



**STANDARDS OF APPRENTICESHIP  
FOR EAR-PIERCING**

**March 16, 2026 Version**



Department of Professional & Occupational Regulation

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Richmond, Virginia 23233  
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## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose of these Standards is to establish minimum requirements for the training of apprentice ear-piercers in accordance with the Board for Barbers and Cosmetology Body-piercing Regulations.

## **FORWARD**

Recognizing the necessity for the development of skilled and efficient practitioners in the profession and to establish procedures for the training of apprentices as required by the Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology, these Standards have been developed as a guide for licensees seeking approval to train apprentices.

**BOTH THE APPRENTICE AND THE SPONSOR ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR READING, UNDERSTANDING, AND COMPLYING WITH THE EAR-PIERCING APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE STANDARDS MAY RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**

It is the goal of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation to provide you with the information you need to comply with the law and regulations. If you have a question and cannot find the answer to it in this booklet, please contact the Board:

Address: Board for Barbers and Cosmetology  
Perimeter Center, Suite 400  
9960 Mayland Drive  
Richmond, VA 23233

Phone: (804) 367-8509

Email: [bchoplicensing@dpor.virginia.gov](mailto:bchoplicensing@dpor.virginia.gov)

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## 1. DEFINITIONS

"Apprentice" means a person who is learning and working in the profession of ear-piercing under these Standards and is covered by a written Apprenticeship Agreement with the sponsor providing for his/her training in accordance with these Standards of Apprenticeship.

"Apprenticeship Agreement" means a Board approved written agreement between a sponsor and apprentice.

"Apprenticeship Sponsor" means an individual approved to conduct ear-piercing apprenticeship training who has met the qualifications in 18 VAC 41-60-70 of the Board's Body-Piercing Regulations and who assumes full responsibility of the apprentice.

"Board" means the Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology.

"Body-Piercer" means any person who for remuneration penetrates the skin of a person to make a hole, mark, or scar, generally permanent in nature.

"Body-Piercing" means the act of penetrating the skin of a person to make a hole, mark, or scar, generally permanent in nature.

"Body-piercing salon" means any place in which a fee is charged for the act of penetrating the skin of a person to make a hole, mark, or scar, generally permanent in nature.

"Ear-piercer" means any person who for remuneration penetrates the ear of a person to make a hole, mark, or scar, generally permanent in nature.

"Ear-piercing" means the act of penetrating the ear of a person to make a hole, mark, or scar, generally permanent in nature.

"Ear-piercing salon" means any place in which a fee is charged for the act of penetrating the ear by the aid of needles or any other instrument designed to touch or puncture the skin.

"Standards of Apprenticeship" means this entire document including these definitions.

"Supervision" means the ongoing process performed by a supervisor who monitors through inspection, critical evaluation, and direction of the performance of the apprentice and provides regular, documented, guidance and instruction with respect to the skills and competencies of the apprentice.

"Supervisor" means a licensed body-piercer or ear-piercer sponsor who assumes responsibility for the education and training activities of the apprentice.

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS**

### **A. Policy Statement**

On or after the date these Standards are adopted, it shall be the policy of the sponsor that all apprentices shall be governed by the terms of these Standards of Apprenticeship.

### **B. Qualifications for Apprenticeship**

1. Be at least 16 years of age.
2. Be physically able to perform the work.

## **3. CREDIT FOR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE**

An applicant for apprenticeship may be allowed credit on the term of apprenticeship for prior experience, whether with the sponsor or elsewhere, which is equivalent to that which he/she would have received under these Standards. Credit for previous experience shall be approved by the Board Administrator prior to the start of the apprenticeship. The maximum to be allowed an apprentice for previous experience as a ear-piercer is 225 hours.

## **4. APPRENTICESHIP AGREEMENT**

A. Each Apprenticeship Agreement is a contract between, and must be signed by, the apprentice (and parent/guardian if apprentice is under 18) and the sponsor's authorized representative, and filed with the Board.

B. A signed Apprenticeship Agreement indicates that both apprentice (and parent/guardian) and sponsor understand and agree to all apprenticeship requirements.

C. To be valid, each Apprenticeship Agreement must:

1. Comply with 18 VAC 41-60.
2. Contain all required signatures.
3. Be approved by the Board.
4. Be registered and filed with the sponsor.

D. All required signers must receive a copy of the signed Apprenticeship Agreement and Standards of Apprenticeship.

## **5. TERM OF APPRENTICESHIP**

The term of apprenticeship shall be 500 hours of theory and practical training.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE APPRENTICE**

A. The apprentice must obtain an apprentice license from the Board. The license must be posted in the apprentice's work area and must be accessible and visible to the public.

- B. Failure for non-display or an expired license may result in immediate termination from the program and/or a fine by the Board for both the apprentice and sponsor. An apprentice having an invalid license may result in immediate dismissal from the program.
- C. The apprentice must be on time for work, learn all work processes, complete all work assignments, and take initiative to ask appropriate questions. The apprentice must use appropriate conduct in the in the classroom and on the job site.
- D. The apprentice agrees to keep a daily record book of work experiences and techniques practiced while in training and to keep such record book at the place of training for review by concerned parties.
- E. The apprentice agrees to abide by all regulations and standards promulgated by the Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology concerning apprentice ear-piercer.

**7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF APPRENTICESHIP SPONSOR**

The responsibilities and duties of the apprenticeship sponsor shall include:

- A. Obtaining approved Body-Piercing or Ear-Piercing Apprenticeship Sponsor status with the Board pursuant to 18 VAC 41-60-70;
- B. Ensuring that the apprentice has obtained an ear-piercing apprentice license from the Board, and that the license is posted in the apprentice's work area accessible and visible to the public. Failure for non-display or an expired license may result in immediate termination from the program and/or Board discipline under 18 VAC 41-60-220. An apprentice having an invalid license may result in immediate dismissal from the program;
- C. Maintaining a current body piercer or ear-piercer license issued by the Board;
- D. Ensuring that the supervisor of the apprentice holds a current body piercer or ear-piercer license issued by the Board;
- E. Providing instruction to ensure that the apprentice obtains a working knowledge of the work performances outlined in the Board's Apprenticeship Training Program;
- F. Ensuring that the apprentice is under the direct supervision of a licensed body-piercer or ear-piercer while performing any procedure(s) on a patron;
- G. Ensuring that the apprentice is given instruction in safe working methods in each operation as it is encountered throughout the term of apprenticeship;
- H. Conducting and documenting a monthly review and assessment of the apprentice's aptitude, skill and progress.

- I. Maintaining adequate records pertaining to the progress of each apprentice to include documentation of suspension or termination if applicable;
- J. Providing the Board with written notification within seven days of the suspension or termination of an apprentice;
- K. Such other duties as may be involved in developing and maintaining an effective program of apprenticeship.

## **8. APPRENTICE SPONSOR RATIO**

The ratio of apprentices to sponsors shall be two ear-piercer apprentices for every one apprenticeship sponsor.

## **9. SCHEDULE OF WORK PERFORMANCES**

- A. The apprentice shall be given instruction and work experience in all branches of Ear-piercing listed in the work performances which are recorded on the Apprenticeship Training and Performance Requirements contained in these Standards.
- B. The work experience does not need to be performed in the precise order listed, nor do the scheduled number of any operations need to be continuous to permit the flexibility necessary for the normal business operation of the salon.

## **10. RELATED INSTRUCTION**

- A. Each apprentice under these Standards must enroll in and satisfactorily complete the required related instruction as prescribed by the Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology.
- B. Credit for related instruction received prior to entering apprenticeship shall be approved by the Board Administrator prior to the start of the apprenticeship. Satisfactory program completion is a mandatory part of the total program for the individual apprentice.

## **11. PERIODIC EVALUATION**

The progress of each apprentice's job performance and related instruction shall be subject to a periodic review. Should a review reveal a lack of interest or ability on the part of the apprentice, the apprentice will be informed of the deficiency and may be placed on probation for a sufficient period to determine improvement or failure. At the end of the probationary period, if the apprentice has not shown acceptable improvement, the apprenticeship may be suspended or revoked. The sponsor will provide written notice of the final action taken to the apprentice and the Board.

## **12. COMPLETION OF APPRENTICESHIP**

- A. Upon completion of the apprenticeship training, the sponsor shall review the apprentice's progress record for the training period. If the results of this review indicate the apprentice is now a candidate for the Board's examination, the sponsor shall sign the Apprentice Completion Form. The properly signed Apprenticeship Completion Form shall be submitted to the testing vendor with the Body-Piercer Examination and License Applications.
- B. Completion of the apprenticeship program shall qualify the apprentice to apply to the Board to take the Board for Barbers and Cosmetology Ear-Piercer Licensing Examination.

## **13. RESPONSIBILITIES OF BODY-PIERCING OR EAR-PIERCING SALONS FOR APPRENTICE TRAINING**

Upon receipt of a request for designation as an Apprenticeship Sponsor, the individual's eligibility will be determined based on the criteria established in the Board's Regulations. The salon where the apprenticeship training will be provided must also be in compliance with the Board's Regulations. The salon shall meet the following standards:

- A. The salon must have a current license issued by the Board and a local business license if applicable;
- B. The salon shall maintain full compliance with the Board's Regulations;
- C. The salon shall have a work station for each apprentice where a sign will be posted in a conspicuous manner which indicates that the person performing the services is working as an apprentice in training.

## **14. TRANSFER OF APPRENTICES**

If a sponsor is unable to carry out the required training, the apprentice may be registered with another qualified sponsor in accordance with Section 3 of the Apprenticeship Standards. The sponsor must return the apprentice license and the apprentice must submit a new application with the new sponsor.

## **15. RELATIONSHIP OF STANDARDS TO BODY-PIERCING REGULATIONS**

Nothing in these Standards shall be interpreted in a manner inconsistent with existing Body-Piercing Regulations of the Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology.

## **16. MODIFICATIONS**

These Standards may be modified, if desired, but any such modification must be approved by the Board. Such modification shall not alter or affect apprenticeship agreements in effect at the time of modification without the consent of all parties affected.

I. **APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING AND PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS**

**500 Total Apprenticeship Training Hours Required**

- A. 150 hours shall be devoted to theory pertaining to sections 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 9 of 18VAC41-60-165.
- B. 50 hours shall be devoted to theory pertaining to section 3 of 18VAC41-60-165.
- C. The remaining 300 hours shall be devoted to practical training and the following performances pertaining to sections 7 and 8 below of 18VAC41-60-165.
- D. An approved ear-piercing apprenticeship program may conduct an assessment of an apprentice's competence in the theory and practical requirements for ear-piercing and, based on the assessment, give a maximum of 225 hours of credit towards the requirements in sections A and C above.

No credit shall be allowed for the 50 hours required in section B above.

1. Microbiology:

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

2. Immunization;

- a. Types of immunizations;
- b. Hepatitis A—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 ear-piercer and client.

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. Pre-service sanitation procedure; and
- f. Post-service sanitation procedure.

4. Safety:

- a. Proper needle handling and disposal;
- b. How to avoid overexposure to chemicals;
- c. The use of Safety Data Sheets (SDS);
- d. Blood spill procedures;
- e. Equipment and instrument storage; and
- f. First aid.

5. Blood borne pathogen standards:

- a. OSHA and CDC blood borne pathogen standards;
- b. Control Plan for blood borne pathogens;
- c. Exposure Control Plan for Ear-Piercers;
- d. Overview of compliance requirements; and
- e. Disorders and when not to service a client.

6. Professional standards:

- a. History of ear-piercing;
- b. Ethics;
- c. Recordkeeping:
  - (1) Client health history;

(2) Consent forms; and

(3) HIPAA Standards (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 Privacy Rule);

d. Preparing station, making appointments, salon ethics:

(1) Maintaining professional appearance, notifying clients of schedule changes; and

(2) Promoting services of the salon and establishing clientele;

e. Salon management:

(1) Licensing requirements; and

(2) Taxes;

f. Supplies:

(1) Usages;

(2) Ordering; and

(3) Storage.

7. Ear-piercing:

a. Client consultation;

b. Client health information;

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. Grade of jewelry; and

j. Metals to use.

8. Ear-piercing procedures:

a. Ear lobe;

b. Helix—ear;

c. Concha—ear; and

d. Tragus—ear.

9. Virginia body-piercing laws and regulations.

<u>Ear-Piercing Performances</u>	
<u>Ear lobe</u>	<u>minimum of 15</u>
<u>Helix - ear</u>	<u>minimum of 10</u>
<u>Concha - ear</u>	<u>minimum of 10</u>
<u>Tragus - ear</u>	<u>minimum of 5</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>40</u>

The minimum number cited is required to qualify for the State examination.

**Return completed application to:**  
 Commonwealth of Virginia  
 Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation  
 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400  
 Richmond, Virginia 23233-1485  
 (804) 367-8509  
[www.dpor.virginia.gov](http://www.dpor.virginia.gov)



**Board for Barbers and Cosmetology**  
**EAR-PIERCING APPRENTICE LICENSE APPLICATION**  
**No Fee Required**

**NOTE:** This application for license as a ear-piercing apprentice requires designation of a Board approved ear-piercing apprenticeship sponsor on a signed Apprenticeship Agreement. Upon successful completion of the required apprenticeship-training program, the apprentice will be required to also successfully complete the Board's licensing examination and meet other licensing eligibility requirements in order to obtain a ear-piercing license.

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle Suffix

2. Provide **one** of the following identification numbers\*.  
 Social Security Number or  Virginia DMV Control Number    -   -      
 \* State law requires every applicant for a license, certificate, registration or other authorization to engage in a business, trade, profession or occupation issued by the Commonwealth to provide a social security number or a control number issued by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

3. Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
MM/DD/YYYY

4. Mailing Address (PO Box accepted) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip Code

5. Street Address (PO Box not accepted)  Check here if Street Address is the same as the Mailing Address listed above.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip Code

6. Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

7. Contact Numbers \_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Telephone Alternate Telephone

8. Have you completed board-approved health education including, but not limited to, bloodborne disease, sterilization, and aseptic techniques related to ear-piercing and first aid?  
 No   
 Yes  If yes, attach a certificate or official school transcript indicating successful completion of the training program. All health education courses must be completed from a board approved education provider listed on the board's website ([www.dpor.virginia.gov/Boards/BarberCosmo/](http://www.dpor.virginia.gov/Boards/BarberCosmo/)) under the tab section for "Education and Exams".

**Apprenticeship Sponsor Designation:**

9. Sponsor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Virginia Ear-Piercing License Number:  1  2

10. Parlor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Virginia Ear-Piercing Salon License Number  1  2  5  7

<b>BOARD USE ONLY</b>	APPLICATION REVIEW DATE	EAGLES		EAGLES	
		Check for Sponsor Confirmed <input type="checkbox"/>	License Approved <input type="checkbox"/>	Check for Salon Confirmed <input type="checkbox"/>	License Denied <input type="checkbox"/>

11. Salon Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

12. Salon Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

13. Salon Contact Numbers \_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

14. Are you requesting Board approval for credits of previous apprenticeship *experience* or *related instruction* completed?

No

Yes  If yes, indicate the *number of hours* that you are requesting for approval and attach supporting documentation signed by your designated apprenticeship sponsor listed above.

*Award of credits is subject to Board approval and can only be awarded prior to the start of the apprenticeship program.*

Experience - No. of Hrs: \_\_\_\_\_ Related Instruction - No. of Hrs: \_\_\_\_\_

**Required Documentation** - Experience must be verified by submitting a completed **Experience Verification Form**. Related instruction must be verified by submitting a transcript showing successful completion of related instructions.

15. I have reviewed with my sponsor Part II. ENTRY. Section 18 VAC 41-60-230. General requirements for ear-piercer of the Body-Piercing Regulations, and I am aware of the qualifications for licensure as a ear-piercer after I have completed the apprenticeship. **The above information is true and correct.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### APPRENTICESHIP AGREEMENT

The purpose of this Apprenticeship Agreement is to establish the obligations of all parties participating in the Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology Apprenticeship Program for Ear-Piercing.

By affixed signatures, the parties named below acknowledge that they have read and agree to comply with all requirements, terms, and conditions established in the Virginia Board for Barbers and Cosmetology Ear-Piercing Apprenticeship Standards and Body-Piercing Regulations.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Apprentice

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(If Required) Signature of Legal Guardian

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Apprenticeship Sponsor

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Body/Ear-Piercing Salon Owner