clerk of the appropriate superior or district court within one year from the date of the cancellation of the approved security: PROVIDED, That no action shall be maintained upon the approved security for any claim which has been barred by any nonclaim statute or statute of limitations of this state. Service of process in an action upon the approved security shall be exclusively by service upon the director. Two copies of the complaint shall be served by registered or certified mail upon the director at the time the suit is started. Such service shall constitute service on the approved security and the school. The director shall transmit the complaint or a copy thereof to the school at the address listed in the director's records and to the surety within forty-eight hours after it has been received. The approved security shall not be liable in an aggregate amount in excess of the amount named in the approved security. In any action on an approved security, the prevailing party is entitled to reasonable attorney's fees and costs.

The director shall maintain a record, available for public inspection, of all suits commenced under this chapter upon approved security. [2004 c 51 s 8; 1991 c 324 s 13; 1984 c 208 s 16.]

**Notice of chapter 51, Laws of 2004—Effective date—2004 c 51:** See notes following RCW 18.16.060.

**RCW 18.16.170 Expiration of licenses.** (1) Subject to subsection (2) of this section, licenses issued under this chapter expire as follows:

(a) A salon/shop, personal services, or mobile unit license expires one year from issuance or when the insurance required by RCW 18.16.175(1)(g) expires, whichever occurs first;

(b) A school license expires one year from issuance; and

(c) Cosmetologist, hair designer, barber, manicurist, esthetician, master esthetician, and instructor licenses expire two years from issuance.

(2) The director may provide for expiration dates other than those set forth in subsection (1) of this section for the purpose of establishing staggered renewal periods. [2015 c 62 s 6; 2013 c 187 s 6; 2002 c 111 s 10; 1991 c 324 s 9.]

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**RCW 18.16.175 Salon/shop or mobile unit requirements—Liability insurance—Complaints—Inspection—Registration—Use of motor homes—Posting of licenses.**

(1) A salon/shop or mobile unit shall meet the following minimum requirements:

(a) Maintain an outside entrance separate from any rooms used for sleeping or residential purposes;

(b) Provide and maintain for the use of its customers adequate toilet facilities located within or adjacent to the salon/shop or mobile unit;

(c) Any room used wholly or in part as a salon/shop or mobile unit shall not be used for residential purposes, except that toilet facilities may be used for both residential and business purposes;

(d) Meet the zoning requirements of the county, city, or town, as appropriate;

(e) Provide for safe storage and labeling of chemicals used in the practices under this chapter;

(f) Meet all applicable local and state fire codes; and

(g) Certify that the salon/shop or mobile unit is covered by a public liability insurance policy in an amount not less than one hundred thousand dollars for combined bodily injury and property damage liability.

(2) The director may by rule determine other requirements that are necessary for safety and sanitation of salons/shops, personal services, or mobile units. The director may consult with the state board of health and the department of labor and industries in establishing minimum salon/shop, personal services, and mobile unit safety requirements.

(3) Personal services license holders shall certify coverage of a public liability insurance policy in an amount not less than one hundred thousand dollars for combined bodily injury and property damage liability.

(4) Upon receipt of a written complaint that a salon/shop or mobile unit has violated any provisions of this chapter, chapter 18.235 RCW, or the rules adopted under either chapter, or at least once every two years for an existing salon/shop or mobile unit, the director or the director's designee shall inspect each salon/shop or mobile unit. If the director determines that any salon/shop or mobile unit is not in compliance with this chapter, the director shall send written notice to the salon/shop or mobile unit. A salon/shop or mobile unit which fails to correct the conditions to the satisfaction of the director within a reasonable time shall, upon due notice, be subject to the penalties imposed by the director under RCW 18.235.110. The director may enter any salon/shop or mobile unit during business hours for the purpose of inspection. The director may contract with health authorities of local governments to conduct the inspections under this subsection.

(5) A salon/shop, personal services, or mobile unit shall obtain a certificate of registration from the department of revenue.

(6) This section does not prohibit the use of motor homes as mobile units if the motor home meets the health and safety standards of this section.

(7) Salon/shop or mobile unit licenses issued by the department must be posted in the salon/shop or mobile unit's reception area.

(8) Cosmetology, hair design, barbering, esthetics, master esthetics, and manicuring licenses issued by the department must be posted at the licensed person's workstation. [2015 c 62 s 7; 2013 c

187 s 7; 2008 c 20 s 6. Prior: 2002 c 111 s 11; 2002 c 86 s 216; 1997 c 178 s 2; 1991 c 324 s 15.]

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**Effective dates—2002 c 86:** See note following RCW 18.08.340.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2002 c 86:** See RCW 18.235.902 and 18.235.903.

**RCW 18.16.180 Salon/shop—Apprenticeship shop—Notice required.**

(1) The director shall prepare and provide to all licensed salons/shops a notice to consumers. At a minimum, the notice shall state that cosmetology, hair design, barber, esthetics, master esthetics, and manicure salons/shops are required to be licensed, that salons/shops are required to maintain minimum safety and sanitation standards, that customer complaints regarding salons/shops may be reported to the department, and a telephone number and address where complaints may be made.

(2) An approved apprenticeship shop must post a notice to consumers in the reception area of the salon/shop stating that services may be provided by an apprentice. At a minimum, the notice must state: "This shop is a participant in a state-approved apprenticeship program. Apprentices in this program are in training and have not yet received a license." [2015 c 62 s 8; 2013 c 187 s 8; 2008 c 20 s 7; 1991 c 324 s 16.]

**RCW 18.16.190 Location of practice—Penalty—Placebound clients.**

It is a violation of this chapter for any person to engage in the commercial practice of cosmetology, hair design, barbering, esthetics, master esthetics, or manicuring, except in a licensed salon/shop or the home, office, or other location selected by the client for obtaining the services of a personal service operator, or with the appropriate individual license when delivering services to placebound clients. Placebound clients are defined as persons who are ill, disabled, or otherwise unable to travel to a salon/shop. [2015 c 62 s 9; 2013 c 187 s 9; 1991 c 324 s 20.]

**RCW 18.16.200 Disciplinary action—Grounds.** In addition to the unprofessional conduct described in RCW 18.235.130, the director may take disciplinary action against any applicant or licensee under this chapter if the licensee or applicant:

(1) Has been found to have violated any provisions of chapter 19.86 RCW;

(2) Has engaged in a practice prohibited under RCW 18.16.060 without first obtaining, and maintaining in good standing, the license required by this chapter;

(3) Has engaged in the commercial practice of cosmetology, hair design, barbering, manicuring, esthetics, or master esthetics in a school;

(4) Has not provided a safe, sanitary, and good moral environment for students in a school or the public;

(5) Has failed to display licenses required in this chapter; or

(6) Has violated any provision of this chapter or any rule adopted under it. [2015 c 62 s 10; 2013 c 187 s 10; 2004 c 51 s 4. Prior: 2002 c 111 s 12; 2002 c 86 s 217; 1991 c 324 s 14; 1984 c 208 s 13.]

**Notice of chapter 51, Laws of 2004—Effective date—2004 c 51:** See notes following RCW 18.16.060.

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**Effective dates—2002 c 86:** See note following RCW 18.08.340.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2002 c 86:** See RCW 18.235.902 and 18.235.903.

**RCW 18.16.210 Violations—Penalties.** If, following a hearing, the director finds that any person or an applicant or licensee has violated any provision of this chapter or any rule adopted under it, the director may impose one or more of the following penalties:

- (1) Denial of a license or renewal;
- (2) Revocation or suspension of a license;
- (3) A fine of not more than five hundred dollars per violation;
- (4) Issuance of a reprimand or letter of censure;
- (5) Placement of the licensee on probation for a fixed period of time;
- (6) Restriction of the licensee's authorized scope of practice;
- (7) Requiring the licensee to make restitution or a refund as determined by the director to any individual injured by the violation; or
- (8) Requiring the licensee to obtain additional training or instruction. [2002 c 111 s 13; 1984 c 208 s 14.]

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**RCW 18.16.220 Appeal—Procedure.** Any person aggrieved by the refusal of the director to issue any license provided for in this chapter, or to renew the same, or by the revocation or suspension of any license issued under this chapter or by the application of any penalty under RCW 18.16.210, shall have the right to appeal the decision of the director to the superior court of the county in which the person maintains his or her place of business. Such appeal shall be filed within thirty days of the director's decision. [1984 c 208 s 15.]

**RCW 18.16.240 License suspension—Noncompliance with support order—Reissuance.** The department shall immediately suspend the license of a person who has been certified pursuant to RCW 74.20A.320 by the department of social and health services as a person who is not in compliance with a support order. If the person has continued to meet all other requirements for reinstatement during the suspension, reissuance of the license shall be automatic upon the department's receipt of a release issued by the department of social and health



services stating that the licensee is in compliance with the order.  
[2002 c 111 s 15; 1997 c 58 s 815.]

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**Short title—Part headings, captions, table of contents not law—Exemptions and waivers from federal law—Conflict with federal requirements—Severability—1997 c 58:** See RCW 74.08A.900 through 74.08A.904.

**Effective dates—Intent—1997 c 58:** See notes following RCW 74.20A.320.

**RCW 18.16.250 Finding—Consumer protection act.** The legislature finds that the practices covered by this chapter are matters vitally affecting the public interest for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW. A violation of this chapter is not reasonable in relation to the development and preservation of business and is an unfair or deceptive act in trade or commerce and an unfair method of competition for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW. [2002 c 111 s 14.]

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**RCW 18.16.260 License renewal—Fee—Examination—Fee.** (1) (a) Prior to July 1, 2005, (i) a cosmetology licensee who held a license in good standing between June 30, 1999, and June 30, 2003, may request a renewal of the license or an additional license in barbering, manicuring, and/or esthetics; and (ii) a licensee who held a barber, manicurist, or esthetics license between June 30, 1999, and June 30, 2003, may request a renewal of such licenses held during that period.

(b) A license renewal fee, including, if applicable, a renewal fee, at the current rate, for each year the licensee did not hold a license in good standing between July 1, 2001, and the date of the renewal request, must be paid prior to issuance of each type of license requested. After June 30, 2005, any cosmetology licensee wishing to renew an expired license or obtain additional licenses must meet the applicable renewal, training, and examination requirements of this chapter.

(2) (a) Any person holding an active license in good standing as an esthetician prior to January 1, 2015, may be licensed as an esthetician licensee after paying the appropriate license fee.

(b) Prior to January 1, 2015, an applicant for a master esthetician license must have an active license in good standing as an esthetician, pay the appropriate license fee, and provide the department with proof of having satisfied one or more of the following requirements:

(i) (A) (I) A minimum of thirty-five hours employment as a provider of medium depth peels under the delegation or supervision of a licensed physician, \*advanced registered nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, or other licensed professional whose licensure permits such delegation or supervision; or

(II) Seven hours of training in theory and application of medium depth peels; and

(B) (I) A minimum of one hundred fifty hours employment as a laser operator under the delegation or supervision of a licensed physician, \*advanced registered nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, or other licensed professional whose licensure permits such delegation or supervision; or

(II) Seventy-five hours of laser training;

(ii) A national or international diploma or certification in esthetics that is recognized by the department by rule;

(iii) An instructor in esthetics who has been licensed as an instructor in esthetics by the department for a minimum of three years; or

(iv) Completion of one thousand two hundred hours of an esthetic curriculum approved by the department.

(3) The director may, as provided in RCW 43.24.140, modify the duration of any additional license granted under this section to make all licenses issued to a person expire on the same date. [2013 c 187 s 11; 2004 c 51 s 5; 2002 c 111 s 16.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The term "advanced registered nurse practitioner" was changed to "advanced practice registered nurse" by 2024 c 239 s 1, effective June 30, 2027.

**Notice of chapter 51, Laws of 2004—Effective date—2004 c 51:** See notes following RCW 18.16.060.

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**RCW 18.16.270 Uniform regulation of business and professions act.** The uniform regulation of business and professions act, chapter 18.235 RCW, governs unlicensed practice, the issuance and denial of licenses, and the discipline of licensees under this chapter. [2002 c 86 s 218.]

**Effective dates—2002 c 86:** See note following RCW 18.08.340.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2002 c 86:** See RCW 18.235.902 and 18.235.903.

**RCW 18.16.280 Cosmetology apprenticeship program.** (1) An approved cosmetology apprenticeship program is hereby created. The apprenticeship program allows for the direct entry of individuals into a training program approved as provided in this chapter and chapter 49.04 RCW.

(2) The department of licensing shall adopt rules, including a mandatory requirement that apprentices complete in-classroom theory courses as a part of their training, to provide for the licensure of participants of the apprenticeship program.

(3) Apprenticeship salon/shops participating in the apprenticeship program must:

(a) Be approved as an approved apprenticeship program conducted in an approved salon/shop by the Washington state apprenticeship and training council in accordance with chapter 49.04 RCW; and

(b) Provide the department with the names of all individuals acting as apprentice trainers.

(4) To act as an apprentice trainer, an individual must be approved by the department. To be approved, the trainer must hold a current license in the practice for which he or she is providing training and must have held that license for a minimum of three consecutive years.

(5) If an approved apprenticeship program or apprenticeship shop implements changes affecting the information required to be provided to the department under this section or rules adopted under this section, the revised information must be submitted to the department before implementing the changes.

(6) The director or the director's designee shall audit and inspect approved apprenticeship shops for compliance with this chapter at least annually. If the director determines that an approved apprenticeship shop is not maintaining the standards required by this chapter, written notice thereof must be given to the approved apprenticeship program and apprenticeship shop. An approved apprenticeship shop that fails to correct the conditions listed in the notice to the satisfaction of the director within a reasonable time may be subject to penalties imposed under RCW 18.235.110. [2008 c 20 s 8; 2006 c 162 s 2; 2003 c 400 s 1.]

**Finding—2006 c 162:** "The legislature finds that direct-entry apprenticeship programs can be very beneficial to both students and employers. However, there is also concern that apprenticeship programs may reduce the number of students who enroll in traditional cosmetology school. The advisory committee is to update the legislature on the program with an updated final report by December 31, 2008, and is to include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the apprenticeship program, including but not limited to the number of apprentices who complete the program, the number of apprentices who take and pass the licensing examination, and a formal review of any impact the expansion of such an apprenticeship program may have on the enrollment of traditional cosmetology schools, including but not limited to whether the enrollment of traditional cosmetology schools is negatively impacted by the direct-entry apprenticeship programs." [2006 c 162 s 1.]

**Effective date—2003 c 400:** "This act takes effect September 15, 2003." [2003 c 400 s 6.]

**RCW 18.16.290 License—Inactive status.** (1) If the holder of an individual license in good standing submits a written and notarized request that the licensee's cosmetology, hair design, barber, manicurist, esthetician and master esthetician, or instructor license be placed on inactive status, together with a fee equivalent to that established by rule for a duplicate license, the department shall place the license on inactive status until the expiration date of the license. If the date of the request is no more than six months before the expiration date of the license, a request for a two-year extension of the inactive status, as provided under subsection (2) of this section, may be submitted at the same time as the request under this subsection.

(2) If the holder of a license placed on inactive status under this section submits, by the expiration date of the license, a written and notarized request to extend that status for an additional two

years, the department shall, without additional fee, extend the expiration date of: (a) The licensee's individual license; and (b) the inactive status for two years from the expiration date of the license.

(3) A license placed on inactive status under this section may not be extended more frequently than once in any twenty-four month period or for more than six consecutive years.

(4) If, by the expiration date of a license placed on inactive status under this section, a licensee is unable, or fails, to request that the status be extended and the license is not renewed, the license shall be canceled. [2015 c 62 s 11; 2013 c 187 s 12; 2004 c 51 s 2.]

**Notice of chapter 51, Laws of 2004—Effective date—2004 c 51:**  
See notes following RCW 18.16.060.

**RCW 18.16.300 Military training or experience.** An applicant with military training or experience satisfies the training or experience requirements of this chapter unless the director determines that the military training or experience is not substantially equivalent to the standards of this state. [2011 c 351 s 3.]

**RCW 18.16.305 Recognition as institution of postsecondary study.** Schools shall be recognized as institutions of postsecondary study under the following conditions:

(1) The school admits as regular students only those individuals who have earned a recognized high school diploma or the equivalent of a recognized high school diploma, or who are beyond the age of compulsory education as provided in RCW 28A.225.010; and

(2) The school is licensed by name by the department under this chapter to offer one or more training programs beyond the secondary level. [2013 c 201 s 2.]

**Intent—2013 c 201:** "It is the intent of the legislature to maintain and expand access to postsecondary education and improve opportunities for students. The legislature recognizes that access to federal financial aid is a major avenue for overcoming financial barriers to higher education for many students in Washington. The legislature recognizes that recent federal changes in federal regulations require the adjustment of definitions of certain postsecondary institutions in state statutes to ensure that those schools that currently meet the requirements are eligible for student financial aid programs provided by the federal government." [2013 c 201 s 1.]

**RCW 18.16.310 Department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund.** (1)(a) For the purpose of providing relief to students impacted by the voluntary or involuntary closure of schools regulated under this chapter, the director shall establish, maintain, and administer a department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund created in RCW 18.16.320. The department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund shall be established no later than January 1, 2019. All funds collected for the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund are payable to the state for the benefit and protection of any student

or enrollee of a private school licensed under this chapter, for purposes including but not limited to the settlement of claims related to school closures.

(b) No liability accrues to the state from claims made against the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund.

(2) (a) The director may impose a fee structure, set forth in rule, on schools licensed under this chapter to fund the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund.

(b) The director must determine an amount that would be sufficient in the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund to provide relief to students in the event of a school closure. The director shall adopt schedules of times and amounts for effecting payments of fees. To reach the amount determined, the director may phase in the collection of fees, but must achieve the amount determined to be sufficient no later than five years from June 7, 2018.

(3) Money from the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund may be used for:

(a) Providing refunds to students affected by school closures;

(b) Securing and administering student records; and

(c) Any other response the director determines is necessary to mitigate impacts of a potential or actual school closure.

(4) In order for a school to be and remain licensed under this chapter, each school owner shall, in addition to other requirements under this chapter, make cash deposits on behalf of the school into the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund.

(5) The department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund's liability with respect to each participating school commences on the date of the initial deposit into the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund made on its behalf and ceases one year from the date the school is no longer licensed under this chapter.

(6) The director shall adopt by rule a matrix for calculating the deposits into the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund on behalf of each school.

(7) No vested right or interest in deposited funds is created or implied for the depositor at any time during the operation of the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund or at any such future time that the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund may be dissolved. All funds deposited are payable to the state for the purposes described in this section. The director shall maintain the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund, serve appropriate notices to affected owners when scheduled deposits are due, collect deposits, and make disbursements to settle claims against the department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund.

(8) The director shall adopt rules to address notifying potential claimants, settling claims, disbursing funds, and any other processes necessary to implement the purpose of this section. [2018 c 203 s 9.]

**Finding—Intent—2018 c 203:** See note following RCW 28B.85.095.

**RCW 18.16.320 Department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund—State treasurer.** The department of licensing tuition recovery trust fund is created in the custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from each school owner under RCW 18.16.310 must be deposited into the fund. Expenditures from the fund may be used only for the

purposes in RCW 18.16.310. Only the director or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the fund. The fund is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures. [2018 c 203 s 10.]

**Finding—Intent—2018 c 203:** See note following RCW 28B.85.095.

**RCW 18.16.900 Short title.** This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Washington cosmetologists, hair designers, barbers, manicurists, and estheticians act." [2015 c 62 s 12; 2002 c 111 s 17; 1984 c 208 s 20.]

**Effective date—2002 c 111:** See note following RCW 18.16.010.

**RCW 18.16.907 Effective date—1984 c 208.** This act shall take effect July 1, 1984. [1984 c 208 s 23.]