BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
Board of Cosmetology
(Amended at ARRS Committee)

201 KAR 12:030. Licensing and examinations.

RELATES TO: KRS 12.245, 317A.020, 317A.050, 317A.060, 317A.100, 317A.145
STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 317A.060(1)
CERTIFICATION STATEMENT: This is to certify that this administrative regulation complies with 2025 RS HB 6, Section 8.
NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 317A.060(1) requires the board to promulgate administrative regulations governing licenses in cosmetology, esthetic practices, and nail technology, including the operation of schools and salons of cosmetology, esthetic practices, and nail technology. This administrative regulation establishes procedures for examinations and licensing.

Section 1. Fees. License fees shall be consistent with 201 KAR 12:260.

Section 2. License validity. Each license shall expire on July 31 of each even numbered year, regardless of the date when the license was issued.

Section 3. Changes. All changes to account information required for licensure shall be submitted to the board within thirty (30) days of occurrence including:
(1) Legal name change;
(2) Change of address;
(3) Change of facility or employer;
(4) Change of phone number;
(5) Change of email address; and
(6) Any other information as required by KRS Chapter 317A or 201 KAR Chapter 12 for licensure.

Section 4. Licensure Requirements. A license may be issued upon submission of the following:
(1) All personal and facility licenses shall require an application for a first-time license, license renewal, license restoration, an out-of-state transfer certification, or a request for examination. These applications are found on the board's Web page;
(2) A diploma or certified testing documents proving grade 12 equivalency education for initial personal licensure or out-of-state transfers into Kentucky;
(3) A copy of a government-issued photo identification;
(4) Payment of the fee established in 201 KAR 12:260;
(5) Resolution of any legal action associated with a prior disciplinary action as described in KRS 317A.145, if necessary;
(6) A current two (2) by two (2) inch passport-style photo taken within the past six (6) months; and
(7) Disclosure to the board of the current name and license number of the facility where the licensee is working.

Section 5. Prior Felony Convictions. For any license or examination issued or conducted by the board, an applicant convicted of a prior felony shall include with his or her application:
(1) A signed letter of explanation from the applicant;
(2) A certified copy of the judgment and sentence from the issuing court; and
(3) A letter of good standing from the applicant's probation or parole officer, if currently on probation or parole.

Section 6. Reciprocal Licensing.

(1) A license issued by another state or US territory shall be considered comparable if the laws of that state require at a minimum:

(a) 1,500 hours of curriculum for cosmetology;

(b) 450 hours of curriculum for nail technology;

(c) 750 hours of curriculum for esthetics;

(d) 300 hours of curriculum for shampoo styling; or

(e) 750 hours of curriculum for instructors.

(2) An applicant licensed in another state may be licensed by reciprocity by submitting the Out of State Transfer Application along with:

(a) Digital certification showing proof of a passing score on a board-approved theory and practical exam or by submitting proof of continuous practice for the last two (2) years;

(b) Current digital certification of the out-of-state license from the issuing state board showing a license in active and good standing; and

(c) Unless a member of the United States Military, Reserves, or National Guard, or his or her spouse, or a veteran or the spouse of a veteran, payment of the applicable license and endorsement fees required by 201 KAR 12:260.

(3) An applicant from a state or US territory whose licensing requirements fail to meet subsection (1) of this section shall apply for a reciprocal license by submitting:

(a) Documentation required by Section 4(1) through (7) of this administrative regulation; and

(b) Payment of the applicable examination fees established in 201 KAR 12:260.

(4) Pursuant to KRS 12.245, a member of the United States Military, Reserves, or National Guard, or his or her spouse, or a veteran or the spouse of a veteran shall apply for a reciprocal license by submitting:

(a) The Military License Transfer Application; and

(b) A document showing proof of service, sponsor's service, change of station orders, or honorable discharge orders listing the applicant or an accompanying family member as a member of the United States Armed Services.

(5) All requests for certification of hours or a license shall use the Certification Request Form accompanied by a copy of the applicant's government-issued photo identification and payment of the fee as established in 201 KAR 12:260. Certifications shall only be transmitted digitally to the reciprocal state agency.

Section 7. Digital Forms. All applications and forms may be replicated and implemented by the board in an online format for processing, payment receipt, and license issuance.

Section 8. Examination Registration.

(1) Applicants shall register as follows:

(a) A student of a licensed cosmetology school shall register with the board at least eight (8) months prior to graduation;

(b) A nail technician student shall register with the board at least seventy-five (75) days prior to graduation;

(c) An esthetician student shall register with the board at least four (4) months prior to graduation; and

(d) A shampoo styling student shall register with the board at least fifty-three (53) days prior to graduation.

(2) A completed Application for Examination shall be received in the Board office no later than ten (10) business days prior to the examination date to be scheduled for either the theory test or the practical demonstration component of the exam. Each exam component shall be scheduled using a separate application and payment of the fee established in 201 KAR 12:260.

(3) Theory examination dates shall be valid for ninety (90) days from student notification.

(4) A passing score for the theory examination, proper application, and payment of fees shall be required prior to being scheduled for the practical examination.

(5) An applicant with curriculum hours obtained in another state shall include with the Out of State Application for Examination:

(a) Certification of curriculum hours from the state licensing board or agency where the hours were obtained, if the state requires the reporting of curriculum hours; or

(b) Certification of the valid licensing status of the school attended from the state board or licensing authority and an official transcript certified by the school.

(6) Examination applicants shall wear a full set of solid color medical scrubs and bring all instruments and supplies as listed on the board Web site for the practical examination. White colored scrubs or other clothing is prohibited.

Section 9. Examination Components.

(1) The examination shall consist of a theory test and a practical demonstration taken from the curriculum requirements specified in 201 KAR 12:082.

(2) The practical demonstration shall be performed on a:

(a) Mannequin head and hand for the cosmetology practical examination;

(b) Mannequin head for the esthetician or shampoo styling services practical examination; or

(c) Mannequin hand for the nail technician practical examination.

(3) The applicant shall provide a mannequin head or hand as needed for an examination.

Section 10. Grading.

(1) A minimum passing grade of seventy (70) percent on the theory test and the practical demonstration shall be required for the cosmetologist, esthetician, shampoo styling, and nail technician examinations.

(2) A minimum passing grade of eighty (80) percent on the theory test and eighty-five (85) percent on the practical demonstration shall be required for all instructor examinations.

(3) All passing exam scores shall be valid for six (6) months from completion.

Section 11. Practice before Examination Prohibited. A student engaging in the practice of cosmetology, esthetic practices, shampoo styling, or nail technology beyond the scope of their registered school enrollment prior to the board examination shall be ineligible to take the examination for a period of one (1) year from the date of the unauthorized practice.

Section 12. License Application.

(1) An applicant who passes the examination shall have ninety (90) days following the examination to apply for a license by complying with all requirements in Section 4(1) through (7) of this administrative regulation.

(2) Failure to apply for a license as required by subsection (1) of this section shall require payment of the appropriate restoration and licensing fees established in 201 KAR 12:260 before a license may be issued.

Section 13. Retaking Examinations.

(1) Any applicant who fails either the theory test or the practical demonstration may retake that portion of the examination upon submitting a new Application for Examination with a two (2) by two (2) inch passport photo of the applicant taken within the preceding six (6) months, and paying the examination fee required by 201 KAR 12:260. An applicant who fails either the theory test or the practical demonstration may not retest until one (1) calendar month has elapsed from the date the applicant received actual notice of failure.

(2) An applicant caught cheating or impersonating another shall not be allowed to retake the examination for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of the original examination.

(3) Any applicant who fails to report for the examination on the date specified by the board shall submit a new examination application and examination fee prior to being rescheduled for examination. The board may waive the examination fee for good cause shown. "Good cause" includes:

(a) An illness or medical condition of the applicant that prohibits the applicant from reporting for the examination; or

(b) A death, illness, or medical condition in the applicant's immediate family that prohibits the applicant from reporting for the examination.

(4) Documents and certificates submitted with an Application for Examination shall be valid for one (1) year following the date of submission after which time applicants shall submit updated documents and a new examination application.

Section 14. Duplicate Licenses, Renewal, and Restoration.

(1) If a license is lost, destroyed, or stolen after issuance, a duplicate license may be issued. The licensee shall submit a statement verifying the loss of the license using the Duplicate License Application that includes a copy of a government-issued photo identification, and pay the duplicate license fee listed in 201 KAR 12:260. Each duplicate license shall be marked "duplicate".

(2) The license renewal period is July 1 through July 31 of each even-numbered year. All licenses shall be renewed by providing the required items in Section 4(1) through (7) of this administrative regulation.

(3) To restore an expired license, a Restoration Application shall be submitted to the board with payment of the restoration fee as established in 201 KAR 12:260 for each year the license has been expired, the total of which shall not exceed $300 per license restored, and by providing the required items in Section 4(1) through (7) of this administrative regulation.

(4) To restore an expired salon license or limited facility license, a Restoration Application shall be submitted to the board with payment of the restoration fee as established in 201 KAR 12:260 for each year the license has been expired, the total of which shall not exceed $300 per license restored, and by providing the required items in Section 4(1) through (7) of this administrative regulation.

(5) To restore an expired school license, a new School Application shall be submitted to the board with payment of the restoration fee as established in 201 KAR 12:260 for each year the license has been expired, the total of which shall not exceed $300 per license restored, and by providing the required items in Section 4(1) through (7) of this administrative regulation.

Section 15. Salon or Limited Facility Application.

(1) Each person, firm, or corporation applying for a license to operate a new or relocating beauty salon, nail salon, esthetic salon, or limited facility shall submit the Salon or Limited Facility Application, provide the required items in Section 4(1) through (7) of this administrative regulation, and request an inspection by the board inspector in writing a minimum of five (5) business days prior to opening for business.

(2) A new or relocating salon or limited facility shall comply with all applicable city, county, and state zoning, building, and plumbing laws, administrative regulations, and codes.

(3) A salon or facility may be located on the premises of a nursing home or assisted living facility if the salon or facility meets all requirements of this section.

(4) Any salon or facility located in a residence shall have a separate outside entrance for business purposes only. This subsection shall not apply to a nursing home or an assisted living facility if the home or facility has obtained a salon license from the board.

(5) A salon or limited facility shall not open for business prior to issuance of its license.

(6) Each salon shall, at all times, maintain a board licensed manager properly licensed in the services the salon provides.
(7) Salon and limited facility licenses shall only be mailed to a Kentucky mailing address.

Section 16. Change in Salon Ownership or Transfer of Interest.
(1) The owners, firm, or corporation operating a licensed salon shall submit to the board a new Salon or Limited Facility Application, or Manager Change Application, provide the required items in Section 4(1) through (7) of this administrative regulation, and provide payment of the license or change fee as established in 201 KAR 12:260 no later than thirty (30) business days prior to selling, transferring, or changing ownership.
(2) All manager changes shall be made with the board within ten (10) business days.
(3) No transfer of ownership interest in a salon shall take effect while the salon license to be transferred is the subject of ongoing disciplinary action pursuant to KRS 317A.145.

Section 17. School Licenses.
(1) Each person, firm, or corporation applying for a license to operate a school shall submit a School Application, provide the required items in Section 4(1) through (7) of this administrative regulation, and pay the applicable fee set forth in 201 KAR 12:260.
(2) The School Application shall be accompanied by:
(a) A proposed student contract listing all financial charges to enrolling students; and
(b) A proposed floor plan drawn to scale by a draftsman or architect.
(3) Each school shall comply with city, county, and statezoning, building, and plumbing laws, administrative regulations, and codes.
(4) Prior to license issuance and following the receipt of a completed application with all accompanying materials, the board inspector and executive director, or their designee, shall conduct an inspection.
(5)
(a) The inspection shall be completed within twelve (12) months of the date that the School Application and all accompanying materials are received unless the board extends the time period for good cause. "Good cause" includes:
1. An illness or medical condition of the applicant that prohibits the applicant from completing the final preparations; or
2. A death, illness, or medical condition in the applicant's immediate family that prohibits the applicant from completing the final preparations.
(b) Requests for an extension of time shall be submitted in writing to the board and shall include:
1. The reason for the extension and the term of the request; and
2. Supportive documentation of the extension request.
(6) A license to operate a school shall be valid only for the location and person, firm, or corporate owner named on the application. A school license shall not be transferable from one (1) location to another or from one (1) owner to another.
(7) The school license shall contain:
(a) The name of the proposed school; and
(b) A statement that the proposed school may operate educational programs beyond secondary education.
(8) Each licensed school shall maintain a board licensed instructor as school manager at all times.
(9) The Board shall determine and publicly post the number of students and percentage of students that take and pass the theory examination and practical demonstration required by Section 8 of this administrative regulation at each school. Licensed schools shall also provide this information to prospective students prior to enrollment.
(10) Each school shall provide the Board with its current student contract when renewing its license.

Section 18. Change in School Ownership or Management.

(1) The owners, firm, or corporation operating a licensed school shall submit to the board a new School Application or a Manager Change Application and payment of the applicable fee established in 201 KAR 12:260 no later than thirty (30) business days prior to selling, transferring, or changing ownership.

(2) All manager changes shall be made with the board within ten (10) business days.

(3) A prospective owner or manager shall meet all qualifications of KRS Chapter 317A and 201 KAR Chapter 12, and obtain approval of the board prior to assuming operation of the school.

(4) A school shall not be opened under new ownership while the current owner still occupies the space.

(5) Written notice from current school owner including final closure date shall be provided to the board no less than ten (10) days prior to closure.

(6) All final student withdrawal and hours posting shall be required prior to new ownership licensing inspection being completed.

Section 19. Classification as School. Any person, establishment, firm, or corporation that accepts, directly or indirectly, compensation for teaching any subject of cosmetology as defined in KRS 317A.010 shall comply with KRS Chapter 317A and 201 KAR Chapter 12.

Section 20. Owner and Manager Student Prohibited. An owner, partner, stockholder, corporate officer, or a manager of a licensed school shall not be enrolled as a student in the school.

Section 21. Board Member Disclosure. A board member shall disclose to the board a financial interest in a salon or school when submitting an application for a salon or school license.

Section 22. Incorporation by Reference.

(1) The following material is incorporated by reference:

(a) "Out of State Transfer Application", March 2025;

(b) "Military License Transfer Application", March 2025;

(c) "Certification Request Form", March 2025;

(d) "Application for Examination", March 2025;

(e) "First-time License Application", March 2025;

(f) "Duplicate License Application", March 2025;

(g) "Renewal Application", March 2025;

(h) "Restoration Application", March 2025;

(i) "Salon or Limited Facility Application", March 2025;

(j) "Manager Change Application", March 2025; and

(k) "School Application", March 2025.

(2) This material may be inspected, copied, or obtained, subject to applicable copyright law, at the Kentucky Board of Cosmetology, 1049 US Hwy 127 S, Annex #2, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or on the board's website at http://kbc.ky.gov.

(201 KAR 012:030. KBHC:Lic:PL: Bus-1; 1 Ky.R. 720; eff. 5-14-1975; 9 Ky.R. 12; eff. 8-11-1982; 13 Ky.R. 1710; eff. 6-9-1987; 15 Ky.R. 2103; eff. 4-14-1989; 30 Ky.R. 955; 1906; eff. 2-16-2004; 44 Ky.R. 1615, 1970; eff. 4-6-2018; 44 Ky.R. 2557; 45 Ky.R. 331; eff. 8-31-2018; 45 Ky.R. 1723, 2332; eff. 3-8-2019; 46 Ky.R. 608, 1091; eff. 11-1-2019; 2298; 2884; 47 Ky.R. 522; eff. 7-30-2020; 49 Ky.R. 397, 1042; eff. 1-31-2023; 51 Ky.R. 1878; 52 Ky.R. 369; eff. 12-2-2025.)

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