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Pennsylvania Extends Cosmetology Apprentice Permits, Temporarily Suspends Weekly Minimum Training Hour Requirement

To obtain a cosmetology license in Pennsylvania, an individual must either graduate from an approved cosmetology school or complete an approved apprenticeship program.

For those who choose the apprenticeship route, the State Board of Cosmetology (Board) issues an apprentice permit. This permit allows cosmetology apprentices to obtain their cosmetology training within a licensed cosmetology salon, under the direction and supervision of a licensed cosmetology teacher.

The apprentice program consists of 2,000 hours of instruction that follows certain prescribed curriculum requirements set forth in the Board's regulations. An apprentice permit is valid for two years, which ordinarily provides apprentices with sufficient time to obtain the necessary training hours, working at a minimum required pace of 25 hours per week.

When the apprentice hours have been completed, the apprentice returns the permit to the Board office. The Board then issues a certification of apprentice hours, which the apprentice includes with his or her application to sit for the cosmetology licensure examination. Once the exam application has been submitted, the apprentice may obtain a temporary license from the Board to practice until the next available examination is scheduled.

Because cosmetology salons have not been deemed "life-sustaining" businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, apprentice permit holders are currently unable to work towards obtaining their required 2,000 training hours. To address this situation, **the Department of State requested, and the Governor approved, a temporary suspension of the 25/hours-per-week minimum requirement.**

This suspension shall be in place for the duration of the emergency plus an additional six months thereafter. It shall apply to all cosmetology apprentice permits that were valid and active as of March 6 when the Governor's emergency disaster declaration was signed, as well as any cosmetology apprentice permits issued during the emergency.

This will allow these cosmetology apprentices sufficient time to resume their training and acquire the needed hours regardless of the expiration date of their permits.