

Queensland Health

Public Health (Infection Control for Personal Appearance Services) Act 2003

What business needs to know about personal
appearance services 2025



**Queensland
Government**

Public Health (Infection Control for Personal Appearance Services) Act 2003 - What business needs to know about personal appearance services 2025

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An electronic version of this document is available at

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Contents

1	Personal appearance services	5
1.1	Personal appearance services legislation	5
1.1.1	What legislation covers personal appearance services?	5
1.1.2	What is a personal appearance service?	5
1.2	Higher risk personal appearance services	6
1.2.1	Requirement to be licensed	6
1.2.2	Mobile higher risk personal appearance services	7
1.2.3	Building requirements for premises	8
1.2.4	Infection control qualification	8
1.2.5	Events	9
1.3	Non-higher risk personal appearance services	10
1.3.1	Building requirement for premises	10
1.4	Minimising the risk of infections	11
1.5	The role of local government	11
1.5.1	Powers and enforcement	12
1.5.2	Licence and inspection fees	13
1.5.3	Appealing against a decision made by a local government	14
1.6	Other laws that apply to personal appearance services	14
1.6.1	Body art and tattooing businesses	14
1.6.2	Laser tattoo removal	15
1.6.3	Piercing and tattooing of persons under 18 years	15
1.6.4	Cosmetic procedures of persons under 18 years	15
1.6.5	Parental consent requirements for minors	16
1.6.6	Smoking and vaping	16
1.6.7	Waste Management	16
1.6.8	Workplace health and safety	16
1.6.9	Scheduled medicines	17
1.6.10	Therapeutic Goods Administration requirements	17
2	Infection control guidelines	18
3	Additional measures to minimise potential harm	19
3.1.1	Vaccination	19
3.1.2	Jewellery considerations	19
3.1.3	Aftercare information	20
3.1.4	Choice of inks	21
3.1.5	Nail salons and foot spa services	22
3.1.6	Exposure prone piercing	22
3.1.7	Platelet-rich plasma (PRP)	23
3.1.8	Single-use instruments	23
3.1.9	Vials	23
3.1.10	Injuries and bleeding	23
3.1.11	Cosmetic testers	24

4 Related resources	24
4.1 Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related facilities	24
4.2 Queensland Development Code	25
4.3 Guideline: Clinical and related waste	25
4.4 Personal appearance services categorisation table	27
4.5 Legislation and compliance resources	28
Appendix 1	29
Example: skin penetration procedure	29
Appendix 2	31
Infections and how they are spread	31

1 Personal appearance services

1.1 Personal appearance services legislation

1.1.1 What legislation covers personal appearance services?

The *Public Health (Infection Control for Personal Appearance Services) Act 2003* (the Act) is the authorising piece of legislation which covers all aspects of minimising the risk of infection that may result from the provision of personal appearance services in Queensland.

The *Public Health (Infection Control for Personal Appearance Services) Regulation 2016* supports the Act.

Under the Act, infection control guidelines for personal appearance services (the Guidelines) are provided to minimise the risk of infection. The Guidelines further specify requirements for personal appearance service proprietors and operators to be familiar with, and comply with relevant Australian Standards, including AS5369:2023 Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related facilities.

1.1.2 What is a personal appearance service?

Beauty therapy, hairdressing and skin penetration procedures including tattooing, cosmetic injectables and body piercing services are collectively referred to as 'personal appearance services'.

To what activities does the Act apply?

The Act aims to minimise the risk of infection that may result from an operator providing personal appearance services as part of a business transaction. It does not apply to personal appearance services provided in a health-care facility (e.g. cosmetic surgery).

Certain activities such as acupuncture and botulinum toxin injections used for the treatment of medical conditions are not considered a personal appearance service and are regulated under Chapter 4 – Infection control for health care facilities – of the *Public Health Act 2005*. See section 4.4 for a guide on the categorisation of personal appearance services.

There are two categories of personal appearance services – higher risk and non-higher risk.

What is a higher risk personal appearance service?

A higher risk personal appearance service means a personal appearance service involving any of the following skin penetration procedures in which the release of blood or other bodily fluid is an expected result –

- body piercing, other than closed ear or nose piercing
- implanting natural or synthetic substances into a person's skin (e.g. hair or beads, cosmetic injectables)
- scarring or cutting a person's skin using a sharp instrument to make a permanent mark, pattern or design
- tattooing (including cosmetic tattooing and semi-permanent make-up)
- tattoo removal (excluding laser tattoo removal).

Thread lifts, cosmetic injectables, skin needling/collagen induction therapy (with implantation) and platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy are examples of higher risk personal appearance services as they involve skin penetration with the injection/insertion/implantation of a substance into a person's skin for cosmetic purposes.

What is a non-higher risk personal appearance service?

A non-higher risk personal appearance service includes all other personal appearance services such as hairdressing, beauty therapy, nails, make-up application and closed ear or nose piercing.

Can a non-higher risk personal appearance service provider become a higher risk personal appearance service provider?

Yes. If a business intends to provide higher risk personal appearance services then they are required to be licensed and to comply with all licence conditions.

1.2 Higher risk personal appearance services

1.2.1 Requirement to be licensed

A business which provides or intends to provide higher risk personal appearance services must have a 'higher risk personal appearance service' licence issued by local government and can only provide services from the premises stated on that licence.

Higher risk personal appearance service licence conditions

In accordance with the Act, all licences are subject to the following conditions –

- the licensee must comply with the Act

- the licensee must ensure that –
 - the licence, or a copy of the licence, is displayed at each premise so that it is visible to a person as they enter the premises
 - a copy of the guidelines are kept at each premises covered by the licence
 - each fixed premise complies with the Queensland Development Code, part MP 5.2
 - each mobile premise complies with the Queensland Development Code, part MP 5.2 to the extent the part could reasonably apply to the mobile premises
 - fixtures, fittings and equipment in the premises are maintained in good repair and operational order
- other reasonable conditions the local government considers appropriate.

How to apply for a higher risk personal appearance service licence

To apply for a licence to provide higher risk personal appearance services from a fixed premise, you need to contact the local government (council) for the area in which the premise is located. If services are to be provided by two or more fixed premises in the same local government area, you may only need a single licence to cover all premises (check with your local government for details). If you are providing services from multiple fixed premises located in different local government areas, you need to apply for separate licences from each local government (council).

An application for a licence to provide services from a mobile premises can be made to any local government, irrespective of whether the service will be provided in that local government area. The application must state an address in the area of the local government to which the application is made where the mobile premises may be inspected before a decision can be made on the application. If the licence application is approved, when requested the mobile premise must also present to an address within the licensed local government area to enable an inspection to be undertaken.

Application forms are available from the local government to which you are applying and need to be submitted back to the local government accompanied by the set fee.

A licence may be issued for three years, or a shorter period at the discretion of the local government. Before granting a licence, the local government must be satisfied –

- the applicant is a suitable person to hold a licence
- the premises are suitable for providing higher risk personal appearance services.

1.2.2 Mobile higher risk personal appearance services

If you are licensed to provide higher risk personal appearance services from mobile premises in one local government area, and want to provide mobile higher risk services in a

second local government area, you must notify the second local government at least seven days before doing so (or by a shorter time period agreed to by the local council).

You must provide the following information by written communication (e.g. email) or phone (immediately followed by confirmation in writing):

- dates and places at which the higher risk personal appearance services will be provided in the local government area
- licence details
- details of the infection control qualification of the operator who will provide the higher risk personal appearance services

When providing services in another local government area, the licensee's obligations under their mobile licence continue to apply.

1.2.3 Building requirements for premises

Building requirements for premises (fixed or mobile) providing higher risk personal appearance services are contained in Part 5.0 (MP 5.2 – Higher risk personal appearance services) of the Queensland Development Code, published by the Department of Housing and Public Works. (See 4.2)

In addition to the fit out requirements within the Queensland Development Code, operators must also consider appropriate facilities for the general cleaning requirements of the business. For example, the Guidelines require businesses to ensure floors and walls are maintained in a clean condition through normal cleaning processes (e.g. mopping) and work surfaces must also be cleaned using detergent mixed with water. Businesses must have appropriate facilities to enable these general cleaning functions, this may include a dedicated cleaning sink. Handwash basins and instrument cleaning sinks must not be used for general cleaning purposes.

1.2.4 Infection control qualification

All operators and employees providing higher risk personal appearance services to clients, including health professionals such as nurses, must hold an infection control qualification. An infection control qualification means a certificate issued by a registered training organisation stating that the individual has achieved a specified infection control competency standard.

The Regulation states the approved competency standard required to provide higher risk services: *HLTINF005 - Maintain infection prevention for skin penetration treatments*.

Attainment of the competency by its former titles is also acceptable:

- *HLTIN402B – Maintain infection control standards in office practice settings*

- *HLTIN402C – Maintain infection control standards in office practice settings*
- *HLTIN2A – Maintain infection control standards in office practice settings.*

Details of the required competency standard and registered training organisations approved to deliver this unit of competency are available at

<https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/?id=HLTINF005>

1.2.5 Events

One-off events which provide higher risk personal appearance services such as tattoo shows and expos are permitted. These events require a higher risk personal appearance service licence issued from the local government in which the event will be held. The person in charge of the event is required to hold the higher risk personal appearance service licence, and similarly to a permanent operation all licence conditions must be complied with.

Premise/layout

Whilst the premises where events are held will vary in type and location, they are all considered a ‘fixed premise’ under the Act. The building requirements for higher risk personal appearance services specified in the Queensland Development Code apply. The licence will only apply to the area where the event is being held, i.e. if the event is being held in a convention centre the licence will only apply to the hall/rooms in which the event is being held, not the whole centre.

It is recommended that there should only be one or two operators per booth, and that each booth be provided with appropriate barriers or entry restrictions to prevent public access to the work area. This will reduce the likelihood of potential injury or infection transmission to persons attending the event.

Each workstation should be self-contained with:

- receptacles for cleaning and disinfecting products for the work bench and the client’s skin
- waste containers including sharps
- container for storing clean items and equipment
- containers for storing soiled and contaminated items and equipment.

Consideration also needs to be given to the reprocessing of reusable equipment. If a central sterilisation room is established, it should be supervised at all times and have adequate barriers to prevent access by non-approved personnel. The Guidelines apply to all one-off events.

Infection control qualification

All persons providing higher risk personal appearance services at the event must hold the infection control qualification required by the Act (HLTINF005, or its former title). The event organiser/licensee should consider this requirement well in advance for any interstate/overseas operators that may be participating in the event.

Other legislation

The *Tattoo Industry Act 2013* requires a person to possess a permit to hold events or exhibitions that involve tattooing procedures, and also regulates overseas tattooists. Enquiries regarding this permit should be directed to the Office of Fair Trading. This permit is in addition to a higher risk personal appearance service licence issued by local government.

1.3 Non-higher risk personal appearance services

Providers of non-higher risk personal appearance services such as hairdressing, nail services and beauty therapy services are not required to be licensed. However, you are required to take all reasonable precautions and care to minimise the risk of infection to your clients. The Guidelines still apply to non-higher risk personal appearance services.

If you are a new business, local government may require you under a local law to notify them within 30 days of starting the business. The notice must contain your name and address, business type and commencement date, address of premises (if fixed premises), and for mobile premises, a description of the premises including vehicle registration number. Check with your local council whether you are required to notify them.

If your business also provides higher risk personal appearance services then you also need to comply with all of the requirements applying to higher risk services.

1.3.1 Building requirement for premises

There are no mandatory building requirements for businesses that provide non-higher risk personal appearance services. However, to be able to implement many of the infection control practices described in the Guidelines, certain facilities may be necessary. For example –

- for hand washing – a basin with clean cold running water needs to be considered (provision of hot water is preferred)
- for instrument cleaning – a separate single bowl sink with clean running water

- where the service is provided in a building or caravan it is recommended that floors, floor coverings, walls, ceilings, shelves, fittings and other furniture be constructed of suitable materials to enable easy cleaning and maintenance
- where the service is not provided in a building or caravan it is recommended you assess the suitability of the environment under which the personal appearance service will be conducted to ensure that infection risks can be minimised.

Providers who travel to different locations to provide non-higher risk services need to determine how they can effectively minimise infection risks in each location. For example, considering what facilities (e.g. hand-basins or sinks) are available at each location for cleaning hands and instruments, and whether portable cleaning facilities will be required.

It is recommended that mobile operators carry alcohol-based hand cleaners, multiple sets of instruments, and only use disposable single-use instruments.

1.4 Minimising the risk of infections

A business proprietor must take all reasonable precautions and care to minimise the risk of infection to their clients, and to ensure their employees and operators do the same.

Business proprietors must ensure employees/operators providing higher risk personal appearance services hold an infection control qualification prescribed by the Regulation.

All businesses providing personal appearance services will comply with the Act if they follow the Guidelines, or adopt other measures that minimise the risk of infection. If a business chooses to adopt other measures, the proprietor may be required to demonstrate to the local government's satisfaction that these measures minimise the infection risk.

All persons providing personal appearance services have a personal obligation to take reasonable precautions to minimise infection risks to their clients, and ensure they hold an appropriate qualification for higher risk services. This obligation extends to persons that may rent a chair/table within a personal appearance service business (e.g. hairdresser or tattooist), or are otherwise engaged by the business proprietor.

1.5 The role of local government

Local government (council) are responsible for administering and enforcing the Act. They can appoint 'authorised persons' (e.g. a local government environmental health officer) whose functions are to enforce the Act, to monitor compliance with the Act by inspecting businesses which provide personal appearance services, and to provide advice and information to businesses on how they can comply with the legislation.

1.5.1 Powers and enforcement

Authorised persons may require information or documents, enter and search premises, take samples for analysis, stop motor vehicles, copy documents and seize evidence of an offence against the Act.

If there is a breach of the Act –

- An authorised person may issue a remedial notice requiring the business proprietor to remedy the breach within a stated reasonable time. Non-compliance with the notice without a reasonable excuse is an offence.
- A local government may prosecute for an offence.

Some offences can result in an ‘on-the-spot’ fine by way of an infringement notice. Under the *State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999* local governments can issue infringement notices for the following offences:

- carrying on a higher risk personal appearance service without a licence (10 penalty units)
- provide higher risk personal appearance services from a premises not stated on the licence (10 penalty units)
- provide higher risk personal appearance services without holding the infection control qualification HLTINF005, or its former title (5 penalty units)
- failure by a licensee of a higher risk personal appearance service to do any of the following:
 - comply with a condition of their licence, including displaying a copy of their licence and ensuring a copy of the Guidelines is kept in their premises (2 penalty units)
 - notify a local government of their intention to provide services from mobile premises in its area (2 penalty units)
 - provide follow-up written confirmation after giving notice by phone as above (1 penalty unit)

The value of a penalty unit may change over time. The *Penalties and Sentences Act 1992* as amended contains the penalty unit value.

If a person is convicted of an offence, the court on its own initiative, or at the request of the prosecutor, may order the person to stop providing personal appearance services, or carrying on or managing a business which provides personal appearance services.

The following additional enforcement measures apply for higher risk services:

- If there is an immediate and serious risk of infection to clients, the local government that issued the licence may immediately suspend it. This will be followed by a ‘show

cause' process, where the licensee is given an opportunity to make a submission as to why the suspension should not continue, or the licence be cancelled.

- The local government that issued a licence may suspend or cancel it after a show cause process if a condition of the licence has been breached or another ground exists.

If a licensee of a mobile premises breaches a condition of their licence while in a second local government area, the second local government may notify the first local government in writing. The first local government may then take action to suspend or cancel the licence as if the breach had occurred in its area.

1.5.2 Licence and inspection fees

Businesses providing higher risk personal appearance services will need to pay a licence fee. In addition, the Act allows local governments to charge higher risk and non-higher risk services a fee for inspecting business premises. An inspection fee may only be charged after an inspection is carried out.

Each local government may set the licensing and inspection fee, but these must be no more than the cost to the local government of providing the service or taking the action. Local governments are permitted to charge the following inspection fees –

For higher risk services:

- each fixed or mobile premises – one inspection fee per year. That is, each local government in which the services are provided may charge an annual inspection fee.

For non-higher risk services:

- services provided only at fixed premises – one inspection fee per year for each premises
- services provided only at places other than fixed premises – one inspection fee per year irrespective of the number of locations or the number of local council areas in which services are provided
- services at both fixed premises and other locations – one inspection fee per year for each fixed premises.

For all personal appearance services, an additional inspection fee may be charged if a remedial notice has been issued and it is necessary for a further inspection to be carried out to check whether the remedial action has been taken. An additional fee may be charged for each follow-up inspection.

1.5.3 Appealing against a decision made by a local government

Under the Act, a business may apply to a local government for a review of certain decisions made by that government about licences for higher risk personal appearance services. If they are dissatisfied by the outcome of the review, they may appeal to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) against the review decision. QCAT plays a key role in improving the openness, accountability, quality and consistency of original decision making in the public sector through reviewing administrative decisions made by government decision-makers.

Decision-makers include the Chief Executive (Director General), Commissioner, Superintendent, registrar, officer, regulator, authority or inspector of Queensland Government departments, local governments and regulatory authorities. More information is available at <https://www.qcat.qld.gov.au/case-types/review-of-government-agency-decisions>

1.6 Other laws that apply to personal appearance services

Business operators and staff should also be aware of their responsibilities under other Queensland legislation, some of which is listed below; however, this is not an exhaustive list.

All current Queensland legislation can be accessed at

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/browse/inforce>

1.6.1 Body art and tattooing businesses

You must have a tattoo operator licence to run a body art or tattooing business in Queensland (excluding cosmetic tattooing). The *Tattoo Industry Act 2013* sets out the occupational licensing and regulatory framework for the Queensland tattoo industry.

To be eligible for a tattoo operator licence you must:

- be 18 years or older
- be an Australian citizen or Australian resident
- not be subject to a relevant control order or registered corresponding control order that restricts you from carrying on a business, engaging in an occupation or performing an activity that requires a licence
- not be convicted of a prescribed offence under the *Tattoo Industry Act 2013* where the conviction was recorded within the last 10 years

- undertake a criminal history check with Queensland Police Service.

In order to operate, you will require both a tattoo operator licence and a Higher Risk Personal Appearance Services licence. You are encouraged to apply for your tattoo operator licence first. This will save you time and money if you are not eligible for a tattoo operator licence.

Further information on the tattoo industry regulation, including applying for a tattoo operator licence, is available on the [Office of Fair Trading webpage](#)

1.6.2 Laser tattoo removal

When a tattoo removal procedure involves the use of an instrument such as a needle to pierce, cut, scar, scrape, puncture or tear a person's skin or mucous membrane it is considered a higher risk personal appearance service.

Laser tattoo removal is not a higher risk personal appearance service. As a specialised industry, under the *Radiation Safety Act 1999* there are licensing and regulatory requirements for Class 4 lasers used for laser tattoo removal procedures.

1.6.3 Piercing and tattooing of persons under 18 years

Under the *Summary Offences Act 2005* it is an offence to pierce the nipples or genitals, or perform tattooing, on a minor (person under 18 years of age).

The maximum penalty for both offences is 40 penalty units or 6 months imprisonment. However, the maximum penalty for the piercing offence is doubled if the minor's decision-making capacity is impaired by alcohol, drugs or by intellectual disability. It is not a defence that the minor's parent or guardian consented to the tattooing or piercing.

1.6.4 Cosmetic procedures of persons under 18 years

Under the *Public Health Act 2005* it is an offence to perform certain cosmetic procedures, predominantly cosmetic surgeries, on a person under the age of 18 years. The maximum penalty for performing a prescribed cosmetic procedure on a minor is 2,000 penalty units or 2 years imprisonment.

For cosmetic services outside the scope of those prohibited by the *Public Health Act 2005*, operators should consider the position of the Medical Board of Australia (the Board), specifically consideration of the appropriateness of the cosmetic procedure for a minor, the capacity of the minor to consent to the procedure, and the view of the minor's parent or guardian. Furthermore, the Board state there must be a cooling-off period of at least seven days between informed consent and any cosmetic procedure being performed on a minor.

The Board considers that cosmetic injectables should not be provided to minors for cosmetic purposes, and in Queensland it is an offence to provide permanent injectable fillers to a minor.

1.6.5 Parental consent requirements for minors

Parental consent is not required for body piercing or non-prohibited cosmetic procedures carried out on a minor. An operator has an implied moral obligation not to pierce or undertake cosmetic services on a minor without their parents' consent. Depending on the nature of the piercing requested, it may be appropriate to ask the client to return the next day after discussing the piercing with their parent or guardian. The implied consent goes hand in hand with a duty of care to take all precautions not to harm a minor during the higher risk personal appearance service. Some people may not have the maturity or mental capacity to give their own consent for a procedure. Parental consent cannot be given for the piercing of a minor's nipples or genitals, or for tattooing a minor.

1.6.6 Smoking and vaping

Smoking and vaping in an enclosed place, and within 5m of an entrance to an enclosed place, is prohibited under the *Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998*.

1.6.7 Waste Management

Sharps must be placed into a rigid-walled, puncture resistant container compliant with AS 23907:2023, or its successor. The sharps container must be yellow in colour and bear the designated symbol specified in the Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2011.

Refer to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2011 for detailed requirements regarding the disposal of waste, including sharps. See 4.3 – excerpt from the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation Guideline: Clinical and related waste

1.6.8 Workplace health and safety

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* requires employers to take steps to ensure the safety of employees at work. It also requires employers and self-employed persons to conduct their business in a manner which ensures their own health and safety, the health and safety of people not under their employment, and the health and safety of members of the public who may be affected.

1.6.9 Scheduled medicines

In Australia, medicines are classified into schedules under a Poisons Standard. In Queensland, the possession and use of scheduled medicines are regulated under the *Medicines and Poisons Act 2019* and Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021.

Business operators must employ or engage the services of a suitably qualified and registered health professional (e.g. doctor, nurse practitioner or registered nurse) in order to offer personal appearance services involving scheduled medicines.

Anaesthetic substances

It is illegal for a person to possess, administer, apply or inject a scheduled anaesthetic or pain reducing substance to another person unless you are authorised under the Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021 to possess and administer the substance.

Anaesthetics containing lidocaine for topical use are classified as a scheduled substance (except those containing 2% or less of total local anaesthetic).

Other scheduled medicines

It is also illegal to possess and administer other scheduled medicines commonly used in personal appearance services such as Botulinum toxins (e.g. Botox® and Dysport®) and hyaluronic acid (in preparations for injection or implantation e.g. dermal filler) unless you are authorised under the Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021 to possess and administer the substance. Hyaluronic acid preparations such as creams which are intended for use as a topical application only (not for injection/implantation) are not considered a scheduled medicine and are therefore not captured under this requirement.

Contact the Medicines Approvals and Regulation Unit for further information on [medicines used in beauty treatment and cosmetic businesses](#).

Advertising

The *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989* and the Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021 prohibit the advertising of substances, or goods containing substances included in Schedules 3, 4 or 8 of the Poisons Standard. Refer to the Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code for further guidance.

1.6.10 Therapeutic Goods Administration requirements

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is responsible for regulating therapeutic goods sold in Australia, including medicines, medical devices and other therapeutic goods. The TGA maintains a public database of therapeutic goods approved for supply in Australia – the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG).

Devices

Any therapeutic devices used for personal appearance services must be registered with the TGA and appear in the ARTG. This may include, for example, microneedles and cosmetic micro-needling handpieces.

Medicines

The TGA recommends against buying medicines and medical devices online from overseas websites.

Blood and blood components

Blood and blood components are regulated in various ways under the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989*. PRP is likely to be considered a blood component when it is prepared by centrifugation, filtration and freezing.

Cosmetic use of PRP is likely to be considered a therapeutic good, and therefore subject to TGA regulation, when there are cosmetic claims and the PRP is injected, or if there are therapeutic claims. PRP used in personal appearance services may be regulated by the TGA as an 'exempt good', or subject to a higher level of regulation when it meets the criteria of a 'biological'.

2 Infection control guidelines

The Guidelines provide evidence-based best practice recommendations to minimise the risk of infection during the provision of personal appearance services. The guidelines apply to all business proprietors and operators providing personal appearance services, including beauty therapy, hairdressing, tattooing, body piercing, cosmetic injectables and other skin penetration services.

The Guidelines cover:

- basic infection prevention principles
- hand hygiene
- aseptic non-touch technique
- personal protective equipment
- safe handling and disposal of sharps
- exposure to blood and body substances
- routine environmental cleaning

- cleaning, disinfecting and sterilizing
- safe handling, storage, and disposal of linen and waste materials
- animals
- materials and instruments used in non-higher risk personal appearance services
- skin penetration procedures
- body piercing, tattooing and microblading
- records for higher risk personal appearance services.

All personal appearance services, irrespective of whether the service is classified as higher risk or non-higher risk, must either comply with the Guidelines or adopt other demonstratable measures that minimise the risk of infection.

For business proprietors/operators conducting higher risk personal appearance services, it is a condition of the licence that a copy of the Guidelines are kept at each premise from which the licensee conducts business.

A copy of the Guidelines can be obtained at

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/industry-environment/personal-appearance/services/legislation>

3 Additional measures to minimise potential harm

Please note these measures are provided as additional information only and are not part of the Guidelines.

3.1.1 Vaccination

An operator may pierce or injure their skin or their client's skin while providing a personal appearance service. The transfer of small (even invisible) amounts of infected blood into a wound could put an operator at risk of contracting or transferring HIV or hepatitis B or C. There is a vaccine available against hepatitis B and it is highly recommended that operators talk to their doctor about this vaccination.

3.1.2 Jewellery considerations

Before using jewellery in body piercing, consider the following:

- the style, shape and size of the jewellery should be compatible with the piercing site and the person's anatomy e.g. thinner jewellery can tear tissue and thick heavy jewellery can

damage or distort tissue, and the size should be suitable for the piercing site e.g. sufficient length to allow for swelling

- the material used in jewellery should be compatible with the person's physiology, e.g. does not cause allergic contact dermatitis
- manufacturers or wholesalers should be able to provide certification and/or a safety data sheet (SDS) that states the material used in the jewellery.

3.1.3 Aftercare information

It is good practice to provide clients with information about appropriate aftercare for the service provided.

Body piercing

It is recommended clients be advised:

- the piercing should be kept dry as much as possible
- to wash their hands thoroughly before touching the piercing
- to avoid touching the piercing site or jewellery as much as possible (except for cleaning), and not to play, pick or scratch the piercing
- when cleaning the piercing site:
 - use an anti-bacterial soap and water
 - after showering/bathing use a clean paper tissue or cotton bud to dry the piercing
- the likely healing time
- to avoid swimming until the piercing has healed
- how to check for infection – indicated by increased pain, redness and an increase in the amount of discharge around the piercing site. Infected discharge is usually thick and yellow, green or grey and may have an unusual odour. Medical advice should be sought if signs of infection arise.
- some antiseptics, skin disinfectants, alcohol-based cleaning solutions and tea tree oil skin cleaners can dry out the skin and result in prolonged healing times

Tattooing

It is recommended clients be advised:

- to remove the cover after two to three hours and to wash the tattoo with clean running water and a mild soap, rinse and pat dry
- to apply an aqueous moisturiser/cream as recommended, and not to overuse the cream
- to not rub, pick or scratch the tattoo
- the likely healing time

- to avoid swimming until after the tattoo has healed
- to not wear tight or dirty clothing
- how to check for an infection, and to seek medical advice if signs of infection arise

Scarification and other similar procedures

It is recommended clients be advised:

- how to care for the procedure including cleaning regime and appropriate products to apply, where applicable
- the likely healing time
- expectation of scab formation
- how to check for an infection, and to seek medical advice if signs of infection arise

Cosmetic injectables, skin needling, PDO threads, PRP and other similar procedures

It is recommended clients be advised:

- the expected side effects at or around the injection site/treatment area
- to remain upright for four hours, where applicable (Botulinum toxin injections)
- how to clean the treatment area
- any activities and substances to avoid and timeframes, including facial treatments, exercise, excessive heat, alcohol and certain medications
- any adverse reactions, and how to seek assistance.

3.1.4 Choice of inks

In Australia, tattoo inks are classified as industrial chemicals, with the chemicals subject to assessment by the Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme. Certain chemicals are also restricted from use in preparations for skin colouring including tattooing in accordance with the TGA's national Poison Standard (the SUSMP). As ink is deposited and retained in the client's body, inks should only be purchased from a reputable supplier. Be aware that some products obtained online may not meet these requirements.

The European Union's REACH (Regulation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals) regulation is an international benchmark for the safety of tattoo inks. You should request a Safety Data Sheet or equivalent from the manufacturer to ensure the ink is compliant with REACH, or:

- free from any contamination including heavy metals
- free from infectious agents

- manufactured under hygienic conditions
- stored at all times in a way that prevents contamination.

If diluting ink, only use sterile water and discard any leftover ink.

3.1.5 Nail salons and foot spa services

Nail salons are non-higher risk personal appearance services but carry a risk of spreading fungal, bacterial and viral infections between clients if equipment such as foot spas and nail tools are not appropriately cleaned and disinfected or sterilized.

Foot spas

Refer to Queensland Health's factsheet on [how to clean and disinfect a foot spa](#). It is important to remember:

- Foot spas must be cleaned and disinfected after every customer, and at the end of every day.
- Disposable liners can be used between clients as an additional measure to help minimise infection risks.
- At the end of the day, ensure you remove the filter screen, inlet jets, and all other removeable parts from the basin, and clean out any debris trapped behind or in them.
- Cleaning brushes must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Nail tools

After every customer, reusable items such as foot scrapers, nail and cuticle clippers must be reprocessed. These items are classified as semi-critical devices and require cleaning and sterilization (or high-level disinfection if the item is not compatible with sterilization). Refer to section 4.1 for further guidance on reprocessing.

3.1.6 Exposure prone piercing

Exposure prone piercing means situations where there is a higher risk of the piercer's hand coming into contact with the needle tip due to the location of the piercing and the position of the hand, where the needle cannot be seen at all times. Examples of exposure prone piercings include oral piercings and some genital piercings.

If you are a body piercer who is HIV or hepatitis C antibody positive, or are a hepatitis B carrier, and you conduct exposure prone piercings, you should talk to your doctor about whether you should continue to conduct these piercings.

3.1.7 Platelet-rich plasma (PRP)

PRP treatments meet the definition of a higher risk personal appearance service. Operators offering PRP treatments must ensure samples are only obtained for immediate use on the same client. It is strongly recommended sample manipulation is carried out in the treatment room with the client. Only in situations where this is not practicable should sample manipulation occur outside the room. In such circumstances a comprehensive unique identification system must be used to ensure the sample matches the client.

Any unused sample contents must be disposed of immediately as clinical waste. Operators must ensure they are compliant with TGA regulatory requirements, and must not freeze, or otherwise store PRP samples for future use.

3.1.8 Single-use instruments

It is good practice to open single-use instruments such as sharps and razors in the presence of the client. These instruments are designed to be disposed of immediately after use.

3.1.9 Vials

Separate vials should be used for individual clients wherever possible, and any open vials must be disposed of appropriately. Operators must comply with the manufacturer's instructions for storage and use including use-by dates, temperature limits and single-use products. Vial contents should be visually assessed prior to use to ensure they are the intended colour(less), consistency and are free from particles. The bung on multi-use vials should be inspected for leaks and disinfected with an alcohol swab prior to use, or as directed by the manufacturer, and a new, sterile needle and syringe used to access the vial.

3.1.10 Injuries and bleeding

Details on how to manage client bleeding and operator exposure to blood or other body substances can be found in the Guidelines. If a staff member is injured, they should immediately report the incident to their manager or employer. If the injury is significant or involves exposure to bodily fluids, the staff member should consult a medical practitioner as soon as possible so their injury may be assessed and treated. It is suggested that business proprietors establish links with a nearby medical service and have contact details readily accessible for staff.

The business proprietor, or delegated person, should review all exposures and accidents, and take steps to reduce the chances of a similar event re-occurring.

3.1.11 Cosmetic testers

Single use disposable applicators should be made available for customers intending to use cosmetic testers such as lipsticks, creams etc. The use of single use applicators can be encouraged by displaying clearly visible signage and/or the monitoring of customers by staff.

4 Related resources

4.1 Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related facilities

Australian Standard AS 5369:2023 *Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related facilities* applies to the reprocessing of devices (instruments and equipment) undertaken in non-health related facilities where skin piercing, tattooing and other procedures where the skin is breached occur, or when mucous membranes are contacted.

AS 5369:2023 sets out the requirements and practices necessary for the effective and safe reprocessing (cleaning, disinfection and sterilization), storage, handling and transportation of reusable instruments and equipment used for personal appearance services. Operators must only reprocess reusable items if the requirements set out in AS 5369:2023 can be met.

Reprocessing

Reprocessing reusable instruments and equipment is a multistep process involving cleaning, and disinfection or sterilization to ensure items are safe to use for their intended purpose.

The reprocessing requirements of reusable instruments and equipment is based on a classification system (Spaulding Classification Scheme) related to the intended use of the item –

1. Critical: cleaning followed by sterilization
2. Semi-critical: cleaning followed by sterilization unless the item is not compatible with sterilization in which case follow with a high-level disinfection process
3. Non-critical: cleaning, may be followed by low or intermediate level disinfection.

Refer to Queensland Health's [guide to reprocessing reusable instruments and equipment](#) for guidance on the minimum reprocessing requirements and applying Spaulding Classification Scheme to personal appearance services.

Business proprietors and operators that reprocess reusable items must ensure that they familiarise themselves with AS 5369:2023.

AS 5369:2023 can be purchased from Standards Australia or Intertek Inform at:

<https://www.standards.org.au/>

<https://www.intertekinform.com/en-au/>

4.2 Queensland Development Code

Part 5.0, MP 5.2 – Higher risk personal appearance services

The Queensland Development Code, MP 5.2 – Higher risk personal appearance services, sets out the standard to ensure that businesses providing higher risk personal appearance services are suitably planned and fitted out to effectively minimise infection risks. The standard outlines criteria and acceptable solutions for the components –

- functionality
- hand washing, instrument and equipment cleaning facilities
- finishing materials (floors, walls, ceilings, benches, cupboard surfaces and workstations)
- finishes - joining system (wall, ceiling and floor finishes)

The Queensland Development Code, MP 5.2 – Higher risk personal appearance services can be obtained online at

<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/building-property-development/building-construction/laws-codes-standards/queensland-development-code>

4.3 Guideline: Clinical and related waste

ESR/2015/1575 Department of Environment, Science and Innovation

The *Guideline: Clinical and related waste* defines clinical waste and describes how it must be managed (handled, stored, packaged, labelled and transported) to minimise the potential for contact with the waste and to reduce the risk to the environment from accidental release.

Clinical waste

Clinical waste means waste that has the potential to cause disease, including, for example, the following –

- a) animal waste
- b) discarded sharps
- c) human tissue waste
- d) laboratory waste

Discarded sharps

A sharp is an object or device having with sharp points, protuberances or cutting edges that are capable of causing a penetrating injury to humans. This waste includes hypodermic, intravenous or other medical needles, Pasteur pipettes, disposable dental picks and drill bits, scalpel blades, lancets, scissors, glass slides and broken laboratory glass.

In order for an item to be defined as a sharp, it does not have to have been in contact with human blood, body fluids or an infectious agent.

Sharps produced by premises generating clinical or related waste must be placed into a rigid-walled, puncture-resistant container that meets the relevant Australian Standard for the type of container and is the appropriate colour for the type of sharp. A rigid-walled container is one that has hard, unbending sides and is resistant to splitting, breaking, and puncturing.

Care should be taken to prevent injuries during the storage and disposal of sharps. Consider the following principles for your premises:


- dispose of sharps immediately to protect operators, staff and clients from injury
- place sharps disposal containers as close as practical to where a procedure is undertaken so they can be easily accessed by the operator
- ensure sharps containers are not accessible to visitors, particularly children
- ensure sharps containers are not overfilled
- ensure items are not forcefully inserted into sharps containers
- refer to the Guidelines if you sustain a needle stick or sharps injury when disposing of a sharp.

Clinical waste disposal

Storage

Clinical waste must be placed in yellow bags and containers identified with the biohazard symbol and the words 'CLINICAL WASTE' marked prominently and permanently in black.

For clinical waste, the design rules for the waste container are as follows –

Waste	Container	Symbol colour	Symbol	Identification
CLINICAL	Yellow	Black	Biohazard symbol 	Clinical waste

Disposal

Untreated clinical waste can only be disposed of to landfill when it has been generated in a scheduled area. Scheduled areas are specified local government areas that do not have easy access to clinical waste transport or treatment options. These local government areas are listed in Schedule 4 of the *Environmental Protection Regulation 2019*.

All other clinical waste (i.e. clinical waste that is generated outside of a scheduled area) must be treated prior to disposal to landfill. Untreated clinical waste, such as sharps, must be provided to an approved facility via a licensed transporter. An environmental authority for regulated waste transport is required to transport waste from the premises on which it was generated to a storage, treatment or disposal facility.

When waste is not clinical waste

If the waste does not contain free-flowing blood or body fluids, it is not clinical waste. This means that waste with a small amount of dried blood (e.g. cotton wool ball with a spot of dried blood) does not have to be disposed of as clinical waste. However, sharps are a clinical waste and must be managed accordingly.

A full copy of the guideline for Clinical and related waste is available from the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation at

<https://www.desi.qld.gov.au/our-department/policies>

4.4 Personal appearance services categorisation table

To assist you in determining which legislation is applicable to the services and procedures you provide at your business, please refer to the personal appearance services categorisation table. This table is not an exhaustive list but is intended to be used as a guide.

If you are uncertain whether your business is captured under the Act, or if you require assistance in determining whether your business is a higher risk or non-higher risk personal

appearance service, you should contact your local government or local public health unit for assistance.

A copy of the personal appearance services categorisation table can be obtained at

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/industry-environment/personal-appearance/services/legislation>

4.5 Legislation and compliance resources

Further information on the relevant legislation and resources to help business comply with the personal appearance services Act and Regulation are available at

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/industry-environment/personal-appearance/services>

Fact sheets on a range of communicable conditions are available on the Queensland Health website at

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/disease-control>

If you have any questions after reading this booklet, contact the Communicable Diseases Management Unit, Queensland Health on (07) 3328 9728, your local council Environmental Health department, or your local [public health unit](#)

Appendix 1

Example: skin penetration procedure

The following is an example of a 'good practice' skin penetration procedure which follows the Guidelines.

Prepare the work area

- perform hand hygiene as per the Guidelines
- clean the work environment where the procedure will take place, if not cleaned previously
- perform hand hygiene again once the work environment has been cleaned
- ensure all required instruments, materials and equipment are at hand in the immediate work area
- if necessary, fit clean linen to furniture to be used by the client
- cover surfaces or controls likely to be touched by the operator (e.g. light fittings) with clean, unused plastic wrap
- open sterile packs of instruments, materials and dressings in front of the client while ensuring the items do not become contaminated
- if unpackaged sterile instruments and items are to be used, use them immediately upon removal from the steriliser.

Preparing the client

- check the client's skin penetration site is free from infection, sores or wounds
- ask the client if they have any allergies and/or sensitivities which may be affected by a skin penetration procedure
- if the client is to be pierced, prepare the client's piercing site, e.g. clean the site and apply antiseptic as per the guidelines
- mark the skin penetration site on the client's skin if necessary, e.g. using a surgical marker, tattoo template etc.

During the procedure

- wear sterile gloves if there will be direct hand contact with that part of the sterile instrument or jewellery that penetrates the skin. Otherwise, wear clean, single-use disposable gloves

- ensure the gloves are not contaminated while putting them on or by coming into contact with an unsterile agent.
- If the operator leaves the immediate work area and then returns to the procedure, the operator should perform hand hygiene and put on another pair of sterile, single-use gloves
- perform the skin penetration procedure including insertion or implantation of the selected item or material into the piercing site
- use a clean, dry single-use swab to remove any blood released as a result of the piercing of skin or mucous membrane
- if the pierced site requires covering; use a clean, dry, single-use covering (e.g. gauze dressing or surgical tape)
- place the used single-use disposable sharps in the sharps waste container
- place reusable instruments into a smooth surfaced resistant container holding water after use. This will prevent drying of matter and allow easier cleaning
- place other waste including instruments and working surface coverings, swabs and gloves into the general waste container
- place contaminated linen into the linen receptacle.

After the procedure

- clean the immediate working area in which the procedure was performed
- wash your hands as per section the Guidelines
- provide your client with aftercare information.

Appendix 2

Infections and how they are spread

The following is an extract from a risk assessment report on personal appearance services by Dr. Joan Faoagali and Dr. Michael William Harrison

As some personal appearance services such as hairdressing and beauty therapy pose a relatively low risk of transmitting blood-borne diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C, while others such as tattooing, body piercing and cosmetic injectables pose a higher risk of transmission, Queensland uses a two-tiered system of regulation.

Many microbes can cause an infection by multiple infectious routes. There are a vast number of micro-organisms in the world although only a few are commonly associated with human disease. Some micro-organisms such as Hepatitis A virus are only found in humans. Other micro-organisms are ubiquitous, although different strains may colonise different animal and plant species. Many of these organisms can cause infections in humans if they are able to invade the skin barrier or be breathed or swallowed by humans. A rule of thumb commonly used in infection control practice is that all organisms are potentially pathogenic if they are able to evade the normal defence mechanisms of the body or if the defence mechanisms are weakened or absent (i.e. immuno-suppressed).

Alertness to the presence of micro-organisms is essential to ensure that they can be adequately controlled. Knowledge of how micro-organisms can spread, where they can be found and how the spread can be prevented is an essential prerequisite to their control. Operators carrying out skin penetration activities must have such an understanding because failure to maintain aseptic techniques could result in the inoculation of environmental organisms into the client during the skin penetration activity.

There are two relevant routes of transmission for personal appearance services, direct contact and indirect contact.

Table 1.1 Methods of spreading infections

Method of Spread	Comment	Examples
Direct Contact	The organisms are spread directly from one person to another	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staphylococcal infection in wounds spread from the hands of attendant(s)• Streptococcal infections from hands of attendant to skin of client• Herpes simplex virus from hand of attendant to client or vice versa• Scabies
Indirect Contact	The organism is spread via a fomite (inanimate item) which is contaminated with the microbe, e.g. reusable needles used in acupuncture or tattooing which have not been adequately sterilized	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contaminated needle: hepatitis C, hepatitis B, HIV infection• Contaminated comb: head lice, dermatophytes (ringworm)

A number of factors influence whether an infection occurs after exposure to an infectious agent as shown in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 Factors influencing the transmission of infectious conditions

Factor	Reason
The (size) dose of the microbe (microbial exposure)	A larger dose of microbes is more likely to cause infection than a smaller dose. Smaller doses may result in immunity to infection without the development of overt disease (infection) by stimulating the immune system but not overwhelming it and causing symptoms (disease).
The virulence of the organism	Virulence is a term used to reflect the ability of the organism to cause disease. This may be associated with the production of extra cellular products (enzymes), which facilitate tissue invasion or the ability to adhere to specific tissues e.g. influenza virus adheres to respiratory epithelium, poliovirus invades and destroys motor neurone cells in the spinal cord.
The site of entry of the microbe – (route of primary infection)	For example, inoculation of S.aureus into the skin may cause a local abscess, inhalation may cause a lung abscess and invasion into the blood stream with deposition and abscess formation in many organs including bone, the heart valves, brain, muscle etc.

Factor	Reason
Immune status of the individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who have been immunised/vaccinated against infection with specific microbes for which a vaccine is available will be unlikely to develop an infection when exposed to that organism. Examples of available vaccines are measles, rubella, diphtheria, polio, TB, hepatitis A & B, haemophilus influenzae type b. • People who have previously been infected with the organism are unlikely to be reinfected. Examples are chicken pox, hepatitis A or B and measles virus infections. • People with abnormal immune systems due to cancer or immunosuppressive drug therapy will be more susceptible to infections to which they have previously been exposed because their natural defense mechanisms (white cells, antibodies, immunoglobulins) are not functioning optimally. Organisms that rarely cause disease can infect these persons. • People with loss of skin due to trauma (e.g. burns) or disease (e.g. pemphigus) will be more susceptible to infection due to loss of their normal skin defensive barrier. • People with invasive devices through skin e.g. IV lines, urinary catheters, have an easy route for microbes to enter areas of the body to which they do not normally have access. These microbes can colonise the invasive devices and be protected from the activity of anti-microbial agents by the formation of biofilm on the catheter surfaces.
Source of the infecting microbe	Although most infecting organisms come from a person's own flora, environmental and animal microbes can cause human disease. Sometimes these diseases are difficult to treat because the animal or environmental micro-organisms are not susceptible to the available antibiotics.
Environmental factors	Ambient temperature, dust, lack of sunlight, humidity, moist areas (damp cloths) may provide an environment which encourages the growth of micro-organisms and is difficult to alter/control e.g. Legionella sp. in tap spouts/shower/rosettes and pseudomonas sp. in damp areas such as foam rubber sponges, nail brushes.
Transmission vectors	Rodents, flies, cockroaches, mosquitoes can transmit micro-organisms indirectly from their external skeleton or excreta or as part of the life cycle of the organism e.g. malaria/Ross River virus infection.
Mode of transmission	Inoculation is more effective than inhalation, which can be more effective than ingestion and direct contact - but other factors including dosage size and microbial virulence must be also considered.