



If you cannot find the answer to your question(s) regarding the Montana Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists on this FAQ we encourage you to review the board's website at www.cosmetology.mt.gov or contact our customer service unit at dlibsbsdhelp@mt.gov.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
Montana Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists
(FAQ Updated 01/2024)

Question 1:

What professions does this board regulate?

Response 1:

Presently the board issues the following licenses:

- Barber
- Barber - Nonchemical
- Cosmetologist
- Electrologist
- Esthetician
- Instructors
- Manicurist
- Salon / Shop (includes fixed location and mobile)
- School or Course
- Booth Renter (all license types)

For more information on how to apply for a license and licensing requirements visit the board's website at <http://www.cosmetology.mt.gov>. If you want to apply for a license we recommend you use the [online application \(www.ebiz.mt.gov/pol\)](http://www.ebiz.mt.gov/pol) as that is the fastest, most efficient way to apply for a license. Note that it is paying the fee that submits the application so that staff can begin their review.

Question 2:

Can the board/department give me legal advice/interpretation of its statutes and rules?

Response 2:

The board and its staff cannot offer advice, interpretation, or legal determinations. Doing so would be providing you legal advice/counsel. It is the responsibility of licensees and members of the public to review the relevant statutes and rules to determine whether a specific practice is legal and/or what licenses are required to operate. If legal advice is needed, you may consult your own attorney.

Question 3:

I am interested in applying for a license. What are the licensing requirements?

Response 3:

Each license type under this board has a licensing requirements and application checklist that summarizes the licensing requirements and lists that specific documents that applicants need to submit as part of the application. Click on the below links to access a particular checklist. The fee to apply for the license is also listed on the checklist.

- Barber
 - [Not currently licensed](#)
 - [Currently licensed in another jurisdiction](#)
- Barber-Nonchemical
 - [Not currently licensed](#)
 - [Currently licensed in another jurisdiction](#)
- Cosmetologist
 - [Not currently licensed](#)
 - [Currently licensed in another jurisdiction](#)
- Electrologist
 - [Not currently licensed](#)
 - [Currently licensed in another jurisdiction](#)
- Esthetician
 - [Not currently licensed](#)
 - [Currently licensed in another jurisdiction](#)
- [Instructor](#)
- Manicurist
 - [Not currently licensed](#)
 - [Currently licensed in another jurisdiction](#)
- [Salon/Shop](#) (includes mobile)
- [School or Course](#)
- [Booth Renter \(all license types\)](#)

Staff are currently working on updating the checklists to create more user-friendly documents. For more information on how to apply for a license and licensing requirements visit the board's website at <http://boards.bsd.dli.mt.gov/cos>. If you want to apply for a license we recommend you use the [online application \(www.ebiz.mt.gov/pol\)](http://www.ebiz.mt.gov/pol) as that is the fastest, most efficient way to apply for a license. Note that it is paying the fee that actually submits the application so that staff can begin their review.

Question 4:

I am applying for a [barber/barber nonchemical/cosmetologist/electrologists/esthetician/manicurist/instructor] license. Can I get licensed without taking the exam(s)?

Response 4:

On May 15, 2020, the Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists passed a motion allowing the department to issue provisional permits to qualifying applicants who have completed their applications for licensure with the exception of having passed the required exam(s). Provisional permits will expire 90 days from the date they are issued. Note that you have to meet all the other licensing requirements in order to qualify for a provisional permit.

If you would like to apply for provisional permit you must do the following:

- Step 1 – Submit an application for licensure and pay the associated fee using the normal application method. Online application is recommended. Further information on how to apply for a license can be found on the board's website at <http://www.cosmetology.mt.gov>. Note that paying the fee is what actually submits your application so staff can begin their review. If you have already submitted an application you can move onto Step 2.
- Step 2 – If you are unable to take the required exam(s) but would like staff to review your application to determine if you apply for a provisional permit you can either upload that request to apply for a provisional permit directly to your online application; or, e-mail it to dlibsdlhelp@mt.gov.

Question 5:

I am currently licensed as a [barber/barber-nonchemical/cosmetologist/electrologist/esthetician/instructor/manicurist] in another state or jurisdiction. Can I "transfer" my license? Does Montana have reciprocity agreements with any other states?

Response 5:

You cannot transfer a license nor does Montana have reciprocity agreements with any other jurisdictions. If you are interested in applying for a Montana license you will need to apply and pay the associated application fee. If you are actively licensed in another state your application will be considered under the "out-of-state" licensing rule for your particular license type. Also see Question/Response #3 for more information on licensing requirements and the application process.

Question 6:

I am thinking of going to school/am already in school and am interested in applying for licensure as a [barber/barber-nonchemical/cosmetologist/electrologist/esthetician/instructor/manicurist] in Montana at some point in the future. Do you have any schools or programs you would recommend? What classes should I take so I can eventually get licensed in Montana?

Response 6:

Neither the board nor staff can offer you legal advice. It is up to you to look at current licensing requirements in Montana and make your own choices when deciding which schools to attend. If you attend school in Montana, note that Montana does license schools. See the board's website at <http://www.cosmetology.mt.gov> for more information.

Additionally, the Legislature and the board can change the board's licensing regulations. The requirements today might not be the same as the requirements at a future date. If you are interested in staying current on board activities and proposed rulemaking you can e-mail dlibsdcos@mt.gov and ask to be added to the board's interested parties list. Individuals on that list will receive notice of all board meeting agendas and proposals to change the administrative rules.

You should also keep in mind that different states and jurisdictions have different licensing requirements so if you are interested in eventually applying for a license in a jurisdiction other than Montana you should contact that jurisdiction(s) regulatory body as well.

Question 7:

I have reviewed the licensing requirements for [barber/barber-nonchemical/cosmetologist/electrologist/esthetician/instructor/manicurist/school/shop/salon] but I am not sure if I would qualify for a license. If I send you my [unofficial transcript, facts about a license I hold in another state, etc.] could you review the information and let me know if I would qualify and should apply for a license?

Response 7:

Neither staff nor the board preapprove application materials or give legal advice. It is up to you to review the licensing requirements and make your own determination regarding whether you would like to apply for a license. The only way staff will review your specific information is if you apply for a license and paid the application fee. Unless you pay the fee, you have not submitted an application. If you do decide to apply, we recommend you [apply online](#) as it is the most efficient method. Once you apply and pay the fee, processing staff will begin reviewing your information.

Question 8:

I have had [criminal conviction(s) in the past/am currently on probation/was disciplined by another state licensing board, etc.]. Could you review my legal history to let me know if I would qualify and should apply for a license?

Response 8:

Neither staff nor the board preapprove application materials or give legal advice. It is up to you to review the licensing requirements and make you own determination regarding whether you would

like to apply for a license. Only after you apply will staff review your criminal history. With that said, having a criminal history does not automatically disqualify you from licensure. If you apply and pay the fee the specifics of your personal history will be evaluated as part of your application.

Applications that qualify as complete and routine can be issued by staff. Applications that are nonroutine must be evaluated by the board at a board meeting so a determination can be made to issue a license, issue a license with probation, or deny a license. The board's rules defining what qualifies as nonroutine are [ARM 24.121.406](#) and [24.121.408](#).

Question 9:

I have applied for a license as a [barber/barber-nonchemical/cosmetologist/electrologist/esthetician/instructor/manicurist/school/shop/salon] but have not been issued a license yet. Can I start practicing before a license is issued?

Response 9:

No. If you qualify and are issued a license that is when you may begin practicing and/or operating your facility.

Question 10:

What is the best way to submit supplemental documents to my application record that do not need to be sent to you directly from a primary source?

Response 10:

You can upload your own application documents to your [online application](#) record. For further assistance you can contact customer service staff at dlibsdlhelp@mt.gov or 406-841-2300.

Question 11:

Where can I find a copy of all the board's laws?

Response 11:

Links to the official, online versions of the board's statutes, administrative rules, and notices of proposed rulemaking can be found on the website at www.cosmetology.mt.gov under the regulations menu. Also, see the direct links below.

- **Statutes and Rules that Apply to All Licensing Boards under DLI**
 - [Title 37, chapter 1, MCA](#)
 - [ARM Title 24, chapter 101](#)
- **Statutes and Rules that Apply to Professions Regulated by the Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists**
 - [Title 2 chapter 15, part 17, MCA](#)
 - [Title 37, chapter 31, MCA](#)

- [ARM Title 24, chapter 121](#)
- **[Proposed Rulemaking](#)**

Question 12:

What is the scope of practice for a [barber/barber-nonchemical/cosmetologist/electrologist/esthetician/instructor/manicurist/school/shop/salon]?

Response 12:

The scope(s) of practice for all professions licensed under this board can be found under ARM 24.121.604 below. In addition, you can view related definitions in [37-31-101, MCA](#), and [ARM 24.121.301](#).

You may also want to review [37-31-102, MCA](#), which lists the exemptions from licensure and [ARM 24.121.2301](#) and [37-1-316, MCA](#), which pertain to unprofessional conduct. See also Question/Response #12.

[ARM 24.121.604](#):...

(2) The scope of training required for the practice of barbering is as follows:

- (a) haircutting with proper uses of tools (e.g., shears, razor, clippers, and thinning shears);
- (b) shampooing and scalp treatments;
- (c) hairstyling, including weaves, braiding, and extensions;
- (d) wet setting, blow drying, curling, and flat ironing; and the arranging of dry hair;
- (e) hair coloring, hair lightening, waving, and relaxing;
- (f) facial shaving with straight razor; and
- (g) skin care.

(3) The scope of training required for the practice of barbering nonchemical is as follows:

- (a) haircutting with proper uses of tools (e.g., shears, razor, clippers, and thinning shears);
- (b) shampooing and scalp treatments;
- (c) hairstyling, including weaves, braiding, and extensions;
- (d) wet setting, blow drying, curling, and flat ironing; and the arranging of dry hair;
- (e) facial shaving with straight razor; and

(f) skin care.

(4) The scope of training required for the practice of cosmetology is as follows:

(a) manicuring and pedicuring, including massage and polishing, nail art, and use of an electric nail file;

(b) application and removal of artificial nails, gels, tips, and wraps;

(c) skin care, skin exfoliation, facials, makeup application, epilation, electricity and light therapies, and application of artificial lashes;

(d) hair coloring, hair lightening, waving, and relaxing;

(e) shampoo and scalp treatments;

(f) hairstyling, including weaves, braiding, and extensions;

(g) wet setting, blow drying, curling and flat ironing, and the arranging of dry hair; and

(h) haircutting with proper uses of tools (e.g., shears, razor, clippers, and thinning shears).

(5) The scope of training required for the practice of electrology is as follows:

(a) electrolysis;

(b) thermolysis;

(c) the blend;

(d) electricity, chemistry, and light therapy; and

(e) epilation.

(6) The scope of training required for the practice of manicuring is as follows:

(a) manicuring;

(b) pedicuring; and

(c) applying and removing artificial nails, gels, tips, and wraps and use of an electric nail file.

(7) The scope of training required for the practice of esthetics is as follows:

(a) skin care;

(b) skin exfoliation, facials, and makeup application;

(c) epilation;

(d) electricity and light therapies; and

(e) application of artificial lashes.

Question 13:

I am a licensed [barber/barber-nonchemical/cosmetologist/ electrologist/esthetician/instructor/ manicurist/school/shop/salon] and I want to perform [x procedure] using [x product]. Is that within my scope of practice?

Response 13:

See Response #12 regarding scope of practice.

You can also review all the board's statutes and rules to see if the specific procedure and/or product is specifically called out and defined by the board or if what that product does is described in the definitions or other statutes and rules (see Response #11 for links to all the board's regulations). You may want to specifically view the board's definitions in [ARM 24.121.301](#) and [37-31-101, MCA](#), in case any of those definitions relate to the procedure(s) and your scope(s) of practice under this board.

Note that the board and its staff cannot offer advice, interpretation, or legal determinations. Doing so would be providing you legal advice/counsel. It is the responsibility of licensees and members of the public to review the relevant statutes and rules to determine whether a specific practice is legal and/or what licenses are required to operate. If legal advice is needed, you may consult your own attorney.

Question 14:

I am a licensed [barber/barber-nonchemical/cosmetologist/ electrologist/esthetician/instructor/ manicurist/school/shop/salon]. What are the board's regulations on tattooing and microblading? Are those within my scope of practice?

Response 14:

Regulations pertaining to microblading and tattooing fall under the jurisdiction of [the Department of Public Health and Human Services Food and Consumer Safety Section](#) as opposed to the Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists. See Question/Response #12 regarding scopes of practice and Question/Response #10 for links to all the board's regulations. You may want to specifically view the board's definitions in [ARM 24.121.301](#) and [37-31-101, MCA](#), in case any of those definitions relate to the procedure(s) and your scope(s) of practice under this board.

Note that the board and its staff cannot offer advice, interpretation, or legal determinations. Doing so would be providing you legal advice/counsel. It is the responsibility of licensees and members of the public to review the relevant statutes and rules to determine whether a specific practice is legal

and/or what licenses are required to operate. If legal advice is needed, you may consult your own attorney.

Question 15:

I am a licensed [barber/barber-nonchemical/cosmetologist/ electrologist/esthetician/instructor/manicurist]. Can I serve a client in their home or a location other than a salon/shop?

Response 15:

See [37-31-301\(2\)\(c\)](#), MCA, below.

[MCA 37-31-301](#). Prohibited acts. (1) Without an appropriate license issued under this chapter, it is unlawful to:

- (a) practice barbering, barbering nonchemical, cosmetology, electrology, esthetics, or manicuring for compensation;
- (b) own, manage, operate, or conduct a school of barbering, barbering nonchemical, cosmetology, electrology, esthetics, or manicuring;
- (c) manage or operate a salon or shop or a booth; or
- (d) teach in a school of barbering, barbering nonchemical, cosmetology, electrology, esthetics, or manicuring.

(2) It is unlawful:

(a) for a person who owns, manages, or controls a salon or shop to employ or use an unlicensed person as a barber, a barber nonchemical, a cosmetologist, an electrologist, an esthetician, or a manicurist;

(b) to operate a school of barbering, barbering nonchemical, cosmetology, electrology, esthetics, or manicuring without complying with all of the regulations of **37-31-311**;

(c) to practice barbering, barbering nonchemical, cosmetology, electrology, esthetics, or manicuring in any place other than in a licensed salon or shop as provided in this chapter, except when a licensee is requested:

(i) by a customer to go to a place other than a licensed salon or shop and is sent to the customer from a licensed salon or shop; or

(ii) by a customer with a disability or homebound customer to go to the customer's place of residence; or

(d) to violate any of the provisions of this chapter.

See also [37-31-101\(8\)](#), MCA, defines "place of residence" as: "a home and the following residences defined under [50-5-101](#):

- (a) an assisted living facility;
- (b) an intermediate care facility for the developmentally disabled;
- (c) a hospice;
- (d) a critical access hospital;
- (e) a long-term care facility; or

(f) a residential treatment facility."

Question 16:

I am a licensed [barber/barber-nonchemical/cosmetologist/electrologist/esthetician/instructor/manicurist]. Can I serve a client in a nursing home/assisted living facility if that facility does not have a licensed shop/salon?

Response 16:

See Question/Response #15 and the definition for "place of residence."

Question 17:

Does the board license mobile salons/shops?

Response 17:

Yes. Rules pertaining to mobile salons and shops including licensing and operation requirements can be found in the board's administrative rules and took effect on 12/11/21. Even if you already have a fixed location salon or shop license, if you want to operate a mobile salon or shop you will need to apply for and obtain a license for the mobile salon or shop. Note that all salon and shop applications must be submitted using the online application at <https://ebiz.mt.gov/POL/Default.aspx>. There is no longer a paper application.

Question 18:

I am a [barber/barber-nonchemical/cosmetologist/electrologist/esthetician/instructor/manicurist] who [owns/works/has booth renter license] in a [salon/shop/school]. Can I perform my services on the property but outside the physical walls of the licensed [salon/shop/school]?

Response 18:

The board and its staff cannot offer advice, interpretation, or legal determinations. Doing so would be providing you legal advice/counsel. It is the responsibility of licensees and members of the public to review the relevant statutes and rules to determine whether a specific practice is legal and/or what licenses are required to operate. If legal advice is needed, you may consult your own attorney.

What we can do is direct you to relevant statutes and rules so you can review them yourself (see [37-31-301, MCA](#), and [ARM 24.121.605](#) and [24.121.2301](#) below). The parts that seem most applicable to this question are highlighted but we encourage you to read all of the text in case there is something else that is relevant to your question.

[MCA 37-31-301](#). **Prohibited acts.** (1) Without an appropriate license issued under this chapter, it is unlawful to:

- (a) practice barbering, barbering nonchemical, cosmetology, electrology, esthetics, or manicuring for compensation;
- (b) own, manage, operate, or conduct a school of barbering, barbering nonchemical, cosmetology, electrology, esthetics, or manicuring;
- (c) manage or operate a salon or shop or a booth; or
- (d) teach in a school of barbering, barbering nonchemical, cosmetology, electrology, esthetics, or manicuring.

(2) It is unlawful:

- (a) for a person who owns, manages, or controls a salon or shop to employ or use an unlicensed person as a barber, a barber nonchemical, a cosmetologist, an electrologist, an esthetician, or a manicurist;
- (b) to operate a school of barbering, barbering nonchemical, cosmetology, electrology, esthetics, or manicuring without complying with all of the regulations of **37-31-311**;
- (c) to practice barbering, barbering nonchemical, cosmetology, electrology, esthetics, or manicuring in any place other than in a licensed salon or shop as provided in this chapter, except when a licensee is requested:
 - (i) by a customer to go to a place other than a licensed salon or shop and is sent to the customer from a licensed salon or shop; or
 - (ii) by a customer with a disability or homebound customer to go to the customer's place of residence; or
- (d) to violate any of the provisions of this chapter.

Question 19:

I am in the process of opening a [shop/salon/school]. In addition to a license under this board, what type of insurance do I need?

Response 19:

Insurance falls outside the scope of regulatory authority of the Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists. You might try contacting the [Office of the Commissioner of Securities and Insurance](#) to see if it can direct you to any applicable laws that might fall outside this board's authority. If you require legal advice, you will need to contact your own attorney as neither staff nor the board can offer you legal advice.

Question 20:

I am licensed under this board and would like to provide clients alcoholic beverages at my salon/shop. What are the board's laws pertaining to alcohol in shops/salons?

Response 20:

The Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists and the Department of Labor and Industry do not regulate alcohol in salons/shops. For more information on these regulations, you will need to contact the [Department of Revenue Alcoholic Beverage Control Division](#).

Question 21:

What are the board's regulations concerning facilities known as medical spas?

Response 21:

Medical spa is not defined by statute or rule. In common usage, and for purposes of this FAQ, the term medical spa means a facility offering cosmetic procedures that exceed the scope of practice of licensees under the Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists. In other words, a medical spa is a facility that offers medical cosmetic procedures. For more information on medical spas and regulations view the [medical spa specific FAQ](#) posted to the board's [FAQ webpage](#).

Question 22:

How do I obtain a list/ mailing list of licensees under this board?

Response 22:

You can purchase a list of licensees from the licensee download service on our website at <https://boards.bsd.dli.mt.gov/barber-and-cosmetologists/#licensee-mailing-lists#licensee-mailing-lists>. Once you select all the criteria for the list then you pay by credit card to complete your purchase.

The cost is \$35 for up to and including 300 records (licensees) with an additional charge of \$0.03 per record after the initial 300 records. Note that we do not give out phone numbers or e-mail addresses for any of our licensees.

For further questions and assistance contact customer service staff at dlibsdhelp@mt.gov.

Question 23:

Does the board pre-approve continuing education for instructors?

Response 23:

No. Licensed instructors are still required to obtain 30 hours of CE per renewal period. However, as of 12/11/21, amendments to the board's rules took effect and the board no longer pre-approves continuing education courses or sponsors. Rather, it is up to each licensee to select quality CE programs that contribute to their professional knowledge and competence and that meet the education objectives described in the below rule.

ARM 24.121.2101 CONTINUING EDUCATION – INSTRUCTORS (1) Instructors are required to complete 30 hours of continuing education (CE) per renewal period to maintain active status licensure. Eight of the 30 hours must be in teaching methodology pursuant to ARM 24.121.1105.

(2) Licensees shall affirm an understanding of their recurring duty to comply with CE requirements as a part of license renewal.

- (3) CE requirements will not apply until after the licensee's first renewal.
- (4) Licensees are responsible for selecting quality programs that focus on protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public and contribute to licensees' professional knowledge and competence. Acceptable CE activities:
- (a) directly relate to the licensee's scope of practice as defined in board statute or rule;
 - (b) review existing concepts and techniques;
 - (c) convey information beyond the basic professional education;
 - (d) update knowledge on the practice and advances in the profession; or
 - (e) reinforce professional conduct or ethical obligations of the licensee.
- (5) CE hours will not be granted to a licensee teaching a course.
- (6) Board meetings are approved as CE.
- (a) A licensee must attend at least half of a meeting to obtain credit.
 - (b) A board meeting is worth two hours of CE credit.
- (7) The department may randomly audit up to 50 percent of renewed licensees.
- (8) Licensees must maintain documentation of completed CE for three years and provide documentation to the board upon request. Documentation must include the following information:
- (a) licensee name;
 - (b) course title and description of content;
 - (c) presenter or sponsor;
 - (d) course date(s); and
 - (e) number of CE hours earned.
- (9) Licensees found to be in noncompliance with CE requirements may be subject to administrative suspension. Licensees may not apply CE hours used to complete delinquent CE requirements for the next education reporting period.
- (10) Any CE hours required by disciplinary order do not apply toward the 30 hours that are required per renewal period under this rule.

Question 24:

What is the best way to submit a question to staff or the board?

Response 24:

First, we encourage you to visit the board's website to see if the information you require is already posted. If you cannot find the information on the website or have a comment for staff or the board you can e-mail the board at dlibsdfhelp@mt.gov or contact customer service staff at 406-841-2300. E-mail is usually the most efficient way to contact department staff and will also allow you to have your response in writing so you can reference it later.



If you have a question regarding an application, you have already submitted for review you should also contact staff at dlibsdfhelp@mt.gov.