

# STATE OF NEW YORK

6652

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

March 19, 2025

Introduced by Sen. WEBB -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Consumer Protection

AN ACT to amend the general business law, in relation to the practice of natural hair care and braiding

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The article heading of article 27 of the general business  
2 law, as added by chapter 509 of the laws of 1992, is amended to read as  
3 follows:

4 LICENSING OF NAIL SPECIALTY, NATURAL  
5 HAIR [~~STYLING~~] CARE AND BRAIDING,  
6 ESTHETICS AND COSMETOLOGY

7 § 2. Subdivisions 3 and 5 of section 400 of the general business law,  
8 subdivision 3 as added by chapter 509 of the laws of 1992 and subdivi-  
9 sion 5 as amended by chapter 343 of the laws of 1998, are amended to  
10 read as follows:

11 3. "Licensee" means a person licensed pursuant to this article to  
12 engage in the practice of natural hair [~~styling~~] care and braiding,  
13 esthetics, nail specialty or cosmetology, or to operate an appearance  
14 enhancement business in which such practice, as herein defined, is  
15 provided to the public.

16 5. a. The practice of "natural hair [~~styling~~] care and braiding" means  
17 providing for a fee, or any consideration or exchange, whether direct or  
18 indirect, any of the following services to the hair of a human being:  
19 with all ranges of hair types and textures, consulting and scalp analy-  
20 sis, hair texture assessment, shampooing, conditioning, providing clean,  
21 botanical and sustainable beauty products which include clarifying and  
22 moisturizing shampoos, leave-in conditioners and steam hydration condi-  
23 tioning, scalp treatments, wellness practices, hydration and protein  
24 strengthening treatments, clays, masks, essential oils, and  
25 herbal/botanical rinses, arranging, dressing, twisting, coiling, wrap-

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD07619-01-5

1 ping, weaving, extending, locking, palm rolling or braiding the hair or  
2 beard by either hand or mechanical [~~appliances~~] equipment, including  
3 using clips, combs, crochet needles, latch-hook tools, interlocking  
4 tools, sewing blunt-tipped and curve needles, beading pliers, curlers,  
5 rods, rollers, hairpins, scissors, thread and yarn for styling natural  
6 textured hair or braids on all ranges of hair types and textures.

7 b. Such practice shall not include cutting, shaving or trimming  
8 natural hair except that such activities are permissible to the extent  
9 that such activities are incidental to the practice of minor hair shap-  
10 ing or trimming of naturally textured hair after the installation and  
11 finishing of braid hair extensions, natural hair styling, and natural  
12 hair braiding.

13 c. Such practice shall not include the application of dyes, reactive  
14 chemicals, or other preparations to alter the color or to straighten,  
15 curl, or permanently alter the structure of the hair with chemicals or  
16 heat. Techniques which result in tension on hair roots such as certain  
17 types of braiding, weaving, wrapping, locking and extending of the hair  
18 may only be performed by a natural hair [~~styling~~] care and braiding  
19 licensee or cosmetology licensee who has successfully completed an  
20 approved course of study in such techniques.

21 § 3. Section 400 of the general business law is amended by adding nine  
22 new subdivisions 5-a, 5-b, 5-c, 5-d, 5-e, 5-f, 5-g, 5-h, and 5-i to read  
23 as follows:

24 5-a. "Natural hair" means all virgin hair types and textures that have  
25 not been exposed to any chemicals or heat styling that may alter the  
26 natural curl, coil or wave patterns of the hair.

27 5-b. "Natural hair care" means the maintenance and overall care  
28 performed by a natural hair care specialist dedicated to the health and  
29 wellness of one's hair and scalp through proper tension techniques and  
30 without the use of chemicals or the alteration of the structure of the  
31 hair.

32 5-c. "Textured hair" means textured hair types, including curly,  
33 coily, tight coily, afro coily, straight and wavy, including, but not  
34 limited to, various curly, coily, wavy or wiry patterns, combinations  
35 and configurations, hair strands, thickness, and volumes of hair.

36 5-d. "Textured hair styling" means the styling practices and tech-  
37 niques for haircare of all hair types and textures performed by a  
38 textured hairstylist, including arranging, dressing, curly and coily  
39 styling, comb coiling, finger coiling, double strand twisting, flat-  
40 twisting or the use of curlers, rods, rollers/hair pins including the  
41 preparation of the foundation of the hair through wellness practices in  
42 order to preserve the health of the hair with clean, botanical and  
43 sustainable beauty products which include clarifying and moisturizing  
44 shampoos, leave-in conditioners, steam hydration conditioning, hydration  
45 and protein strengthening treatments, and herbal/botanical rinses; and  
46 topical agents such as gels and gelee, hairspray, foams, mousse, molding  
47 muds, moisturizers, oils, pomades, in conjunction with performing the  
48 practice of natural hair care and braiding. Such styling shall include  
49 the use of blow dryers and diffusers for the purpose of drying natural  
50 textured styles with indirect heat.

51 5-e. "Braid" means the interlacing of three or more strands of hair,  
52 and can be worn in a variety of styles, including cornrows, twists,  
53 locs, and box braids with or without added hair fibers.

54 5-f. "Braiding" means the styling practices and techniques performed  
55 by a braid specialist who styles all hair types and textures which  
56 includes the use of natural human hair or synthetic hair

1 extension/fibers, natural human hair and synthetic blended fibers, deco-  
2 rative beads, and other hair adornments. Minor hair shaping or trimming  
3 of naturally textured hair or hair extensions necessary for finishing  
4 braid hair extensions may occur. Braiding types and techniques can  
5 include, but are not limited to, individual box braids, knotless/feed-in  
6 braids, cornrows, stitch cornrows, casamas, plaits, Bantu Knots, or  
7 Senegalese Twists.

8 5-g. "African braiding" refers to the cultural reference of tradi-  
9 tional techniques of naturally braiding and cornrowing hair, originating  
10 from African communities within the African diaspora.

11 5-h. "Locking" or "loc extensions" includes, but is not limited to,  
12 wrapping the hair, palm rolling techniques, grooming, interlocking,  
13 crochet locking, micro/locking including the preparation of the founda-  
14 tion of the hair through wellness practices in order to preserve the  
15 health of the hair with clean, botanical and sustainable beauty products  
16 which include clarifying and moisturizing shampoos, leave-in condition-  
17 ers, and steam hydration conditioning treatments, hydration and moistur-  
18 izing techniques, protein strengthening treatments, and herbal/botanical  
19 rinses; and topical agents such as gels and gelee, hairspray, foams,  
20 mousse, molding muds, moisturizers, oils, pomades, in conjunction with  
21 performing the practice of natural hair care and braiding.

22 5-i. "Weaving" and "extensions" means extending natural textured hair  
23 with the addition of braids, locs or additional textured hair with human  
24 hair, synthetic fibers, and hair extension; the making of wigs from  
25 human hair, synthetic fibers, and hair extensions including the prepara-  
26 tion of the foundation of the hair through wellness practices in order  
27 to preserve the health of the hair with clean, botanical and sustainable  
28 beauty products which include clarifying and moisturizing shampoos,  
29 leave-in conditioners, and steam hydration conditioning treatments,  
30 hydration and moisturizing techniques, protein strengthening treatments,  
31 and herbal/botanical rinses; and topical agents such as gels and gelee,  
32 hairspray, foams, mousse, molding muds, moisturizers, oils, pomades, in  
33 conjunction with performing the practice of natural hair care and braid-  
34 ing.

35 § 4. Subdivisions 1 and 3 of section 401 of the general business law,  
36 subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 80 of the laws of 2015 and subdivi-  
37 sion 3 as amended by chapter 341 of the laws of 1998, are amended and a  
38 new subdivision 4 is added to read as follows:

39 1. No person shall engage in the practice of nail specialty, waxing,  
40 natural hair [~~styling~~] care and braiding, esthetics or cosmetology, as  
41 defined in section four hundred of this article, without having received  
42 a license to engage in such practice in the manner prescribed in this  
43 article. No person shall act as a trainee or perform any service as such  
44 unless [~~he or she~~] such person has obtained a certificate of registra-  
45 tion pursuant to this article.

46 3. A person licensed by any other state or country to practice nail  
47 specialty, waxing, natural hair [~~styling~~] care and braiding, esthetics  
48 or cosmetology shall be allowed to practice in New York state for three  
49 months or less within any calendar year for the purpose of giving to, or  
50 receiving from, persons who are licensed under this article training in  
51 current styles, techniques or materials, provided however, that no such  
52 unlicensed person may provide services to the public for any fee, or  
53 other compensation, whether direct or indirect.

54 4. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, an unlicensed  
55 person practicing natural hair care and braiding in the state of New  
56 York or any other state or country for at least five years shall be

1 permitted to apply for a license in New York state. Such applicants  
2 shall be issued a temporary license after providing evidence of such  
3 required work experience in a form approved by the department. Such  
4 applicants shall be required to fulfill all requirements under subdivi-  
5 sion three of section four hundred-eight-c of this article prior to  
6 being licensed. The secretary of state shall promulgate rules and regu-  
7 lations with input from the advisory committee established under section  
8 four hundred three of this article to ensure such licensing.

9 § 5. Section 404 of the general business law, as amended by chapter  
10 664 of the laws of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

11 § 404. Rules and regulations. The secretary shall promulgate rules and  
12 regulations which establish standards for practice and operation by  
13 licensees and trainees under this article in order to ensure the health,  
14 safety and welfare of the public including licensees and trainees when  
15 they are working within such establishments. Such rules and regulations  
16 shall include, but not be limited to, the sanitary conditions and proce-  
17 dures required to be maintained, a minimum standard of training appro-  
18 priate to the duties of nail specialists, trainees, waxers, natural hair  
19 [~~stylists~~] care and braiding specialists, estheticians, and cosmetolo-  
20 gists and the provision of service by nail specialists, trainees,  
21 waxers, natural hair [~~stylists~~] care and braiding specialists, estheti-  
22 cians or cosmetologists at remote locations other than the licensee's  
23 home provided that such practitioner holds an appearance enhancement  
24 business license to operate at a fixed location or is employed by the  
25 holder of an appearance enhancement business license. Regulations  
26 setting forth the educational requirements for nail specialists and  
27 trainees shall include education in the area of causes of infection and  
28 bacteriology. Regulations setting forth the educational requirements for  
29 cosmetologists [~~ex~~], natural hair [~~stylists~~] care and braiding special-  
30 ists and natural hair care and braiding apprentices shall include educa-  
31 tion regarding the provision of services to individuals with all hair  
32 types and textures, including, but not limited to, various curl, coil or  
33 wave patterns, hair strand thicknesses, and volumes of hair. Addi-  
34 tionally, such regulations for natural hair care and braiding special-  
35 ists and natural hair care and braiding apprentices shall include educa-  
36 tion in the area of natural hair care and braid techniques, cause of  
37 infection and bacteriology, alopecia and scalp disorders and diseases,  
38 salon health and safety protocols and the science of sanitary practices.  
39 In promulgating such rules and regulations the secretary shall consult  
40 with the state education department, the advisory committee established  
41 pursuant to this article, any other state agencies and private industry  
42 representatives from beauty schools and academies as may be appropriate  
43 in determining minimum training requirements.

44 § 6. Section 406 of the general business law, as added by chapter 509  
45 of the laws of 1992, subdivisions 1, 2 and 4 as amended by chapter 341  
46 of the laws of 1998, paragraph e of subdivision 1 as amended by chapter  
47 376 of the laws of 2015, paragraph f of subdivision 1 as added by chap-  
48 ter 80 of the laws of 2015, paragraph c of subdivision 2 as amended by  
49 section 3 of part D of chapter 328 of the laws of 2014 and paragraph a  
50 of subdivision 3 as amended by chapter 324 of the laws of 1998, is  
51 amended to read as follows:

52 § 406. License application; procedure; requirements; temporary  
53 license. 1. a. Any person intending to practice nail specialty, waxing,  
54 natural hair [~~styling~~] care and braiding, esthetics or cosmetology as  
55 defined in this article, or to own or operate an appearance enhancement

1 business, shall first make application to the secretary for a license  
2 therefor.

3 b. Such application shall be in a form and manner prescribed by the  
4 secretary and shall contain such information as, in the secretary's  
5 judgment, is reasonable and necessary to determine the qualifications  
6 and fitness for licensing of the applicant.

7 c. The application shall be subscribed by the applicant and affirmed  
8 under penalty of perjury.

9 d. Each application shall be accompanied by the appropriate fee as  
10 prescribed by this article.

11 e. Each application shall be accompanied by a certificate of a duly  
12 licensed physician, or nurse practitioner to the extent authorized by  
13 law and consistent with subdivision three of section six thousand nine  
14 hundred two of the education law on a form prescribed by the secretary,  
15 showing freedom from any infectious or communicable disease which  
16 certificate shall have been issued within thirty days prior to the date  
17 of the filing of the application.

18 f. Notwithstanding the educational requirements of this section, a  
19 trainee may obtain a license to practice nail specialty if such trainee  
20 provides satisfactory evidence to the secretary that such trainee has  
21 been actively engaged in a traineeship for a period of one year and has  
22 completed a course of study set forth by the secretary. Such course of  
23 study may be delivered by electronic means.

24 2. a. Any person seventeen years of age or older may apply to the  
25 secretary for a license to practice nail specialty, waxing, natural hair  
26 [~~styling~~] care and braiding, esthetics or cosmetology.

27 b. Each such application shall also be accompanied by satisfactory  
28 evidence of having taken and passed the appropriate examination or exam-  
29 inations offered by the secretary pursuant to this article for the  
30 license sought and evidence of the successful completion of an approved  
31 course of study in nail specialty, waxing, natural hair [~~styling~~] care  
32 and braiding, esthetics or cosmetology in a school duly licensed pursu-  
33 ant to the education law.

34 c. Any applicant for a license to practice nail specialty, waxing,  
35 natural hair [~~styling~~] care and braiding, esthetics or cosmetology may  
36 submit satisfactory evidence of licensure to practice an equivalent  
37 occupation issued by any other state, territory, protectorate or depend-  
38 ency of the United States or any other country in lieu of the evidence  
39 of schooling and examination required by this subdivision, provided that  
40 such license was granted in compliance with standards which were, in the  
41 judgment of the secretary, not lower than those of this state and  
42 provided that such state, territory, protectorate, dependency, or coun-  
43 try extends similar reciprocity to the licensees of this state, or the  
44 applicant practiced an equivalent occupation in such state, territory,  
45 protectorate, dependency or country for a minimum of five years, or the  
46 applicant is a member of the household of a member of the armed forces  
47 of the United States, national guard or reserves and was a member of  
48 such household before such member relocated to the state.

49 d. Notwithstanding the educational requirements of this section and  
50 the testing requirements of this section, an applicant who otherwise has  
51 met the licensing requirements of this article for a nail specialist,  
52 waxer, natural hair [~~stylist~~] care and braiding specialist, esthetician  
53 or cosmetologist who shall provide satisfactory evidence [~~he or she~~]  
54 such person has been actively and continuously engaged in the practice  
55 of nail specialty, waxing, natural hair [~~styling~~] care and braiding,  
56 esthetics or cosmetology for at least one year prior to the effective

1 date of this article, may be issued a license for nail specialty,  
2 waxing, natural hair [~~styling~~] care and braiding, esthetics or cosmetol-  
3 ogy pursuant to this article. Notwithstanding the educational and test-  
4 ing requirements of this section, a person licensed to practice barber-  
5 ing under article twenty-eight of this chapter who otherwise has met the  
6 licensing requirements of this article may apply for a temporary natural  
7 hair care and braiding license in order to study and take the natural  
8 hair care and braiding written examination. Upon passing, such licensed  
9 barber shall be issued a license to practice natural [~~hairstyling~~] hair  
10 care and braiding. Other than applicants licensed under article twen-  
11 ty-eight of this chapter, those persons who apply after a twelve month  
12 period from the effective date of this article will be required to  
13 provide evidence of training and to take the examination or examinations  
14 as required for other licenses pursuant to this article.

15 e. Upon acceptance by the secretary of a proper application for an  
16 operator's license to practice nail [~~speciality~~] specialty, waxing,  
17 natural hair [~~styling~~] care and braiding, esthetics or cosmetology, the  
18 secretary may issue a temporary operator's license which shall expire  
19 six months from issuance. Upon good cause shown, the secretary may renew  
20 a temporary operator's license for one additional six-month period upon  
21 filing the appropriate application and fee.

22 3. Appearance enhancement business license. a. Any person, eighteen  
23 years of age or older, or any firm, limited liability company, partner-  
24 ship or corporation having at least one member eighteen years of age or  
25 older may apply to the secretary for an appearance enhancement business  
26 license.

27 b. Each such application for an appearance enhancement business  
28 license shall be accompanied by evidence of a bond or liability insur-  
29 ance.

30 4. a. Notwithstanding any provision contained in this article to the  
31 contrary, if any person, eligible for any license pursuant to this arti-  
32 cle, should be called to active military service at or during the time  
33 application for any license is required to be filed and license fee  
34 paid, pursuant to the provisions of this article, the period within  
35 which said application may be filed and license fee may be paid, is  
36 extended on behalf of such person, until three months after the termi-  
37 nation of said military service.

38 b. In the case of persons who are called to active military service  
39 and will be discharged from active military service, the period of two  
40 years specified in paragraph d of subdivision two of this section need  
41 not be continuous. The length of time such person was engaged in the  
42 practice of nail specialty, waxing, natural hair [~~styling~~] care and  
43 braiding, esthetics or cosmetology before entering active military  
44 service may be added to any period of time during which such person was  
45 or is engaged in the practice of nail specialty, waxing, natural hair  
46 [~~styling~~] care and braiding, esthetics or cosmetology after the termi-  
47 nation of active military service.

48 § 7. Subdivision 1 of section 407 of the general business law, as  
49 amended by chapter 255 of the laws of 1999, is amended to read as  
50 follows:

51 1. The examinations for the license to practice natural hair [~~styling~~]  
52 care and braiding, esthetics, nail specialty and cosmetology shall be  
53 practical and written. The examinations for the license to practice  
54 waxing shall be limited to a written examination only. The secretary  
55 shall determine reasonable standards of performance for each license and  
56 shall evaluate the prospective applicants and applicants on the basis of

1 such standards. The objectives of the examinations shall be to insure  
2 that prospective applicants and applicants have sufficient basic skills  
3 to safeguard the health and safety of the public and to insure that  
4 prospective applicants and applicants have attained adequate levels of  
5 skill to competently engage in the activities authorized by the license.

6 § 8. The general business law is amended by adding a new section 408-c  
7 to read as follows:

8 § 408-c. Natural hair care and braiding apprentice. 1. A natural hair  
9 care and braid apprentice shall be a person pursuing in good faith a  
10 course of study in the practice of natural hair care and braiding under  
11 the tutelage, supervision, and direction of a natural hair care and  
12 braiding licensee and who assists such licensee in such practice. A  
13 business appearance enhancement licensed salon shall register with the  
14 department of licensing to participate in such apprentice program. The  
15 secretary of state shall promulgate rules and regulations regarding  
16 salons and salon supervisors, for tutelage, guidelines and requirements  
17 of natural hair care and braid instructors and textured hairstylist  
18 instructors. The advisory committee established under this article shall  
19 advise on such rules and regulations.

20 2. a. A certificate of registration as an apprentice shall be for a  
21 period of two years and shall be renewable for an additional two years,  
22 if necessary.

23 b. Each certificate of registration issued as provided in this section  
24 shall be posted in some conspicuous place where such apprentice is actu-  
25 ally engaged in the practice of natural hair care and braiding as an  
26 apprentice.

27 3. A mandatory twenty-five hour online or in-person course of study  
28 shall be required from an accredited school approved by the New York  
29 state department of licensing in the areas of health and safety, science  
30 and sanitary practices, and alopecia and scalp disorders.

31 4. Upon completion of the requirements of this section, the apprentice  
32 shall be eligible to apply for a natural hair care and braiding license.

33 § 9. Subdivision 1 of section 409 of the general business law, as  
34 amended by section 2 of part Y of chapter 60 of the laws of 2011, is  
35 amended to read as follows:

36 1. The non-refundable fee for an application for a license to engage  
37 in the practice of nail specialty, waxing, natural hair [~~styling~~] care  
38 and braiding, esthetics or cosmetology, shall be forty dollars initially  
39 and for each renewal thereof the fee shall be forty dollars; the fee for  
40 a temporary license and each renewal shall be ten dollars.

41 § 10. Paragraph a of subdivision 2 of section 410 of the general busi-  
42 ness law, as amended by chapter 80 of the laws of 2015, is amended to  
43 read as follows:

44 a. The secretary may issue an order directing the cessation of any  
45 activity related to nail specialty, waxing, natural hair [~~styling~~] care  
46 and braiding, esthetics or cosmetology for which a license is required  
47 by this article upon a determination that a person, partnership, limited  
48 liability company or business corporation, engaging in the business or  
49 occupation of, or holding [~~himself, herself~~] themselves or itself out as  
50 or acted, temporarily or otherwise, as a nail specialist, natural hair  
51 [~~stylist~~] care and braiding specialist, esthetician or cosmetologist  
52 within this state without a valid license being in effect. The secretary  
53 shall, before making such determination and order, afford such person,  
54 partnership, limited liability company or business corporation an oppor-  
55 tunity to be heard in person or by counsel in reference thereto in an

1 adjudicatory proceeding held pursuant to section four hundred eleven of  
2 this article as applicable.

3 § 11. Subdivision 1 of section 412 of the general business law, as  
4 amended by chapter 80 of the laws of 2015, is amended to read as  
5 follows:

6 1. The practice of nail specialty, waxing, natural hair [~~styling~~] care  
7 and braiding, esthetics or cosmetology without a license or while under  
8 suspension or revocation, or in violation of an order directing the  
9 cessation of unlicensed activity issued by the secretary pursuant to  
10 section four hundred ten or four hundred eleven of this article, is a  
11 violation and is subject to a civil penalty of up to five hundred  
12 dollars for the first violation; one thousand dollars for a second such  
13 violation; and two thousand five hundred dollars for a third violation  
14 and any subsequent violation.

15 § 12. This act shall take effect on the sixtieth day after it shall  
16 have become a law.