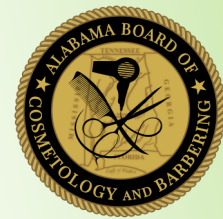




ALABAMA BOARD OF COSMETOLOGY AND BARBERING

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Summer 2026 Newsletter

Important Legislative Update: Alabama Legislature Exempts Natural Hair Styling from Licensure

Senate Bill 183 (SB183), sponsored by Senators Merika Coleman, Linda Coleman-Madison, and Vivian Figures, exempts Natural Hair Styling services from regulation by the Board, effective October 1, 2026.

This means that individuals who perform only natural hair styling services will no longer be required to hold a license issued by the Board, and will not be regulated by the Board. Businesses that provide only natural hair styling services do not need a Board-issued shop license and are not subject to inspection by the Board.

SB183 provides an option for individuals to obtain a voluntary Natural Hair Stylist license. Individuals who choose to become licensed must meet all Board requirements for licensure. Once licensed, these individuals remain under the regulatory authority of the Board. Individuals who currently hold a Natural Hair Stylist license may continue to renew their license if they choose to do so. This option allows individuals to demonstrate professional credentials while remaining compliant with Board standards.

For more information, please visit our website or contact our office if you have questions about whether a service requires a license or falls under the regulatory authority of the Board.

Inside this issue

Alabama Legislature Exempts Natural Hair Styling from Licensure

Passage of the Esthetics Interstate Compact

Barber Licenses Renew This Year

Changes in Administrative Rules Make it Easier to Test for Exams

Cleaning and Disinfection in Nail Salons

FDA Warning on Eyebrow and Eyelash Tinting Products

Understanding the Difference: Alabama Law, Board Rules, and Regulatory Authority

FDA Recall of Morovan-branded Gel Nail Polish Remover

Alabama Becomes the First State to Pass the Esthetics Interstate Compact



With the passage of Senate Bill 163, sponsored by Senator Kirk Hatcher, Alabama became the first state to enact the Esthetics Interstate Compact! Kansas and Virginia have since enacted esthetics compact legislation.

Once seven states have enacted the Esthetics Compact, the Esthetics Compact Commission will be formed to develop and implement the process for issuing multistate esthetics licenses.

The Cosmetology Interstate Compact currently includes 11 member states: Kentucky, Arizona, Alabama, Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee, Colorado, Ohio, Kansas, Washington, and West Virginia. Compact legislation is also actively pending in several additional states.

Development of a shared compact

licensing database—designed to support both the Cosmetology and Esthetics Compacts—began in early December 2025. This system is expected to allow member states to begin issuing multistate cosmetology licenses as early as late summer or early fall.

Multistate licensure offers several key benefits, including expanded employment opportunities across state lines, reduced licensure barriers through increased mobility, and enhanced support for military spouses and families who relocate frequently.

For more information about these compacts, visit: cosmetologycompact.gov and estheticscompact.org.

“The cosmetology and esthetics compacts strengthen workforce mobility, support economic growth, and ensure professionals can continue serving clients wherever opportunity takes them.” Leslie Roste, Professional Beauty Association

It's Easy to Renew!

- ◇ The Board has a new online personal license renewal system.
- ◇ Visit the Board's website at: www.aboc.alabama.gov
- ◇ Select **Online License Renewal**.
- ◇ Create a new account.
- ◇ Ensure that your photo upload is a clear **passport type photo of your head and shoulders**, no hats, no glasses.
- ◇ Licenses are available for you to **print immediately** after payment.

Barber Licenses Renew This Year!

All barber licenses issued by the Board expire this year on the last day of your birth month. The Board makes renewing your license quick and easy through our new online personal renewal platform!

You can access our new online renewal system through our website at 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.

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 and a phone number. The system will send verification codes to both your email and your phone during the sign-up process.

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. **Please note that the Board no longer mails licenses renewed online.** Licenses should be printed in color and must be displayed at your workstation.



Changes in Administrative Rules Make it Easier to Test for Exams

ABOCB has updated its administrative rules regarding licensure examinations. These changes are designed to provide greater flexibility for applicants while maintaining standards that ensure competency and public protection.

Under the previous rules, individuals who completed cosmetology or barbering school, or an apprenticeship program, were required to take and pass their licensing examinations within two (2) years of completion of the program. If that deadline was missed, the applicant could be required to complete additional training before becoming eligible to test again.

Effective May 15, 2026, the updated rules remove the strict two-year deadline to sit for the exam after completing school or an apprenticeship. This means that applicants will no longer lose eligibility to test simply due to the passage of time after completing their education or training program.

While the eligibility window to begin testing is now more flexible, the rules introduce a new requirement once testing has started: Applicants must pass both the written and practical examinations within a two (2) year period, known as the “eligibility period.”

This change shifts the focus from when an applicant starts the testing process to ensuring they complete it within a reasonable and consistent timeframe.

These updates are intended to remove unnecessary barriers for individuals who may face delays after completing their education, provide flexibility for life circumstances such as work, family obligations, or financial considerations, and maintain examination integrity by ensuring both portions of the exam are completed within a defined period.

The full text of these rule changes is available on the Board’s website. Licensees, students, schools, and other stakeholders are encouraged to review the rule changes to ensure that you stay informed.

Please visit our website for the most up-to-date laws and administrative rules.

Stay Updated!

Stay updated on our laws and administrative rules by regularly checking our website.

Our website contains the most current information related to the laws and administrative rules which govern the operations of the board.

www.aboc.alabama.gov



Clean tools.

Safe clients.

Strong salons.

*Infection control starts
with every service,
every client.*

Cleaning and Disinfection in Nail Salons: Protecting Clients and Your License

Proper cleaning and disinfection are among the most important responsibilities in a nail salon. Nail services involve direct contact with skin, nails, and sometimes small cuts or abrasions, creating opportunities for bacteria, fungi, and viruses to spread if proper infection control procedures are not followed.

Common bacterial infections associated with improperly disinfected tools include staph infections and other skin infections. Fungal infections, such as nail fungus, can spread through contaminated implements, foot spas, files, and buffers. Viruses, including those spread through blood or bodily fluids, may also be transmitted when tools are not properly cleaned and disinfected between clients.

Cleaning and disinfecting are not the same. Implements must **first be thoroughly cleaned** with soap or detergent and water to remove debris before being **disinfected with an EPA-registered disinfectant** according to the manufacturer's instructions and required contact time. Simply wiping tools off or placing dirty implements into disinfectant is not effective. All reusable implements that come into contact with clients must be properly disinfected after each use, while single-use items must be discarded immediately after the service.

Salon owners should also ensure foot spas are cleaned and disinfected between clients and at the end of each day. Maintaining proper infection control practices protects public health, strengthens client trust, and helps licensees remain compliant with Board regulations and professional standards.



FDA Warning on Eyebrow and Eyelash Tinting Products

Licensees are reminded that many hair coloring products containing aniline derivatives and other oxidative dye ingredients are **not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use on the eyebrows or eyelashes**. Ingredients such as paraphenylenediamine (PPD) and similar coal-tar dye compounds are commonly found in hair color products and may pose serious health and safety risks when used near the eyes.

The FDA requires many of these products to carry a warning stating that they must not be used for dyeing the eyebrows or eyelashes because doing so may cause severe eye injury, including blindness. Even when products are marketed online or through beauty suppliers as "brow tint" products, licensees should carefully review ingredient labels, manufacturer instructions, and FDA guidance before use.

Using unapproved products around the eye area may also increase the risk of allergic reactions, burns, swelling, irritation, infection, and permanent injury. The skin surrounding the eyes is extremely delicate and more vulnerable to chemical exposure than the scalp.

Licensees are encouraged to use only products specifically intended and legally approved for eyebrow and eyelash application and to follow all manufacturer directions, safety precautions, and state board regulations. Maintaining safe practices protects both the public and the professional licensee.

As always, salons and practitioners are responsible for ensuring that all products used in services are safe, properly labeled, and used according to applicable laws and regulations.



Understanding the Difference: Alabama Law, Board Rules, and Regulatory Authority

With many proposed bills in the Alabama Legislature over the past few years with the potential to significantly impact our industry, many licensees have asked, “Why don’t you regulate this?” or “Why don’t you do anything about that?” Most often, the answer is, “We do not have the legal authority.”

Many licensees are familiar with the Board’s rules and regulations, but less have a clear understanding of the important distinction between laws passed by the Alabama Legislature and the administrative rules adopted by the Board. While both work together to regulate the profession, they serve different purposes and are created through different processes.

The Alabama Legislature is responsible for passing the laws found in the Alabama Code. These laws establish the authority of the Board, define what professions and activities are regulated, set licensing requirements, and determine the Board’s powers and responsibilities. Only the Legislature can create, amend, or remove statutory requirements through the legislative process.

The Board’s role is different. The Board does not determine what is or is not regulated based on preference or opinion. Instead, the Board is responsible for enforcing the law as written by the Legislature. In carrying out that responsibility, the Board adopts administrative rules that help clarify, interpret, and implement the law in practical ways. These rules provide the detailed standards needed for day-to-day operations such as cleaning and disinfection requirements, inspection procedures, school standards, safety practices, and licensing processes.

Administrative rules cannot conflict with or exceed the authority granted in state law.

Instead, they serve to supplement the law by providing guidance and consistency for licensees, schools, and establishments.

Understanding the distinction between laws and rules helps clarify the Board’s role in protecting public health and safety while ensuring fair and consistent enforcement of the laws enacted by the State of Alabama.



The Alabama Legislature maintains a public website where all individuals can track and monitor legislation. When the legislature is in session, a bill can be tracked through the legislative process in real time. All licensees are encouraged to stay informed about legislation that may impact our industry.

Please visit the Alabama Legislature’s website at <https://alison.legislature.state.al.us> for more information.





FDA Recall of Morovan-branded Gel Nail Polish Remover

The Nail Manufacturer Council on Safety (NMC), a council of the Professional Beauty Association, is urging licensed professionals and consumers to use caution when purchasing and using rapid or “instant” gel nail polish removers following a recent FDA recall involving a Morovan-branded product. According to the FDA, testing revealed the product contained **extremely high levels of methylene chloride and chloroform**, chemicals that are prohibited in cosmetic products in the United States due to serious health and safety concerns.

These products are commonly marketed online as “magic removers” or fast-acting gel polish removers designed to quickly break down gel polish. However, methylene chloride has been associated with significant health risks, including toxicity, cancer concerns, and even fatalities in occupational settings. Chloroform is also banned in cosmetics because of its hazardous effects on human health.

The NMC has expressed concern that similar products continue to be sold through online marketplaces, often without proper labeling, ingredient disclosure, or regulatory oversight. Industry leaders are encouraging salon professionals to purchase products only from reputable professional suppliers and to avoid products making unrealistic “instant removal” claims.

Licensed professionals and consumers are also encouraged to report suspicious or unlabeled cosmetic products to the FDA or other appropriate authorities to help protect public health and salon safety.

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