

State of South Dakota  
Cosmetology Commission

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### Booths & Salons:

***Q: How do I open a new booth or salon?***

A: In order to establish a new booth or salon please complete the 'Salon/Booth Permit License Application': [https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/forms/Salon\\_Booth\\_Permit\\_Application\\_f.pdf](https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/forms/Salon_Booth_Permit_Application_f.pdf). The Fee is \$60.00

***Q: What should I put as my opening date?***

A: The Commission will issue your license with an active date which reflects your 'opening date'. If you are not sure when you will be open because your salon or booth is under construction, you are making renovations, or you are negotiating a lease, please include a date that accounts for this timeline. **You must include an opening date on your application for it to be processed.**

***Q: How long is my temporary salon/booth permit valid for?***

You have 90 days from the date your permit is issued to be inspected. If you have not completed construction or renovation, or if you have not signed a lease, you will not be inspected. If an inspector attempts to inspect your booth or salon and they are denied entry or are unable to conduct the inspection, you are subject to a reinspection fee.

Salon or booth permits will not be extended unless there is an error or delay on the part of the Commission

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***Q: Do I have to put what days I am closed?***

A: You are required to indicate which days your booth or salon will be closed. This information allows the Commission inspectors to schedule unannounced inspections. If your salon or booth is closed at a time when you have indicated it is open, you are subject to a reinspection fee. Your salon or booth may also be closed by the Commission if you do not respond to an “Attempted Inspection Notice” within 10 days of the attempted inspection.

***Q: Do I need to apply for a booth or salon license?***

A: This is an individual decision based on the preferences and needs of the business owner. However, a booth is required to be registered under an existing salon license. A salon license is required for each unique postal address.

**Note: If you are a W-2 employee of a salon and receive a wage from the salon, you are not required to hold a booth license.**

***Q: What are the basic requirements to open a salon/booth?***

A: You must have:

- A minimum of 120 sq ft of working space for the first licensee (does not include restroom or storage closets)
- A minimum of 60 sq ft for each additional licensee
- Plumbing connected to a municipal sewer system
- Adequate ventilation for the square footage of the salon or booth
- Publicly accessible restroom
- Relevant supplies (e.g. labeled containers for soiled/clean items, disinfectant, clean linens)
- A minimum of one covered waste container (to be emptied at least daily)
- Sink
- First aid kit (at least one per salon)
- 5-pond ABC Fire Extinguisher (at least one per salon and one for every 1500 sq. ft.)

License Specific Requirements:

Nail Salons/Booths:

- Mechanical exhaust system (must vent to open air) or activated carbon filtration adequate for square footage
- Minimum of one nail table with lamp
- Minimum of one manicure chair
- Minimum of one pedicure station with client chair
- A nail applicator brush

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- At least one dedicated sink for use exclusively on clients (no bathroom, breakroom, or kitchen sinks)

Esthetics Salons/Booths:

- A minimum of one facial chair
- One additional chair
- Clean and disinfected esthetics tools & Implements
- At least one dedicated sink for use exclusively on clients (no bathroom, breakroom, or kitchen sinks)

Cosmetology Salons:

- A minimum of one shampoo bowl
- Clean and disinfected cosmetology tools & Implements
- All other required items for nail technology, esthetics, or both as applicable.

Note: this list is not exhaustive, please refer to the South Dakota Cosmetology Commission Laws & Rules (SDCL 36-15; ARSD 20:42)

***Q: What will the inspectors look for during my inspection?***

A: Please refer to the South Dakota Cosmetology Commission Laws & Rules (SDCL 36-15; ARSD 20:42) and the salon/booth inspection checklist:

[https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/documents/salon\\_self\\_inspection\\_checklist.pdf](https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/documents/salon_self_inspection_checklist.pdf)

***Q: I am building or starting a new salon, how do I know if it will pass inspection?***

A: In addition to carefully reading the South Dakota Cosmetology Commission Laws & Rules, you may request a pre-inspection for a fee of \$50.00.

If you would like to request a pre-inspection, **please complete the “Payment Form”**, and mail it to the Commission with a check or money order. **Please mark the ‘Other’ box and write ‘Pre-inspection’:** [https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/forms/Payment\\_Identification\\_Form.pdf](https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/forms/Payment_Identification_Form.pdf)

**Education:**

***Q: Where can I go to school?***

A: The list of Commission approved education institutions are available here:

[https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/documents/approved\\_education\\_providers.pdf](https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/documents/approved_education_providers.pdf)

***Q: What school does the Commission recommend?***

A: The Commission does not endorse any school or college.

***Q: When can I take the State board examination?***

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A: Students with an active enrollment status at a Commission approved school or college may take the State board examination at any time. However, we strongly encourage students to complete at least 50 percent of their education before attempting the State board examination.

**Examinations:**

***Q: When are examinations held?***

A: Examinations are available online, anywhere a computer and internet connection is available. Examination applicants may choose a date and time that works for his or her schedule when registering for examination (subject to availability).

The instructions to register, pay for, and complete an examination are available here:

<https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/exams.aspx>.

***Q: How will I know when I am scheduled to take the examination?***

Examination applicants will receive a confirmation email (and an optional text message) from the examination vendor 'Prov'. The email will include the date, time and instructions for completing the examination.

***Q: When will I receive my exam results and my license?***

A: Examinees will be emailed their pass/fail status and score within 48 hours of completing an examination (excluding weekends and holidays).

***Q: What if I pass?***

A: Examinees who pass their examination will be provided with provisional work authorization so they may begin working while they wait for their license in the mail.

***Q: What if I fail?***

A: Examinees who fail to pass their examination, will be provided with instructions for registering for a retake examination.

**Examinees who fail the state board examination will be ineligible to work until they have passed the state board examination.**

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**Inspections:**

***Q: What will the inspector look for?***

A: A: Please refer to the South Dakota Cosmetology Commission Laws & Rules (SDCL 36-15; ARSD 20:42) and the salon/booth inspection checklist:

[https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/documents/salon\\_self\\_inspection\\_checklist.pdf](https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/documents/salon_self_inspection_checklist.pdf)

***Q: What happens if I fail inspection?***

A: You will receive one of two forms if you fail an inspection:

- Blue Form: A blue form is issued for a minor infraction including, but not limited to, missing items such as a fire extinguisher or first aid kit. It may also be issued if you have a recently expired license.

**You are required to submit the blue form along with proof of correction to the Commission.**

- Yellow Form: A yellow form is issued if the licensee fails inspection due to multiple infractions or one or more serious infractions. Serious infractions include, but are not limited to, employing unlicensed workers, not possessing a salon or booth license, possessing a chronically expired or long overdue license, or performing services which require additional certification without proper certification.

If you receive a yellow form, a reinspection is required, and you are subject to a \$50.00 reinspection fee. Two or more failed inspections are grounds for disciplinary action. **Please mail in the form with a check or money order for \$50.00**

***Q: How often will I be inspected?***

A: Established salons and booths will be inspected annually at a minimum.

**Licensing:**

***Q: What licenses are offered under the South Dakota Cosmetology Commission?***

A: The South Dakota Cosmetology Commission offers three licenses, Cosmetology, Esthetics, and Nail technology. Cosmetologists may practice all services covered by the three licenses.

***Q: How many education hours are required for each license?***

A: Cosmetologists must earn 1500 Commission approved education hours. Estheticians must earn 600 Commission approved education hours. Nail Technicians must earn 400 Commission approved education hours.

***Q: Can I perform eyelash extension, microdermabrasion, or electric nail files?***

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A: A licensee may perform the above services if it is within their scope of practice and they have received proper certification.

**Q: How do I get certified to perform eyelash extension, microdermabrasion, or electric nail files?**

A: In order to become certified you must do the following:

- Eyelash extension:
  - Complete 16 hours of approved coursework/training
  - Submit proof of completion to include a certificate with the number of hours and course title.
  
- Microdermabrasion:
  - Complete 16 hours of approved coursework/training
  - Submit proof of completion to include a certificate with the number of hours and course title.
  
- Electric Nail Files:
  - Complete 8 hours of approved coursework/training
  - Submit proof of completion to include a certificate with the number of hours and course title.

If you choose to use a course provider that is not pre-approved by the Commission, you will be required to pay \$35.00 so the Commission can research the provider and verify the course.

**Providers and courses not on the pre-approved list are not guaranteed to be approved.**

A \$5.00 duplicate license fee is required for issuance of an updated license. Please send a check or money order along with your proof of course completion.

### **Reciprocity Licensing:**

**Q: I am moving to South Dakota, how can I transfer my license?**

A: If you hold an active Cosmetology, Esthetics, or Nail Technology license in good standing in another state, you may be eligible to receive a reciprocity license in South Dakota. In order to apply for reciprocity licensure you will need to complete the following:

1. Submit the online Reciprocity Application:  
[https://sdeforms.na2.adobesign.com/public/esignWidget?wid=CBFCIBAA3AAABLbqZhADy2oLgEL7zM6zb9hOozPCE5HuakeCthmjVlvuScd3j6bCugBxIFoP5x7JaufIV00\\*](https://sdeforms.na2.adobesign.com/public/esignWidget?wid=CBFCIBAA3AAABLbqZhADy2oLgEL7zM6zb9hOozPCE5HuakeCthmjVlvuScd3j6bCugBxIFoP5x7JaufIV00*)

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2. Request that the state which issued your license send the SD Cosmetology Commission a 'Certification of Licensure'. The certification will need to include details about the amount of education you received, whether or not you have taken and passed a state approved theory examination, whether or not your license is active and in good standing, whether you have ever received disciplinary action, and when your initial license was issued.
  
3. Request that your school send the Commission an official transcript (*optional – strongly recommended*)

Many states have different names for their Cosmetology, Esthetics, and Nail technology licenses so do not be discouraged if your license does not have the same name as one in South Dakota. If you meet the basic requirements for licensure in South Dakota it is likely that you are eligible for a reciprocity license.

***Q: How long does the process take?***

A: Once the Cosmetology Commission has received your application and **all required documents** it can take up to 15 business days for the Cosmetology Commission to review your application and issue your license (if you qualify).

***Q: Will I have to take an exam?***

A: All applicants for reciprocity licensure are required to take the 25 question, take-home 'State Laws & Rules' examination. If you have not taken a state approved theory examination for your specific license type, you will be required to take the South Dakota State Board Examination. Proof of your exam status must be included on your certification of licensure in order to receive a waiver for the South Dakota State Board Examination.

***Q: Can I work while my application is being processed?***

A: Applicants for reciprocity licensure may apply for a temporary license:  
[https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/forms/exam\\_and\\_temp\\_license\\_application.pdf](https://dlr.sd.gov/cosmetology/forms/exam_and_temp_license_application.pdf).

Once the Commission has received a complete application and a certification of licensure showing that the applicant meets the minimum requirements for licensure, the Commission will issue the temporary license.

Temporary licenses are good for 30 days, or until the next scheduled state board examination if the applicant is required to take the exam.

***Q: What if my license type does not match a license in South Dakota?***

A: Each application is reviewed individually to determine equivalency with a relevant South Dakota license.

The license types available in South Dakota are Cosmetology, Esthetics, and Nail Technology. Please [click here](#) to see the hours requirements for each license type.

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If your license is determined not to be equivalent to a South Dakota license, you may need to earn additional education hours.