



## ALABAMA BOARD OF COSMETOLOGY AND BARBERING

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## Winter 2025 Newsletter

### Don't Forget to Renew Your Shop License!

The Alabama Board of Cosmetology and Barbering makes renewing your shop license easy—especially through our online platform. The 2025–2027 (10/1/2025–9/30/2027) renewal window opened on July 1. Your 2023–2025 (10/1/2023–9/30/2025) license must be current and any outstanding fees or fines must be paid before you can renew your 2025–2027 license.

Here's how to renew seamlessly:

Go to the **Online Payments** section of the Board's website.

- To renew your **2025–2027 shop license**, select **[Shop License Renewal (2025–2027)]** and pay the \$150 renewal fee (plus credit card processing fees). Renewals completed after **October 31** will incur a late fee of \$54.
- If your **2023–2025 shop license** has not been renewed yet, you must renew it first. Select **[Shop License Renewal ('23–'25 renewals only)]**, complete that renewal, and then return to select **[Shop License Renewal (2025–2027)]** for your new license cycle.

By following these steps, you'll stay compliant and ready for business—without skipping a beat!

### Inside this issue

[Don't Forget Renew Your Shop License!](#)

[Our New Online Personal License Renewal Portal](#)

[The Interstate Cosmetology Licensure Compact](#)

[Infection Control During Cold and Flu Season](#)

[The Practice of Medicine vs. The Practice of Esthetics](#)

[Winter Skin, Hair, and Nail Safety](#)

[Top Violations Found During Inspections](#)

['Tis the Season!](#)

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## Our New Online Personal License Renewal Portal: What You Need to Know

The Alabama Board of Cosmetology is moving to a new and improved system to handle online personal license renewals. Our new system is designed to be much easier to use and access, and we plan to add more functionality to it in the future.

If you had a username and password for the previous version of our personal renewal website, that username and password are no longer valid. **When you visit the new site for the first time, please use the "Sign up now" link at the bottom of the login screen to create a new account.** You will need a valid email address (not necessarily the email address we have on file) and a phone number. The system will send verification codes to both your email and your phone during the sign-up process.

You can access our new online renewal system through our website at <https://www.aboc.alabama.gov>. Click the link on the home page for the new Personal License Renewal system. You can also view a video walkthrough of how to renew your license!

One of the advantages of the new online renewal system is that **you can access and print your own license immediately** after your renewal payment has been processed. You can download your license in PDF form from the "Print Licenses" menu option when you are logged in to your account.

As a reminder, we currently still accept license renewals by mail and in-person at our office in Montgomery. You can print out the License Renewal Form from our website and mail in your renewal at any time.

### What's changing?

- ◆ The Board has launched a new online personal license renewal system.
- ◆ Old usernames and passwords no longer work.
- ◆ Licenses are available for you to **print immediately** after payment.

### How do I access the new system?

- ◆ Visit the Board's website at: [www.aboc.alabama.gov](https://www.aboc.alabama.gov)
- ◆ Select **Online License Renewal**.
- ◆ Create a new account.
- ◆ A video walkthrough is available to guide you through the process.

# The Interstate Cosmetology Licensure Compact

## What is the Interstate Cosmetology Licensure Compact?

The Interstate Cosmetology Licensure Compact is a multi-state occupational licensure agreement among U.S. states that makes it easier for licensed cosmetologists to practice across state lines. It allows licensees to practice in all other states that are part of the compact without needing a separate license for each state, similar to the way a driver's license works.

In September 2020, the Department of Defense (DoD) entered into a cooperative agreement with the Council of State Governments (CSG) to fund the creation of new interstate compacts to strengthen the portability of occupational licensure. The Technical Assistance Group, including representatives from the Alabama Board of Cosmetology and Barbering, assisted with the development of the policy recommendations for the compact.

*The Cosmetology Compact was designed to support professional mobility, reduce barriers for cosmetologists who move or work across state lines while maintaining high standards of public safety.*

### Benefits for Military Families

The Department of Defense funded the establishment of the Cosmetology Licensure Compact. DoD is committed to supporting military spouses to ensure the retention of the force, essential for military readiness.

The Cosmetology Licensure Compact allows active duty military personnel or their spouse to designate a Home State and keep that designation as long as the service member is on active duty.

### Other Occupations with Interstate Compacts

Interstate Medical Licensure Compact  
Nurse Licensure Compact and Advanced Practice Nurse Compact  
Emergency Medical Service Officials Licensure Compact  
Physical Therapists Licensure Compact  
Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact  
Audiology and Speech Pathology Interstate Compact  
Occupational Therapy Interstate Licensure Compact  
Counseling Interstate Licensure Compact

**In 2023, Alabama became the third state to pass compact legislation.** Seven states were required to pass legislation to activate the compact. In June 2024, Colorado became the seventh state to pass legislation. As of September 2025, the compact has been enacted into law in **ten states**: Alabama, Arizona, Kentucky, Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee, Colorado, Ohio, Kansas, and Washington, with legislation pending in several more states.

The first meeting of the Cosmetology Licensure Compact Commission, the governing body of the cosmetology compact, took place in October 2024. The Commission is tasked with adopting bylaws, rules, and building the database and license management infrastructure. The compact is expected to become operational, with **multi-state licenses available to cosmetologists by early to mid 2026**, pending completion of infrastructure and regulatory setup.

### How do I obtain a Cosmetology Compact license?

To be eligible to apply for a multi-state license, a cosmetologist must hold an active license in a compact state, the licensee must be in good standing, complete a multi-state application and pay the application fees. Licensees will continue to renew in their home state. The home state license must be active and in good standing to maintain multistate privileges.

A cosmetologist using the compact's multi-state license must abide by the laws, regulations, and rules for the practice of cosmetology in the state where they are located at the time they provide a service.

When compact member states are ready to issue multi-state licenses, instructions will be posted on our website at <https://www.aboc.alabama.gov>.

*For more information or to learn more about the Cosmetology Licensure Compact, visit: [cosmetologycompact.org](http://cosmetologycompact.org)*



## Infection Control During Cold and Flu Season

Cold and flu season presents an increased risk for the spread of illness in salons and schools due to close personal contact and shared tools and surfaces. Strict adherence to infection control and sanitation requirements is essential to protect both clients and professionals. Hands must be thoroughly washed before and after each service, and all tools, implements, and equipment must be properly cleaned and disinfected in accordance with Board rules. Licensees should avoid providing services when they are ill and should reschedule clients who show signs of contagious illness. Consistent infection control practices are a critical component of public safety and professional responsibility, particularly during peak cold and flu months.

**CLEANING:** The process which removes visible debris and residue by washing with warm water and soap or detergent.

**DISINFECTION:** The process which destroys infection-causing microorganisms through treatment with a disinfectant.

### RECOMMENDED CLEANING AND DISINFECTION PROCEDURES:

1. Using a scrub brush, clean multi-use tools and equipment of all visible debris after EACH client using clean water and soap or detergent.
2. After cleaning, **completely immerse** tools in an EPA registered disinfectant following the manufacturer's directions.
3. Remove tools with clean tongs or gloved hands. Allow the disinfected tools to air dry in an area where they are safe from contamination.
4. Store clean, disinfected tools in a clean, closed, container, separate from tools which have not been cleaned and disinfected.

**ELECTRIC TOOLS:** Electric tools should never be immersed in water or other liquid.

1. Electric tools should be wiped clean of dust and debris using a clean towel or cloth.
2. Using EPA registered disinfectant wipes, wipe the surface of the equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's directions.
3. Allow to air dry, then store in a clean, covered container.

### Did You Know?

Disinfectant **MUST** be an EPA registered bactericidal, virucidal, and fungicidal.

All tools should be **cleaned** prior to disinfection.

Disinfectant should be mixed **DAILY**, at a minimum, if tools are submerged in the disinfectant.

Tools must be **completely** immersed in the disinfectant solution.

Disinfectant solutions must be covered with a lid at all times.

After use, single use items must be discarded immediately in a covered container.

***The Practice of  
Esthetics:  
In Alabama,  
estheticians are  
licensed to perform  
non-invasive skin  
care services on the  
outer layer of the  
skin (the epidermis),  
such as facials,  
product application,  
and surface  
massage.***

## The Practice of Medicine vs. the Practice of Esthetics

The Alabama Board of Medical Examiners (ALBME) considers the practice of medicine to include the “use of **lasers/pulsed light devices, or any energy source, chemical, or other modality that affects living tissue** (when referring to the skin, anything below the stratum corneum), whether applied for surgical, therapeutic, or cosmetic purposes.”

Estheticians may only treat non-living tissue (stratum corneum). Procedures that alter, cut, or damage living cells exceed the ABOCB's scope of practice.

### Scope of Practice: Micro channeling vs. Micro needling

**Micro channeling:** In Alabama, **estheticians are permitted to perform micro channeling using tips no greater than 0.25mm**, as this depth **does not penetrate living tissue** and therefore does not constitute the practice of medicine. Here's why:

•**Scope of Practice:** Treatments at or less than this depth remain within the superficial layers of the skin (stratum corneum), aligning with the esthetics scope of practice which allows work on the **outermost layer of the epidermis**. This is based on the determination that shallow micro channeling is a cosmetic procedure focused on improving the appearance and condition of the skin's surface.

•**Important Reminder:** While micro channeling is allowed within the esthetics scope when using 0.25 mm tips or less, estheticians should be cautious in how they market. You should not advertise or claim that micro channeling stimulates collagen production, treats or heals medical skin conditions, or alters the structure or function of the skin.

**Micro needling:** Micro needling typically uses needles longer than 0.25mm to penetrate the living tissue to stimulate collagen or create a controlled injury, and is **considered a medical treatment**. **Micro needling is not permitted for estheticians** unless performed under the supervision and delegation of a licensed medical professional in accordance with medical board regulations.

## Winter Skin, Hair, and Nail Safety

Cold temperatures, low humidity, and indoor heating can significantly impact the skin, hair, and nails during the winter months. Clients may experience increased dryness, irritation, brittle hair, flaky scalps, and cracked cuticles.



While licensees may recommend appropriate cosmetic products and perform services within their licensed scope—such as moisturizing facials, conditioning treatments, scalp care, and nail services—**licensees may not diagnose or treat medical conditions**.

Services and product claims should remain cosmetic in nature and **avoid implying treatment of skin diseases, circulatory issues, or medical conditions**. Maintaining proper sanitation, using clean and well-maintained tools, and adjusting services to account for sensitive winter skin are essential to protecting client safety. When clients present with conditions that appear severe, inflamed, or abnormal, they should be referred to a licensed medical professional.

## !! Top Violations Found During Inspections !!

The Alabama Board of Cosmetology and Barbering is committed to protecting the health and safety of the public by conducting routine inspections of licensed shops. These inspections are designed to ensure compliance with state laws and rules. While many shops are operating in full compliance, several common violations continue to be noted across the state.

### 1. Expired Shop Licenses

Shops must maintain an active license at all times. Operating with an expired license is a violation and can result in fines or disciplinary action. All shop licenses expire on 9/30 of each odd numbered year. Shop licenses must be renewed by October 31 to avoid late renewal penalties.

### 2. Expired Personal Licenses

Every professional working in a shop—cosmetologists, barbers, estheticians, manicurists, and natural hair stylists—must hold a valid license. Personal licenses, except for barbers, expire on the last day of your birth month, in odd numbered years. Barber licenses expire on the last day of your birth month in the even numbered years. Shop owners are responsible for ensuring that all individuals performing services on clients hold the proper license and a current license.



### 3. Tools and Implements Not Properly Cleaned and Disinfected

Tools must be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water, then fully immersed in an EPA-registered disinfectant after each client. Skipping steps or rushing this process increases health risks.

### 4. Improper Storage of Cleaned and Disinfected Tools

Once tools have been cleaned and disinfected, tools should be placed in a clean, closed, and labeled container separate from other items. Leaving tools out on counters exposes them to contamination.

*Get prepared for your next inspection by visiting our "How to prepare for a Shop Inspection" on our Shops section of our webpage!*

## Tis the Season!



As we enter the winter and holiday season, the Alabama Board of Cosmetology and Barbering extends warm wishes to our licensees, schools, and industry partners. This time of year offers an opportunity to reflect on the professionalism, dedication, and care you provide to the public every day.

Whether you are celebrating Christmas, other holidays, or simply the close of another year, we wish you a season filled with health, safety, and success!

Thank you for your continued commitment to upholding standards that protect the public and elevate the cosmetology and barbering professions as we look ahead to the new year!

## About Us:

The Alabama Board of Cosmetology was originally established in 1961 to regulate the practice of cosmetology, protect public health, and ensure safety standards across salons and schools. In 2013, the Legislature expanded its authority to include barbers, officially forming the Alabama Board of Cosmetology and Barbering. This consolidation created a single regulatory agency responsible for licensing professionals, approving schools, and enforcing sanitation and safety laws for cosmetologists, estheticians, manicurists, natural hair stylists, threaders, and barbers.

## Purpose of the Board

The Board's primary mission is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public by:

- Licensing qualified practitioners and establishments
- Setting education and training standards
- Conducting inspections and investigations
- Enforcing rules and sanitation requirements

This ensures that all beauty and grooming services in Alabama are provided by trained, licensed professionals in safe and sanitary environments.

## ABOCB Board Members

Ms. Audra Maxwell, District 1 Cosmetologist	Mr. Daniel Powers, District 2 Secretary/Treasurer Barber
Ms. April Davis, District 3 Esthetician	Ms. Misty Garrison, District 4 Investigative Committee Member Cosmetologist
Ms. Kathy Linden, District 5 Chair Consumer Member	Ms. Tommie Jinright, District 6 Barber
Vacant, District 7 Manicurist	

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