

Hairdressers and barbers



Hairdressers and barbers need to adopt good infection control practices to prevent infections spreading from one person to another.

About this fact sheet

Hairdressers and barbers conduct procedures that can spread skin infections on the scalp, face and neck including impetigo (a bacterial infection) and fungal infections such as tinea and ringworm.

These infections can spread when instruments and equipment are not cleaned between clients, when instruments are not handled hygienically, and when furnishings and fittings are not kept clean and in good repair.

Only businesses that carry out skin penetration procedures need to comply with the Public Health Regulation 2022 (the Regulation).

Business construction

- The design and construction of the business must meet the requirements of the [Local Government \(General\) Regulation 2021](#). Contact the [local council](#) to ensure all local rules have been met.
- The following will assist businesses to ensure good hygiene and infection control:
 - All surfaces can be easily and correctly cleaned.
 - Non-slip flooring.
 - Adequate lighting and good ventilation.
 - Suitable floor coverings, shelves, fittings and furniture.
 - A waste disposal bin.
 - Storage facilities that can store equipment and utensils in a hygienic manner.
 - A separate sink with a supply of clean, warm water for cleaning equipment.
 - A dedicated hand wash basin that has a constant supply of:
 - warm running water
 - liquid soap and an alcohol-based cleaner
 - single-use towel or a working automatic hand dryer.

Equipment

- Equipment that is difficult to clean should be single-use.
- All equipment must be cleaned between use, including combs, brushes, rollers, clippers and scissors, and be kept in a clean and dry condition.
- Manual clippers with non-detachable blades should not be used as they cannot be easily cleaned.
- Detachable blades on clippers must be cleaned before being reused.
- Equipment should not be soaked in solutions of disinfectant unless specified by the manufacturer's instructions.
- Equipment must be cleaned using warm water and detergent. Common household detergents are not recommended due to their high foaming properties and difficulties removing residues.
- Sterile single-use razors should be used for shaving. After use, the razor must be disposed of into an appropriate sharps container.
- Clean towels or linen must be used for each new client. Linen should be washed in detergent and hot water. If an impervious cover is used (such as plastic), it must be cleaned and disinfected before it is used for each new client.
- If equipment is exposed to blood or penetrates the skin, it must undergo a valid sterilisation process in line with *AS/NZS 4815:2006 Office-based health care facilities - Reprocessing of reusable medical and surgical instruments and equipment, and maintenance of the associated environment*, before it can be reused (see fact sheet titled 'How to clean and sterilise reusable equipment and instruments').

Business hygiene

- The business is to be kept in a clean condition.
- Treatment areas such as benches should be cleaned between each client and/or a clean covering placed over the treatment surface.
- The business should have documented cleaning and maintenance procedures for the fixtures, fittings and equipment, and staff are trained in these procedures.

- All waste should be tightly bagged and disposed of daily.
- To prevent cross contamination, all liquids and creams should be decanted into single-use containers, and a single-use applicator must be used for each person.
- Waxing is a skin penetration procedure and if a hairdresser or barber is waxing, the business must register with the local council as a skin penetration business (see fact sheet titled 'Waxing').

Personal hygiene for hairdressers and barbers

- Hairdressers and barbers should wear a clean gown or apron and single-use gloves during the procedure.
- Cuts or wounds should be covered with a sealed waterproof bandage.
- Hands should be washed:
 - before and after attending to a client
 - before and after a procedure
 - after exposure to a body substance
 - after touching a client's surroundings
 - after the removal of gloves.
- See [Hand Hygiene Australia](#) for additional information on how to wash your hands.

Other requirements

- The business must be registered with the local council, meet all planning and building standards and have all necessary approvals before opening.
- If skin penetration procedures are carried out, the business must comply with the Regulation.
- Sharps containers must meet AS/NZS 4261:1994 *Reusable containers for the collection of sharp items used in human and animal medical applications*, or AS 4031:1992 *Non-reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items used in health care areas*.

Further advice

- Contact your [local council](#).
- Contact your local [Public Health Unit](#) by calling 1300 066 055.

Further information

The following resources are also available to help skin penetration businesses and practitioners understand the requirements of the *Public Health Act 2010* and Public Health Regulation 2022. Visit our [Skin penetration resources](#) page on the NSW Health website:

Fact sheets

- Beauty, body art and skin penetration industries
- How to clean and sterilise reusable equipment and instruments
- Waxing

Standards

- [AS/NZS 4815:2006](#)