Body Art Enacted Legislation

For the 2026 legislative sessions state legislatures introduced 167 bills on body art, enacting 37 bills in 21 states.

Bills were enacted on acupuncture, barbers and cosmetology, massage therapy and piercing and tattoos.

The states where bills on body art were enacted: Alaska, Alabama, Colorado, Hawaii, Iowa, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, Vermont and Washington.

Acupuncture

- 8 Enacted in IL, LA, MD, MN, NH, WA

Louisiana HB 405, Act No. 550 – Practice of Acupuncture

Provides for the licensure of acupuncturists; provides for the name change of the national certifying organization.

Maryland HB 374, Chap. No. 233 – State Acupuncture Board

This bill concerns the State Acupuncture Board and makes revisions to acupuncture practice regulations. The bill modifies licensing and renewal procedures, removes certain definitions, updates accreditation terminology, and establishes prohibitions against employing unlicensed practitioners or aiding unauthorized practice. The bill also restructures penalty provisions for violations of acupuncture practice requirements.

Maryland SB 370, Chap. No. 234 – State Acupuncture Board Revisions

This bill revises Maryland's State Acupuncture Board regulations and licensing requirements. The bill modifies renewal procedures, updates accreditation organization references, and addresses unauthorized practice of acupuncture. The bill also restructures penalties for violations of acupuncture practice laws.

Minnesota HB 3825, Chap. No. 115 - Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine Practice

This bill modifies licensing and scope of practice for multiple health occupations including acupuncture and herbal medicine practice, athletic training, mortuary science, social work, dentistry practice, marriage and family therapy, pharmacy practice, physical therapists,

and advanced practice registered nurses. The bill establishes registration for massage therapists and Asian bodywork therapists and establishes licensure for music therapists. The bill also modifies certain unlicensed practice provisions, establishes advisory councils, imposes civil penalties, requires reports, imposes fees, and appropriates money.

New Hampshire HB 1269, Chap No. 223 - Qualifications to Practice Acupuncture

This bill modifies the qualifications and licensure requirements for acupuncture practice in New Hampshire. It also updates the composition of the acupuncture board and the name of the relevant certification body.

Barbers and Cosmetology

- 61 Introduced in 2026
- 16 Enacted in AK, CO, HI, IA, IL, KY, ME, MS, NH, NJ, RI, VT, WA

Colorado HB 1181, Chap. No. 353 – Sunset Barber Cosmetologist Act

This bill continues the regulation of barbers, hairstylists, cosmetologists, estheticians, nail technicians, and registered places of business under Colorado's Barber and Cosmetologist Act. The bill implements recommendations from the Department of Regulatory Agencies' 2025 sunset report, including updating definitions, removing the advisory committee, and adding new exemptions from licensure requirements.

Hawaii SB 2876, Act No. 74 – Natural Hair Braiding Licensing Requirements

This bill addresses the regulation of natural hair braiding in Hawaii by replacing the existing licensure requirement under the Barbering and Cosmetology Licensing Act with a registration requirement. The legislature finds that natural hair braiding is a traditional practice distinct from cosmetology and barbering, and that requiring natural hair braiders to obtain a full cosmetology or barbering license imposes an undue burden. Beginning January 1, 2028, natural hair braiders must register with the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology and comply with sanitation, health, and safety requirements.

Iowa HB 711, Chap. No. 140 – Practice of Barbering and Cosmetology Arts and Sciences

Relates to the practice of barbering and cosmetology arts and sciences, including establishment training programs, schools of barbering and cosmetology arts and sciences, and course of study.

Illinois HB 3460, P.A. 478 – Barber and Cosmetology Apprenticeship Agreements

This bill amends the Barber, Cosmetology, Esthetics, Hair Braiding, and Nail Technology Act of 1985 to create a formal apprenticeship program as an alternative pathway to licensure for cosmetologists, barbers, estheticians, nail technicians, and hair braiders. The

bill also addresses the processing of license applications submitted by incarcerated persons and modifies examination and curriculum requirements for several licensed professions.

Illinios SB 2495, P.A. No. 153 - Cosmetology and Esthetics

Repeals the Barber, Cosmetology, Esthetics, Hair Braiding, and Nail Technology Act on the specified date; provides that it is unlawful for any person, firm, partnership, limited liability company, professional LLC, corporation or professional service corporation to own, operate or conduct a cosmetology, esthetics, nail technology, hair braiding, or barber school without a license; provides for cosmetology, esthetics, nail technology, braiding, and barber teacher licenses; provides for continuing education.

Kentucky SB 73, Act No. 52 - Tallow Based Cosmetic Products

This bill relates to animal agriculture and makes modifications to Kentucky's food, drug, and cosmetic laws. The bill addresses home-based food and cosmetic processing, on-farm poultry slaughter and processing for direct consumer sales, and animal control provisions for dogs and stray equines. The bill also updates administrative procedures and labeling requirements for various agricultural products and activities.

Maine SB 731, P.L. 257 - Styling and Treatment of Textured Hair

Requires training on textured hair for aestheticians, barber hair stylists, cosmetologists and hair designers.

Mississippi SB 2566 - State Board of Cosmetology and Barbering

This bill comprehensively amends Mississippi's cosmetology and barbering regulatory framework under Chapter 7, Title 73 of the Mississippi Code. The legislation modifies licensing requirements, educational standards, examination procedures, fee structures, and disciplinary provisions for cosmetologists, barbers, estheticians, nail technicians, instructors, schools, and salon/barber shops. The bill also addresses board operations, including meeting notice requirements and administrative procedures for the State Board of Cosmetology and Barbering.

Nebraska LB 720 – Uniform Credentialing Act

This bill relates to body art licensure and proposes to require the Department of Health and Human Services to create a temporary event license for body artists attending certain events. The bill amends the Cosmetology, Electrology, Esthetics, Nail Technology, and Body Art Practice Act to include the new licensing provisions.

New Jersey AB 3414, Chap. No. 18-2026 - Shampoo Technicians

Provides that a junior student in a course of instruction in cosmetology and hairstyling shall be eligible to obtain a shampoo permit if the student submits to the State Board of Cosmetology and Hairstyling satisfactory evidence that the student completed at least a specified number of hours of relevant course instruction and does not have a communicable, contagious or infectious disease which could reasonably be expected to be transmitted during the course of rendering shampoo and hair rinsing services.

Rhode Island HB 5833/SB 381, P.L. 055 & 056 - Mobile Cosmetology and Barbering Services Licensure

Allows providers of services under this section to visit the houses of individuals with special needs or sensory-related disorders or differences in order to provide haircuts or hairdressing services.

Virginia HB 122, Chap. No. 910 - Manufacturing Cosmetic Products

This bill addresses cosmetic safety by prohibiting the manufacture and sale of cosmetic products containing certain toxic ingredients. The bill amends Virginia's consumer protection laws to include violations of cosmetic safety requirements as prohibited practices. The legislation creates comprehensive regulations for both animal testing prohibitions and restrictions on specific chemical ingredients in cosmetics.

Washington HB 1874, Chap. No. 194 - Cosmetologists Training

Requires training for cosmetologists, barbers, estheticians, and hair designers on the care, styling, and treatment of textured hair; establishes curricula for the training of students and apprentices under this chapter, including training for cosmetologists, barbers, estheticians, and hair designers on the care, styling, and treatment of textured hair which must include techniques for cutting, styling, and chemically treating textured hair, among other things.

Massage

- 9 Introduced in 2026
- 2 enacted in AL, IA, IL

Iowa HB 2602 – Licensure of Massage Establishments

This bill addresses the licensure of massage establishments in Iowa. It establishes a new licensing requirement for massage establishments, defines key terms such as 'establishment' and 'sole practitioner,' and grants the board authority to issue, deny, suspend, and revoke establishment licenses. The bill also sets forth record-keeping requirements and criminal history screening procedures for establishment owners.

Illinois HB 5387, P.A. No. 796 – Massage Therapy Practice Act

Concerns grounds for discipline in the Massage Therapy Practice Act; provides that, the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation shall revoke, without a hearing, any license issued under the Act of any person who is convicted of any offense related to sexual assault under the laws of any jurisdiction, including, without limitation, prostitution, rape, sexual misconduct, involuntary sexual servitude of a minor, battery against a patient, including any offense based on sexual conduct.

Piercing and Tattooing

- 24 Introduced in 2026
- 4 enacted in ME, TN , UT

Tennessee SB 171, Chap. No. 19 - The Ink of Hope Act

Provides that each tattoo operator or tattoo artist shall, before receiving a permit to operate a tattoo establishment or to apply a tattoo, complete up to one hour of online or in person training, at no cost to the applicant, by a nonprofit organization approved by the State Human Trafficking Advisory Council that focuses on how to recognize the signs of human trafficking, how to respond to those signs, how to refer a client to resources for victims of human trafficking, and reporting signs.

Tennessee SB 497, Chap. No. 212 - Tattoo Artist Licensing

Provides that to receive a tattoo artist license, a tattoo artist must be trained in the profession of tattooing, including sterilization methods, in a certified shop for at least a specified period under a currently licensed tattoo artist; provides that the tattoo artist must provide the tattoo artists signature on the States tattoo apprenticeship completion application signifying that the apprentice tattoo artist has met certain requirements; provides for out of State tattoo artists.

Utah HB 531, Chap. No. 209 - Scarification Amendments

This bill addresses scarification practices at body art facilities by establishing safety requirements and regulatory oversight. The bill creates criminal penalties for performing scarification on minors for compensation. The bill also requires the Office of Professional Licensure Review to study scarification practices and report findings to the legislature.