



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

Guideline for the management of public health risks associated with the hairdressing and barber industry

Public Health Act 2016 (WA)



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Disclaimer

This document provides general guidance on aspects of the *Public Health Act 2016*. This Guideline is not a substitute for reading the Public Health Act and should not be regarded as legal advice.

Legal advice relevant to the user's circumstances should be obtained when necessary. It is the responsibility of users to inform themselves of any updates to the Guideline and the relevant legislation applying, and to ensure that they rely on information that is current.

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Glossary of terms and acronyms

Term	Explanation
Assistance animal	Has the meaning given by the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> (Cth). An assistance animal is a dog or other animal: (a) accredited under a law of a State or Territory that provides for the accreditation of animals trained to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability; or (b) accredited by an animal training organisation prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this paragraph; or (c) trained: (i) to assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effect of the disability; and (ii) to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place.
Cleaning	Means the removal of soil and reduction in number of micro- organisms from a surface by a process such as washing in detergent and water without prior processing.
Client	Means any person on whom a hairdressing procedure is being or is to be carried out on but not necessarily for gain or reward.
Detergent	Means a substance that enhances the cleansing action of water or other liquid.
Disinfectant	Means an agent intended to destroy or remove pathogenic micro- organisms but does not usually destroy bacterial spores.
Disinfection	Means the inactivation of non-spore forming organisms using either thermal (heat and water) or chemical means.
Hairdressing	An activity where a person conducts services to a person's facial or scalp hair including shampooing, drying, cutting, trimming, shaving colouring and styling. A person conducting barbering is considered to be hairdressing for the purposes of these Guidelines.
Mobile operator	Any person who performs hairdressing procedures from a business that travels to the client's location such as a house, business, nursing home or hospital and includes businesses that operate from a caravan or other vehicle.
Operator	Any person who performs hairdressing procedures for the purposes of these Guidelines.
Sharps container	Means a clearly labelled, puncture resistant container that conforms with Australian Standard AS 4031-1992 ' <i>Non reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items used in health care areas</i> '.
Skin penetration	Means any process involving the piercing, cutting, puncturing, tearing or shaving of the skin, mucous membrane or conjunctiva of the eye.

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1.0 Purpose

This Guideline is issued by the Chief Health Officer of the Department of Health of Western Australia in accordance with the *Public Health Act 2016*.

This Guideline:

- provides practical advice to assist the hairdressing industry to meet their obligations under the general public health duty specified in Part 3 of the *Public Health Act 2016*.
- aims to promote a high standard of hygiene and infection prevention and control to ensure hairdressing services prevent the spread of blood-borne viruses and other infections to their clients.

It can be used to support the development of business policies, procedures and protocols that help to demonstrate compliance with infection prevention and control principles.

1.1 Who should use this Guideline?

This Guideline provides information and practical advice to assist hairdressers, barbers and hairdressing assistants who:

- engage in the business of hairdressing or barbering (including home businesses)
- operate or work as a hairdresser or barber
- operate or work in mobile hairdressing or barbering services

Hairdressing is an activity which can include the provision of services to a person's hair such as shampooing, drying, cutting, colouring and styling. Barbering can also include beard trimming or face shaving. For the purposes of this Guideline the term hairdressing also includes barbering.

Where a hairdressing business also provides skin penetration services, the operators and workers must follow the relevant sections of the [skin penetration legislation and Code of Practice](#). Skin penetration services can include beauty therapy procedures (e.g. waxing, tweezing and nail treatment) and body art (e.g. body piercing, tattooing, dermal anchors and scarification or branding).

2. Background

Previously the public health risks associated with hairdressing were managed under the *Hairdressing Establishment Regulations 1972* (the Regulations).

With the implementation of the *Public Health Act 2016* (WA) all regulations under the *Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1911* (WA) were reviewed, including the hairdressing Regulations.

In 2016, the discussion paper '[Proposed repeal of the Hairdressing Establishment Regulations 1972](#)' was circulated for feedback from the hairdressing and barber industry. It proposed that the Regulations be repealed and replaced by an industry guideline as a more effective and contemporary way of managing the industry's public health risks. This proposal was supported by industry feedback. As a result, the *Hairdressing Establishment Regulations 1972* were repealed and replaced with these Guidelines. Feedback on the discussion paper can be found in the [consultation summary](#).

3. Risks to public health

What is a public health risk?

A risk to public health is something that is known to cause or potentially cause disease or harm to the public health or wellbeing of humans.

Public health risks in the hairdressing industry can be managed via hygiene practices and precautions. Although the risks are minimal, procedures performed by the hairdressing industry may potentially expose clients to infection or infestation if hygiene precautions are not taken. For example, a person may be at risk of exposure to skin infection (e.g. impetigo), fungal infection (e.g. tinea and ring worm) or infestation (e.g. head lice).¹

Infection can be transmitted if hairdressing instruments and equipment are not cleaned properly between clients. Unhygienic hairdressing equipment and tools (such as hairdryers, combs and brushes) can be contaminated with infection causing bacteria such as *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Escherichia coli*.²

Transmission of blood-borne viruses and infections are considered low risk in the hairdressing industry. The majority of hairdressing procedures are not intended to cut or puncture the skin, although accidentally nicking or cutting a client with scissors or clippers may pose a risk of infection. Examples of blood borne viral infections that may be spread in hairdressing establishments if blood exposure occurs include human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B and hepatitis C.³

The risk can be managed by appropriately cleaning and disinfecting equipment after use. Effective hygiene and infection controls can manage the potential risk of transmission to clients or staff. It should be assumed that all blood and body fluids are potentially infectious and should be treated as such.

Part 1 – Enforcement options

The enforcement options available to local governments for the management of public health issues associated with hairdressing are outlined in Part 1 of this Guideline.

4. Public Health Act 2016

4.1 Serious and material public health risks

The *Public Health Act 2016* defines:

Serious public health risk –

- a) Means a public health risk involving potential harm to public health that is irreversible, of a high impact or on a wide scale; and
- b) Includes a public health risk declared by the regulations to be a serious public health risk; but
- c) Does not include a public health risk declared by the regulations not to be a serious

public health risk.

Material public health risk –

- a) Means a public health risk involving potential harm to public health that is neither trivial nor negligible; and
- a) Includes a public health risk declared by the regulations to be a material public health risk; but
- b) Does not include a public health risk declared by the regulations not to be a material public health risk.

As defined in the *Public Health Act 2016*, **harm** includes physical or psychological harm to individuals, whether of long-term or immediate impact or effect.

In cases where matters are a nuisance or amenity problem but are not likely to result in harm, the serious and material public health risk provisions will not apply.

The *Public Health Act 2016* prescribes a range of offences for conduct that causes, or may cause, a serious or a material public health risk. It is unlikely that the usual practice of conducting hairdressing activities will create a serious public health risk without significant extenuating circumstances. However, this activity may be considered as causing a material public health risk if a person is not adhering to best practice guidance and they are generating significant and consistent impacts that have a demonstrable harm or potential harm to public health.

4.2 General public health duty

General Public Health Duty – *Public Health Act 2016* (WA)

“A person must take all reasonable and practicable steps to prevent or minimise any harm to public health that might foreseeably result from anything done or omitted to be done by the person”.

The general public health duty specified in Part 3 of the *Public Health Act 2016* (WA) requires that a person must *“take all reasonable and practicable steps to prevent or minimise any harm to public health that might foreseeably result from anything done or omitted to be done by the person”*.

In assessing what is reasonable and practicable, regard must be had to the objects of the *Public Health Act 2016* and to a range of other matters. A person will not breach the public health duty if they act in a manner or in circumstances that accord with generally accepted practices.

Detailed and specific guidance on the different enforcement options are available in the [Public Health Act 2016 Handbook for local government](#).

These Guidelines may be used to clarify the application of the general public health duty and provide industry specific information on what might constitute 'reasonable and practical steps' to prevent harm to public health.

Part 2 – Guidelines for best practice

5. Infection prevention and control

The business owner or manager should ensure every hairdresser has infection prevention and control skills and knowledge.

It is the business owner or manager/supervisor's responsibility to ensure all employees who perform hairdressing procedures have an understanding of how infections are spread, and what actions can be taken to prevent the spread of infection by adopting and using the recommended standards. The business owner or supervisor should examine the steps of a procedure or treatment, identify what risks are involved, and know how to best prevent those risks.

Staff and supervisors must be able to work in ways that ensure the business performs services safely and hygienically. Staff and supervisors must know about issues associated with infection control, cleaning and disinfection relevant to the business activities and work duties.

The hairdressing industry should be aware of diseases that can be transmitted in the course of their work and develop their own protocols and standards in response to this information. To learn more about a particular disease or infection, refer to the WA Department of Health website (www.healthywa.wa.gov.au) for a range of fact sheets that explain how each disease is transmitted, its symptoms and common health care advice. At minimum, hairdressers should familiarise themselves with basic information about blood-borne viruses such as:

- [HIV](#)
- [Hepatitis B](#)
- [Hepatitis C](#).

6. Standards for premises

Careful planning is required before setting up a hairdressing business. It is important that premises are designed to reduce the spread of infections, minimise hazards in the workplace and fit out with appropriate furniture and fittings.

6.1 General premises design

A hairdressing premises should:

- ✓ have sufficient space for equipment and for staff to conduct their work activities
- ✓ be protected from pests and other contaminants such as dirt and fumes
- ✓ be constructed of materials that are easy to clean and maintain
- ✓ have enough potable water available, at a warm temperature, for handwashing and cleaning
- ✓ have a disposal system for garbage, sewage and wastewater

- ✓ have sufficient lighting and ventilation
- ✓ have sufficient bench space for preparation work
- ✓ provide separate areas for food preparation and client treatment
- ✓ have a system for sharps waste disposal (if applicable)
- ✓ have adequate equipment to undertake the procedures carried out by the business
- ✓ provide staff with access to toilets and hand wash basins
- ✓ have separate sinks for hair washing and for washing instruments and equipment
- ✓ provide designated storage areas for personal belongings and clothing, office equipment, papers and any chemicals used by the business
- ✓ provide fixtures, fittings and equipment that are:
 - made of a suitable material appropriate for the work of the business
 - suitable for the jobs they are used for
 - easy to clean and, if necessary, disinfect.

6.2 Hand wash basins

A hand wash basin should be located in the main salon area in an accessible location to encourage use by staff. The basin should have hot and cold water supplied through a single outlet, ideally with a hands-free tap. Soap, disposable paper towels or a hot air dryer should be provided in the area next to the hand wash basin.

Hair washing basins with hot and cold running water through a single outlet are suitable for washing hands prior to conducting a hairdressing procedure if the basin is not in use.³

6.3 Hair washing basins

The number of hair washing basins to be provided in a salon is at the discretion of the business owner, based on business demand.

Hair washing basins must not be used to wash dishes or to wash hands which have been exposed to blood or body fluids.³

6.4 Equipment sinks

A separate sink with hot and cold running water should be available for cleaning instruments and washing equipment. Hair washing basins should not be used for washing equipment.

Sink sizes should be large enough to allow immersion of the largest appliance/equipment to be cleaned.



6.5 Food and drink preparation and service

Food preparation should not occur in the same areas as:

- hairdressing preparation (e.g. mixing dyes)
- cleaning (e.g. of equipment)
- hairdressing procedures (e.g. hair cutting).

If a hairdresser wants to offer their clients a complimentary drink (such as water, tea, soft drinks, alcohol or coffee) drinks are to be prepared in an area separate from where the client's hair is cut or equipment is cleaned, such as in a separate staff break room.

Drinks should be stored separately from hairdressing supplies in a clean and dry location. This is necessary to prevent the risk of contaminating drinks and utensils used for eating and drinking.

Glasses and utensils used to serve drinks must be washed thoroughly between use at a separate sink or in a dishwasher. An additional separate sink is not required for beverages that are pre-packaged or served using disposable cups and utensils. ⁴

A business that provides complimentary drinks in conjunction with another kind of business (e.g. hairdressing) is exempt from the registration provisions of the *Food Act 2008* (WA). However, the operator must still notify the relevant enforcement agency (local government or the Department of Health) that they intend to operate.

If the hairdressing business provides other types of food or beverages for sale, then they are required to comply with the *Food Act 2008* and will need to register with the local government. Refer to the Department of Health's website for further information regarding the [registration of a food business](#).

6.5.1 Alcohol

Hairdressers that wish to provide alcohol to their clients must comply with the *Liquor Control Act 1988* (WA) which regulates the sale, supply and consumption of liquor. There are situations which are exempt from the application of the *Liquor Control Act 1988*, such as the gratuitous supply of liquor when it is provided ancillary to the purpose of a customer's attendance at a business, when certain conditions are met. Refer to the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries website for information regarding [exemptions to the Liquor Control Act 1988](#).

7. Hygiene measures

Personal hygiene and preventing the spread of infection is the responsibility of everyone in the hairdressing and barber industry.

Knowing how and when to apply standard hygiene precautions is critical for any successful business.

Safe and hygienic work practices need to be applied for each client.

Successful infection prevention and control includes:

- Good personal hygiene practices, including tying long hair back, trimming nails, wearing clean clothing and applying waterproof coverings over cuts and abrasions
- Washing and drying hands before and after client contact
- Using protective barriers such as gloves, gowns, plastic aprons and masks
- Appropriate handling and disposal of sharps (e.g. razors)
- Using single use equipment when applicable
- Appropriate cleaning and processing of re-usable equipment and instruments.

7.1 Hand hygiene and hand washing

Hand hygiene is the most important step in preventing the spread of infection from one person to another.

Hands can become contaminated through contact with a client, the environment or other workers.

As a general rule, a hairdresser should wash their hands often especially:

- Before and after contact with each client
- After any interruptions in a procedure e.g. answering the phone
- After eating, drinking or smoking
- After going to the toilet
- After patting an animal
- After going to the toilet
- After blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing
- After handling laundry or waste
- After contact with blood or other bodily substances
- After removing disposable gloves
- When hands become visibly contaminated.

General hand washing steps

Steps to good hand hygiene can be found here [Hand hygiene \(healthywa.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.health.wa.gov.au/hand-hygiene) and include:

- Washing hands with warm water and soap. For general hand washing, plain soap or liquid soap or sanitiser is sufficient.
- Hands should be rubbed together for a minimum of 40 seconds so that the soap comes into contact with all surfaces of the hands, paying particular attention to the fingertips, thumbs and the areas between the fingers
- Hands should be rinsed under running water
- Hands should be patted dry using disposable paper towels or a single-use towel (if cloth towels are used a fresh, clean towel must be used each time).

Refer to Appendix A for an infographic on effective hand washing.

Paper towels, soap and a waste bin should be easy to access and located next to the hand wash basin.



Alcohol-based hand rubs

Alcohol-based hand rubs (ABHRs) can be used to sanitise hands without soap and water. ABHRs do not remove dirt from hands effectively and should only be used on hands that are visibly clean.

The active ingredient in ABHRs varies in percentage and may include ethanol or isopropyl alcohol. An ABHR should contain between 60% – 80% alcohol.⁵

It is important that ABHR products are used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Generally, the product is applied to the palm of the hand and then rubbed into the hand, between fingers, around thumbs and fingertips and the back and sides of the hands. Hands should be rubbed until they are dry. Further details can be found here [How to wash your hands \(health.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.health.wa.gov.au/how-to-wash-your-hands)

7.2 Cuts and abrasions

Intact skin is a natural defence against infection. Cuts or breaks in the skin or the presence of skin lesions are possible points of entry for infectious organisms.

To reduce the risk of cross-transmission of infectious organisms, cuts and abrasions should be covered with waterproof dressings. Waterproof dressings should be changed if the dressing becomes soiled or wet. Disposable gloves can be used to cover the dressings.

7.3 Wounds and infections on client

If a hairdresser feels uncomfortable providing a services to a client due to an open wound or infection, open sores or abrasions, or a skin condition, they should recommend the client consult their general practitioner and treat the condition before returning to the hairdressing premises.

The hairdresser may elect to provide a service to a client with a skin abrasion or infection if:

- they believe they can appropriately provide the service around the condition, and
- they have the processes in place to prevent the transmission of infection to other clients.

7.4 Personal protection

Personal protection is used to protect the client and hairdresser by providing a physical barrier to infections caused by dirt, blood and excretions.

Personal protection can include:

- washable aprons
- disposable gloves
- surgical masks
- protective eyewear goggles

When choosing the right protective clothing/equipment, consider:

- the likelihood of being exposed to dirt, blood or excretions
- potential for exposure

Protective clothing and/or equipment must be made available for staff. Training on ways to prevent transmission of infection and appropriate ways to clean equipment should be provided.

7.5 Animals

Animals should not be allowed in areas where hairdressing procedures are being undertaken except for assistance animals defined under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth). A guide, hearing, or assistance dog is permitted in any public place.

7.6 Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in an enclosed workplace by regulation 50D of the *Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022* (WA):

- (1) An individual must not smoke in an enclosed workplace
- (2) A person conducting a business or undertaking at an enclosed workplace or a worker at the workplace must not allow an individual to smoke in the workplace.

8. Head lice

Head lice are tiny insect parasites that live on the head and feed on the scalp. They reproduce by laying their eggs (nits) on the hair shaft (the part of hair closest to the scalp). Head lice are not dangerous, do not carry diseases, and are not a sign of poor hygiene (cleanliness).

8.1 Signs and symptoms of head lice

A hairdresser may be able to see head lice crawling in a client's hair, although they can be difficult to spot as they move quickly. Use the following guidance to help identify the presence of head lice: ⁶

- Adult lice are usually dark brown and about 2 to 3 mm long.
- Hatchlings (young lice) are often a lighter brown colour and about 1 to 2 mm long.
- Eggs will be attached to the hair shaft. They can be tiny and hard to see, especially newly-laid eggs close to the scalp. They are grey-white and about the size of a grain of salt.

8.2 Transmission of head lice

Head lice are spread by head-to-head contact with another person who has head lice.

Head lice can run from one head to another in seconds. Head lice cannot fly, jump or swim, but can sometimes swing from one hair to another.

Head lice are not spread through bed linen, clothing or head gear (hats and helmets) as they do not leave the scalp unless they are dead, dying or moving to another scalp.

8.3 Managing a client who has head lice

There is no regulation preventing a person who has head lice from attending or having treatment at a hairdressing salon. It is important that the business owner develops their own policies and procedures on how to manage a client who presents with head lice. Staff should be aware of head lice and how to manage them. All staff should be trained appropriately in accordance with documented procedures and policies.

Hairdressers should not be alarmed when presented with a case of head lice. Head lice are not considered a threat to staff or others, if recommended precautionary practices are followed.

Hairdressers should consider implementing the following practices to manage head lice: ³

- If head lice are identified, sensitively advise the client on appropriate treatments
- Cut the client's hair, taking additional precautions to prevent the spread of head lice to themselves and other clients. These may include:
 - Contain cut hair in the cape used on the client. On completion of the haircut, fold the cape inwards and roll into a ball to contain any shed lice and take the cape to the cleaning area to dispose of the hair in a disposable rubbish bag. Place the rubbish bag into a bin with a plastic lining.
 - Sweep up all loose hair and immediately place it into a rubbish bag for disposal. All hair should be swept up and placed in a plastic bag and disposed of in a rubbish bin with a plastic lining. Disinfection, fumigation or cleaning of floors and walls is not necessary. Wash capes used to capture hair using a standard laundering cycle.

- Clean equipment used on the client. Brushes, scissors and combs must be cleaned and disinfected in hot water. Combs and other instruments can be 'deloused' between clients in water over 60°C for at least 30 seconds (this temperature is too hot for washing hair). Towels, wraps, garments and other washable fabrics can be washed with hot water (not less than 70°C) and detergent.
- Wash hands after contact with the client and again after washing equipment.
- Provide the client with current, consistent and appropriate information on how to treat and manage head lice. Refer to the Department of Health's website for information on head lice and treatment options:
 - [Head lice \(healthywa.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.health.wa.gov.au/health-topics/lice)
 - [Treating head lice \(healthywa.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.health.wa.gov.au/health-topics/lice)

9. General hairdressing equipment

9.1 Cutthroat razors

Cutthroat razors, also known as straight razors, have a flick blade that folds back into the razor handle. Cutthroat razors with non-changeable blades should not be used in commercial hairdressing establishments in Western Australia because they cannot be adequately decontaminated between clients. Reuse of this equipment increases the risk of spreading blood-borne viruses and infection.

The use of cutthroat razors with disposable single use blades is only acceptable if a new disposable blade is used for each client and discarded after use, following the advice in Section 9.3 below. All used blades must be detached and disposed of into a sharps container that complies with Australian Standard AS 4031-1992 *Non-reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items used in health care areas*.

After the used blade has been removed, the blade handle must be cleaned with lukewarm water and detergent to remove potential contaminants.³ The handle should then be dried with a clean cloth prior to attaching the new single use razor blade to the handle.

9.2 Disposable razors (single use)

Disposable razors must be single use only and are to be disposed of immediately into a sharps container after use.

If razors have a detachable blade, the blade must be disposed of into a sharps container that complies with Australian Standard AS 4031-1992 *Non-reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items used in health care areas*.

10. Cleaning and disinfecting equipment

Cleaning means the removal of soil and reduction in number of micro-organisms from a surface by a process such as washing in detergent and water without prior processing.

Products used for general cleaning must be suitable for the purpose. The cleaning products used are at the business' discretion. Detergent and water are typically all that is required for general cleaning. Chemical disinfectants are not recommended for routine cleaning.

Scrubbing with warm water and detergent is sufficient for the majority of instruments used during a hairdressing procedure. Products used to clean instruments are at the discretion of the premises. Chemical disinfectants are not recommended for cleaning instruments unless the items are contaminated.

In general, when cleaning instruments:

1. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves, apron and goggles) in accordance with the manufacturer's advice or Material Safety Data Sheet for the chemicals in use
2. Dismantle or fully open items to ensure all parts are present
3. Rinse items in warm running water to remove particulates
4. Immerse items in the sink with warm water and detergent, and scrub clean
5. Rinse items in warm to hot running water and dry
6. Inspect the item for cleanliness and completeness.

Items that cannot be fully immersed should be wiped over with a lint-free cloth dampened in warm water and detergent, then rinsed and dried.

Disinfection means an agent intended to destroy or remove pathogenic micro-organisms but does not usually destroy bacterial spores.

Instruments that do not come into contact with blood or bodily fluids do not need to be disinfected. However, if such instruments (e.g. scissors) accidentally pierce, nick or cut the skin it must be disinfected before being used on another client.

The suggested process to disinfect blood-contaminated hair dressing equipment includes: ³

- Thoroughly clean equipment using detergent and water and dry the equipment
- Check the use by date on the label before using disinfectants and discard any products that are out of date
- Disinfect the equipment by immersing the item in either:
 - 70% alcohol solution
 - hospital grade disinfectant.
- Disinfectants must be labelled appropriately with the name, date and dilution strength
- Disinfectants must be used and stored according to the manufacturer's instructions. Check the contact time, concentration and any requirement to rinse the product off after disinfecting.

Table 1: Cleaning and disinfection schedule for common hairdressing equipment³

Instrument	Potential risk	How	When	Additional information
Bottles of hair products including nozzles and pumps	Contamination	Wash in warm water and detergent. Rinse under hot running water. Dry using a lint-free cloth. Refill the bottle or replace the pump/spray nozzle	When empty	Empty and clean out pump/spray bottles before topping up
Capes, towels and wraps	Infection or infestation (e.g. head lice)	Wash in warm water and detergent. Rinse in hot water. Dry according to the type of material Items such as towels may be laundered in a hot washing machine cycle (above 60°C)	After each client unless a clean towel/ paper is used around neck	Use a clean towel or paper around neck
Combs, brushes, clips, pins, rollers, hot tongs and crimping tongs	Infection or infestation (e.g. head lice)	Remove hair. Scrub clean in warm water and detergent. Rinse in hot running water. Dry with a lint free cloth	After each client or after being dropped on the floor	Dispose of any equipment that pierces the client's skin
Dye mixing bowls	Chemical contamination	Wash in warm water and detergent. Rinse in hot running water. Dry with lint free cloth	After each use when empty	Prevent residual dyes from mixing into new preparations
Electric clippers	Skin infections or blood-borne virus transmission	Remove hair. Wipe clipper blade attachment with alcohol. Wipe the body of clipper with a damp cloth containing detergent and water or alcohol	After each client	Electric clippers with non-detachable blades cannot withstand immersion
Equipment Trolley	Contamination	Remove hair. Clean with warm water and detergent. Dry with lint free cloth	At least weekly	Cover items in trolley when not in use
Razors – cutthroat razor blades (single use only)	Skin infections or blood-borne virus transmission.	Must be single-use blades and must be disposed of into a sharps container after each use	After each client	Not for reuse
Razors – electric haircutting razors	Skin infections or blood-borne virus transmission.	Clean and disinfect clipper blades. Dispose of blades that come into contact with the skin into sharps container. Wipe over razor body with a damp cloth containing detergent and water and an alcohol solution of 70%	After each client	New blade for each client
Razors -	Skin infections or blood-borne	Must be single-use products and must be disposed of into a	After each client	Not suitable for reuse

Instrument	Potential risk	How	When	Additional information
single use	virus transmission	sharps container after each use		
Scissors	Skin infections or blood-borne virus transmission	Scrub clean in hot water and detergent. Rinse in hot running water. Dry with lint free cloth. If the scissors cut skin, follow with disinfection.	After each client	Care should be taken when using scissors
Shaving brushes and bowls	Skin infections	Rinse to remove hair and shaving cream. Wash in warm water and detergent. Rinse in hot water. Dry thoroughly	After each client	

11. Cleaning premises, fittings and furniture

Routine cleaning of work areas is important because deposits of dust, soil and microorganisms on surfaces can potentially transmit infection. All floors, floor coverings, walls, ceiling, shelves, fittings and other furniture should be routinely and regularly cleaned.

Hair should be swept up from the floor between each client or a vacuum should be used. Once collected, hair should be disposed of in a bin lined with a plastic rubbish bag.

A salon cleaning schedule may be useful, listing:

- each area, fitting or piece of furniture that needs routine cleaning
- frequency of cleaning
- person responsible for cleaning
- method of cleaning
- amount and type of chemical to be used
- precautions (e.g. use of protective clothing).

Linen

Disposable paper towels, capes, or clean linen are recommended where appropriate, and must be changed for each client.

Used and soiled linen, towels and protective clothing must be laundered using hot water (>60°C) and detergent. Domestic laundering is sufficient, and washing may be taken offsite for laundering.

Blood-stained linen or towels must first be washed in cold or cool water no more than 35°C to prevent setting blood stains. Once the stains have been removed, the linen can be processed using hot water (>60°C) and detergent.

Clean linen, towels and clothing must be stored in a clean, dry area to reduce the risk of contamination.

Blood or body fluid spills surface clean-up

Hairdressing operators should establish procedures to respond to situations where the client's skin has been cut and bleeding has occurred (e.g. skin is accidentally cut with scissors or a razor), and ensure staff are trained and aware of how to manage this.

- Wash hands and put gloves on before helping the client manage their injury. Attend to the client by applying pressure to the cut with a clean tissue and apply a clean dressing to cover it.
- Dispose of contaminated single use equipment into a sharps container. If the equipment is re-usable, store it in a smooth-surfaced, impervious container until it can be cleaned and disinfected as per [Section 10 of these Guidelines](#).
- Clean blood spills or spots or drops of blood from surfaces, equipment or the floor following the below steps:
 - wear gloves
 - wipe the area immediately with paper towel to remove blood
 - clean the area as soon as possible using detergent and lukewarm water
 - in situations where cleaning is difficult (such as between tiles) and there is a possibility of bare skin contact with that surface, clean with a disinfectant (such as bleach) after the initial clean up with detergent and water
 - place any bloodied materials in two plastic bags, one inside the other (including the gloves used for cleaning) and discard into domestic waste
 - remove gloves and wash hands using soap and running water.

12. Waste management

12.1 Disposal of general waste

General waste includes hair, tissues, gloves, swabs and other waste and should be disposed of into a waste bin that is easily accessible, lined and that has a tight-fitting lid. General waste can be stored and disposed of via normal refuse collection.

A suitable rubbish bin should: ³

- adequately contain the volume of rubbish
- be impervious and rigid
- prevent the escape of odours
- prevent access by flies and other pests.

12.2 Disposal of sharps

Sharps such as razors must never be placed in general waste receptacles.

The use of sharp devices can expose workers to the risk of injury and potential exposure to blood-borne infectious agents, including hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus and HIV.

Sharps used by a hairdresser include:

- razors,
- blades, and
- anything else capable of cutting or penetrating the skin.

Any person who has used a disposable sharp instrument or equipment must be responsible for its safe management and immediate disposal after use.

All used sharps shall be placed in a designated puncture resistant container that complies with the Australian Standard AS 4031:1992 *Non reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items used in health care areas*.

Sharps containers should be disposed of in accordance with the *Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) Regulations 2004* using a licensed controlled waste carrier.

13. Mobile and home hairdressing requirements

13.1 Mobile hairdresser

Mobile operators are an important part of the industry. The lack of a permanent premise should not result in compromised health or hygiene standards.

A mobile operator includes any person who performs hairdressing procedures from a business that travels to the client's location such as a house, business, nursing home or hospital. It includes businesses that operate from a caravan or other vehicle.

Cleanliness and hygiene must be maintained in accordance with the Guidelines. The following considerations apply to mobile operators:

- Hand wash facilities at each location must be easily accessible, with an adequate supply of warm potable water, soap and paper towels
- Hand hygiene is to be performed before and after each client
- A suitable treatment area must be selected. If the treatment area is dirty, cluttered or inappropriate (e.g. in the kitchen), the mobile operator should not carry out any hairdressing procedures
- Equipment is to be cleaned between clients
- A sharps container is to be provided and used for disposable sharps
- Disposable gloves are to be available to use as required
- Mobile operators should have adequate facilities to store clean and used equipment separately. Linen and waste products should be stored safely in separate containers before and after use and while in transit.
- Any vehicle used to perform procedures must be connected to the sewer or have a wastewater storage tank suitable for the reception of all liquid wastes. Wastewater storage tanks must be discharged to the sewer and not to the stormwater.

13.2 Home based hairdresser

A home-based operator must meet all the same requirements as a commercial hairdresser based at a salon, as detailed in these Guidelines.

Prior to operating a home based hairdressing business, the operator must contact the relevant [local government authority](#) to discuss the process of applying for and obtaining planning and building approvals in order to operate a home occupation.

14. Other agency requirements

People working in hairdressing must be aware of other agencies that may have a regulatory or advisory role related to the industry.

14.1 WorkSafe WA

[WorkSafe](#), part of the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, is the work health and safety department that will assist the regulator in the administration of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*. This includes the provision of inspectors and other staff to secure compliance with the legislation. The *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* aims to provide a balanced and nationally consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces.

WorkSafe's SmartMove offers an online educational course for young people entering the [hairdressing, nail care and beauty industry](#).

14.2 Therapeutic Goods Administration

The [Therapeutic Goods Administration](#) (TGA) is part of the [Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#), and is responsible for evaluating, assessing and monitoring products that are defined as therapeutic goods, such as disinfectants.

The TGA administers the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989* (Cth) which provides for the establishment and maintenance of a national system of controls relating to the quality, safety, timely availability and, where necessary, efficacy, of therapeutic goods that are used in Australia, whether produced in Australia or elsewhere.

14.3 Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme

The [Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme](#) replaced the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme. The scheme helps protect Australians and the environment by assessing the risks of importing or manufacturing (introducing) industrial chemicals; and promoting their safe use. They focus on chemicals, polymers, ingredients of products used in printing, plastics, mining, construction, paints, adhesives, consumer goods, cosmetics and more.

14.4 Industry Training Advisory Body

Industry training advisory bodies oversee vocational education and training for their industry sectors. The Logistics and Defence Skills Council is now responsible for overseeing the barbering, beauty, community pharmacy, floristry, funeral services, hairdressing and retail sectors. The Council has replaced the former Retail and Personal Services Skills Advisory Board, which is now obsolete.

15. Practical application of the information provided in this guideline

The following example is provided to assist businesses to understand how to practically apply the information in this Guideline.

15.1 Example – Hairdresser hygiene complaint

A local government authority receives a complaint alleging poor hygiene practices at a hairdressing business. The complaint alleges that the hairdresser cut their ear during a haircut and did not provide treatment to the cut or clean the equipment following the incident.

An authorised officer may consider taking any of the following actions:

- Gather and confirm the details of the allegation:
 - Address and name of the business
 - Date and time of occurrence
 - Observations and issues identified
 - Name and contact details of the complainant
- Investigate the hairdressing establishment to ensure the business is being operated in accordance with the best practice principles outlined in these Guidelines
 - [Section 6 of this Guideline](#) (Standards for premises) including for the premises to have:
 - sufficient lighting
 - a handwash basin with warm running water, soap, paper towel or a hand dryer
 - a separate sink with warm, running water for washing instruments and equipment
 - sufficient space for staff to conduct their work activities
 - [Section 7 of this Guideline](#) (Hygiene measures) including for the hairdresser to:
 - follow good hand hygiene e.g. regular hand washing
 - wear gloves when handling blood or items contaminated with blood
 - [Section 10 of this Guideline](#) (Cleaning and disinfecting equipment) including for the hairdresser to follow appropriate processes to clean and disinfect blood contaminated equipment
 - [Section 11.2 of this Guideline](#) (Blood or body fluid spills clean-up) including for the hairdresser to:
 - have a written procedure to respond to clients in situations where the skin has been cut and bleeding has occurred
 - clean hands and put gloves on before helping the client with their injury
 - dispose of contaminated equipment into a sharps container or disinfect it before using it again
 - clean any spills, spots or drops off blood off surfaces, equipment or the floor
- If the investigation finds that the hairdressing establishment is not being operated in accordance with industry best practice, and site investigations confirm significant and frequent hygiene issues – the local government authority may have recourse to enforcement action. [See Part 1 of this Guideline](#).
- If the investigation indicates that the hairdresser is being operated in accordance with industry best practise, and site investigations have not confirmed significant hygiene risks – the authorised officer may close out the investigation.




16. References

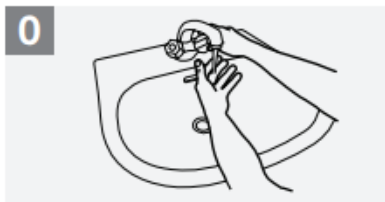
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Appendix A - The World Health Organisation's How to Handwash Poster⁷

How to Handwash?

WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB

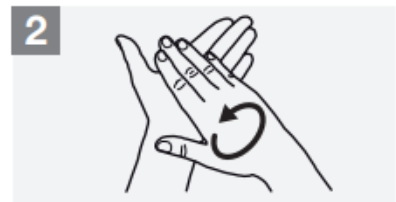
 **Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds**



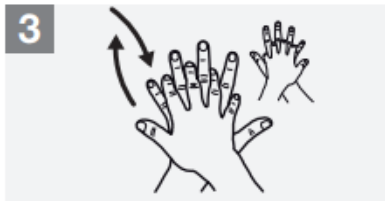
0 Wet hands with water;



1 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;



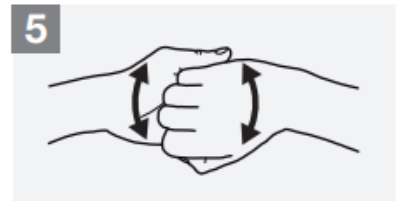
2 Rub hands palm to palm;



3 Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



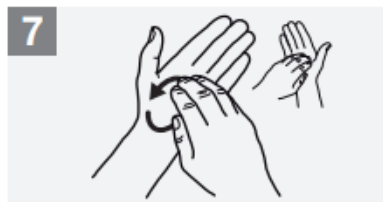
4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



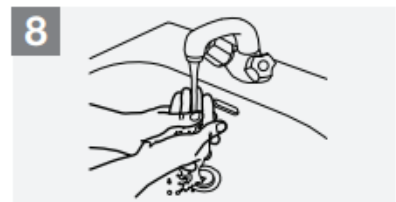
5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



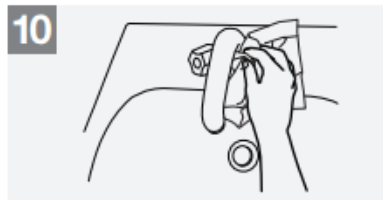
7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



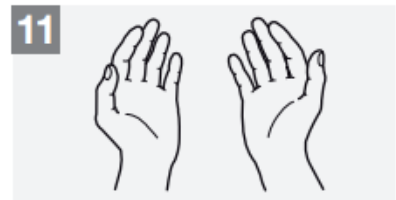
8 Rinse hands with water;



9 Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;



10 Use towel to turn off faucet;



11 Your hands are now safe.



World Health Organization

Patient Safety

A World Alliance for Safer Health Care

SAVE LIVES

Clean Your Hands

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