



**PENNSYLVANIA**  
***COSMETOLOGY***  
**CANDIDATE HANDBOOK**

April 2018

# QUICK REFERENCE

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## PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF STATE, BUREAU OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL AFFAIRS STATE BOARD OF COSMETOLOGY

[www.dos.pa.gov/cosmet](http://www.dos.pa.gov/cosmet)

P.O. Box 2649

Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649

(717) 783-7130

*Hours of Operation 8:00 am – 5:00 pm M-F, Closed on Federal Holidays*

### **Contact the State Board of Cosmetology to:**

- Clarify information about licensure
- Obtain information regarding reciprocity from other States
- Obtain information on continued licensure
- Change your current address or name after testing
- Renew or reinstate a license that has been inactive for less than five years
- Obtain license verification

### **Go to [www.pals.pa.gov](http://www.pals.pa.gov) to:**

- Apply for licensure by reciprocity
  - Verify if your Eligibility Requirements were received
- 

## PEARSON VUE® PENNSYLVANIA COSMETOLOGY

[www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology](http://www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology)

*Attn: Regulatory Program Manager*

5601 Green Valley Dr.

Bloomington, MN 55437

(866) 638-7502

*Monday–Friday 8am–11pm; Saturday 8am–5pm; Sunday 10am–4pm (Eastern Time Zone)*

### **Go to Pearson VUE's website ([www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology](http://www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology)) to:**

- Download a Candidate Handbook
- Make a real-time examination reservation
- View Frequently Asked Questions
- Download the Duplicate Score Report Form from the Candidate Handbook

### **Call or email ([pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com](mailto:pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com)) Pearson VUE to:**

- Schedule, cancel, or reschedule a Theory/Procedural Skill Examination
- Obtain information regarding your Score Report
- Obtain a copy of your Authorization to Test (ATT) letter
- Obtain information regarding your examination

### **Accommodation Requests (<http://pearsonvue.com/accommodations>):**

- Request an accommodation for testing under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines
- 

## PEARSON VUE® C/O DASHER

PO BOX 1652

Harrisburg, PA 17105

**(866) 474-1148**

*Monday–Friday 8am–6pm (Eastern Time Zone)*

### **Call or email ([pboards@dasherinc.com](mailto:pboards@dasherinc.com)) Pearson VUE c/o Dasher to:**

- Check on the status of your license application
- Change your current address or name *before* testing
- Clarify application instructions
- Verify if your application was submitted
- Verify if your Eligibility Requirements and transcripts were received
- Obtain a printed copy of the candidate handbook
- Obtain information on license requirements

# STEPS TO LICENSURE

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## STEP 1: SUBMIT THE APPLICATION

Complete the *License Application* by logging in to the following website:  
[www.pals.pa.gov](http://www.pals.pa.gov)

You can also find a link to the state's web site (and application) at:  
[www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology](http://www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology)

Notarized affidavits, photo's, etc. can be attached electronically to the application.

Transcripts must be sent from the Cosmetology school to Pearson VUE c/o Dasher.

A money order for processing and examination must also be sent to Pearson VUE c/o Dasher.  
Be sure to also request your Criminal History Record Information Check.



## STEP 2: RECEIVE ELIGIBILITY (FROM PALS) AND APPROVAL TO TEST NOTIFICATION (FROM PEARSON VUE)

Once applications are submitted along with required documentation and payments, applicants will receive their eligibility letter (from PALS) and Approval to Test (ATT) notification, (from Pearson VUE) which will detail steps for scheduling the exam. Applicants MUST provide a valid e-mail address, eligibility and ATT notices are sent via e-mail.



## STEP 3: SCHEDULE THE EXAMINATION

The applicant may take the examination at any given time **within one year** from the application authorization date. If the applicant is out-of-state and there is a reciprocal agreement, please refer to the reciprocity section of this handbook.



## STEP 4: COMPLETE THE EXAMINATION

If the applicant does not pass the examination, the applicant must schedule a retake examination. Please note, the examination fee is required for each retake.



## STEP 5: LICENSURE

If the applicant has passed the examination (and has completed the required program of study), the state will issue the applicant's license. Passing results will be sent electronically to the State. The State will issue the applicant's license. To verify whether or not a license has been issued, an applicant may search the State's web site using the following link:  
[www.pals.pa.gov](http://www.pals.pa.gov)

Please allow 10–15 days for information to be updated.

Note: If the candidate passes the exam under "Early Testing," a license will not be issued until the final transcripts and salon training certificate are received.

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# INTRODUCTION

This handbook is for candidates who want to be licensed as natural hair braiders, cosmetologists, estheticians and nail technicians, or teachers (in any of these professions) in Pennsylvania. It describes the steps you, the candidate, must follow to apply for and test. Please read this handbook in its entirety.

The Pennsylvania State Board of Cosmetology has contracted with Pearson VUE to manage the application process, as well as create, score, and report the results of the Theory/Procedural Skills Examination you must take to become licensed. The contact information (including web services) for Pearson VUE are listed in the Quick Reference on the inside front cover of this handbook.

## EXAM OVERVIEW

The Examination consists of multiple-choice questions and is available for all license types in English. Candidates may also take the Cosmetologist, Esthetician, and Nail Technician examinations in Korean, Spanish, or Vietnamese. Content Outlines for the examinations can be found on pages 8 to 12 in this handbook.

**Notice:** Candidates are not required to take and pass a hands-on practical examination. Candidates are required to take and pass a computer based theory/procedural skills exam.

# ELIGIBILITY

You must submit a License Application with supporting documentation and fees prior to being eligible to receive a temporary license and sit for the examination. Candidates who apply for EARLY TESTING are not permitted to request temporary licenses.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

### EARLY TESTING

- Candidates for the examination to practice COSMETOLOGY are eligible to take the examination after completing 900 hours
- Candidates for the examination to practice ESTHETICS are eligible to take the examination after completing 250 hours
- Candidates for the examination to practice NAIL TECHNOLOGY are eligible to take the examination after completing 150 hours
- Candidates for the examination to practice NATURAL HAIR BRAIDING are eligible to take the examination after completing 250 hours
- Candidates for the examination to TEACH cosmetology, natural hair braiding, nail technology or esthetics are eligible to take the examination after completion of 400 hours:

**Licenses and temporary permits WILL NOT BE ISSUED until completion of the full amount of hours (1250 Cosmetologist; 500 teacher; 300 esthetician; 200 nail technician; 300 natural hair braider) and program requirements are completed for all license classifications.**

If candidates opt to take the examination early, transcripts will be required to show the minimum amount of hours needed to test. You will need to remit the \$10 application fee and \$93 processing/examination fee. The transcript **MUST** be received in both cases directly from the cosmetology school, as is currently required.

### PA-20-10 – COSMETOLOGIST

A candidate who wishes to obtain a cosmetology license must pass the examination. Before taking the examination:

- Successfully complete a course with at least 1,250 hours of instruction in a licensed school of cosmetology **OR**
- Successfully complete 2,000 hours as an apprentice in a licensed salon. The candidate must contact the PA State Board to receive a letter with the State seal noting completion of 2,000 hours of apprenticeship. The candidate must attach the original letter with his or her application form. **AND**
- Be at least 16 years old and have a 10th grade education or equivalent; **OR**, waive the 10th grade education requirement by providing proof of being 35 years of age or older.

PA-20-14C – COSMETOLOGIST TEACHER,  
PA-20-14E – ESTHETICIAN TEACHER,  
PA-20-14N – NATURAL HAIR BRAIDER TEACHER, AND  
PA-20-14M – NAIL TECHNICIAN TEACHER

A candidate who wishes to obtain a teacher license must pass the examination. Before taking these examinations, a candidate must:

- Successfully complete a course with at least 500 hours of instruction in cosmetology, natural hair braider, esthetics, or nail technician teacher curriculum in a licensed school of cosmetology. **AND**
- Possess a current Cosmetologist, Natural Hair Braider, Esthetics or Nail Technician License. **AND**
- Be at least 18 years old and have a 12th grade education or equivalent.

PA-20-13 – ESTHETICIAN

A candidate who wishes to obtain an esthetician license must pass the examination. Before taking the examination, a candidate must:

- Successfully complete a course with at least 300 hours of instruction in esthetics in a licensed school of cosmetology **AND**
- Be at least 16 years old and have a 10th grade education or equivalent; **OR**, waive the 10th grade education requirement by providing proof of being 35 years of age or older.

PA-20-15 – NATURAL HAIR BRAIDER

A candidate who wishes to obtain a natural hair braiding license must pass the examination. Before taking the examination, a candidate must:

- Successfully complete a course with at least 300 hours of instruction in hair braiding in a licensed school of cosmetology **AND**
- Be at least 16 years old and have a 10th grade education or equivalent; **OR**, waive the 10th grade education requirement by providing proof of being 35 years of age or older.

PA-20-12 – NAIL TECHNICIAN

A candidate who wishes to obtain a nail technician license must pass the examination. Before taking the examination, a candidate must:

- Successfully complete a course with at least 200 hours of instruction in nail technology in a licensed school of cosmetology **AND**
- Be at least 16 years old and have a 10th grade education or equivalent; **OR**, waive the 10th grade education requirement by providing proof of being 35 years of age or older.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

COSMETOLOGIST, ESTHETICIAN, NATURAL HAIR BRAIDER,  
NAIL TECHNICIAN, AND TEACHERS

Required Documentation (for Cosmetologist, Esthetician, Natural Hair Braider, and Nail Technician):

1. **Proof of Age:** (copy of your current, unexpired Driver's License, Birth Certificate, Visa, or Passport).

2. **Completed and Notarized Affidavit\***

\*In lieu of a signed school affidavit, a certificate issued by the licensing board certifying school hours for a school which has closed is an acceptable alternative.

3. **Cosmetology School Transcript\*\*:** An official school transcript must be submitted (**directly from the school**)

A. Cosmetology School Official transcript with school seal (**copy not accepted**).

\*\*For Early Testing candidates: Final transcripts must be submitted once the program has been completed.

4. **Proof of High School Education:** (submit one of the following):

A. Original high school diploma or acceptable GED points and diploma. (copies accepted).

B. Official letter from school with original signature of principal or guidance counselor. Original letter mailed by school (copies not accepted).

1. Home schooling documentation is acceptable if it follows the previously stated guidelines and is through an association currently registered with the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

C. Original high school transcripts (copies not accepted).

1. Home schooling documentation is acceptable if it follows the previously stated guidelines and is through an association currently registered with the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

D. If you were educated outside of the United States, attach the following:

1. An original evaluation of your education from any accredited evaluation service, a copy of what was evaluated, and a translated, notarized copy of what was evaluated (copies accepted by upload).

5. **Criminal History Record Information Check** (see notice on next page)

Recommended Services:

1. **ACREVS, Inc.**

1776 Clear Lake Ave., Milpitas, CA 95035-7014

E-mail: [www.acrevs.com](http://www.acrevs.com)

Phone: 408-719-0015 Fax: 510-252-0876

2. **Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc.**

P.O. Box 514070, Milwaukee, WI 53203-3470

E-mail: [www.ece.org](http://www.ece.org)

Phone: 414-289-3400 Fax: 414-289-3411

**\*An original acceptable GED points and diploma or TABE scores.**

**NOTICE:** The Pennsylvania State Board of Cosmetology requires all candidates to submit an official Criminal History Record Information check with their applications for licensure examinations, reactivation and reciprocity.

Applicants will need to supply an official Criminal History Record Information check from the State Police or other state agency for every state in which the candidate has resided during the past five years. The reports must be dated within ninety (90) days of the date of the application.

## RECIPROCITY FOR COSMETOLOGY

There is reciprocity for cosmetology teacher licensees. However, it is not offered with all states. You may visit the Board's website at [www.pals.pa.gov](http://www.pals.pa.gov) and review the instructions contained in the reciprocity application. Reciprocity agreements are subject to change, so please contact the board for verification.

- **Reciprocal States:** If you hold a current license for at least two years and you have two years active working experience in states with which Pennsylvania has a reciprocity agreement, you may by-pass the examination process. Contact the board at (717) 783-7130 or visit the Board's website: [www.pals.pa.gov](http://www.pals.pa.gov)
- **Non-Reciprocal States:** If you hold a current license in a state where Pennsylvania **DOES NOT** have an understanding of reciprocity, you will be required to take and pass the examination. Please complete a cosmetology application. Contact Dasher at (866) 474-1148 for more information.

### FOR LICENSURE AS A COSMETOLOGIST

Pennsylvania does *not* have an understanding of reciprocity with **Connecticut, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island, or Utah.**

### FOR LICENSURE AS A NAIL TECHNICIAN

Pennsylvania does *not* have an understanding of reciprocity with **Alabama, Connecticut, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, or West Virginia.**

### FOR LICENSURE AS AN ESTHETICIAN

Pennsylvania does *not* have an understanding of reciprocity with **Connecticut, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island, or Utah.**

### FOR LICENSURE AS A NATURAL HAIR BRAIDER

Pennsylvania does *not* have an understanding of reciprocity with **any state OTHER THAN NEW YORK at this time.**

## INFORMATION ON RECIPROCAL STATES

The reciprocity list is subject to change at any time. It is advisable to contact the Pennsylvania State Board prior to submission of an application, to ensure that the information is currently accurate.

## REINSTATEMENT

- If you hold a Pennsylvania license that has not been active for more than five years, complete a reinstatement application or visit the Pearson VUE web site at [www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology](http://www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology) to print an application. You are required to take and pass the examination.
- If you hold a Pennsylvania license that has not been active for less than five years, contact the board at (717) 783-7130 or e-mail the board at: [ra-cosmetology@pa.gov](mailto:ra-cosmetology@pa.gov)

## APPLICATION AND SCHEDULING

### COMPLETING AN APPLICATION

To become licensed in Pennsylvania, you must complete an *Application for Licensure*. You can begin the on-line application process by logging into the PALS system at: [www.pals.pa.gov](http://www.pals.pa.gov)

Since you are the applicant, you must complete the application yourself. You may call a Pearson VUE or Dasher representative for assistance at (866) 474-1148. You will need to attach other documents to the application. Please refer to the application to determine which additional documents you need to include. You must pay the application fee of \$10 when you begin the application. You will also be required to mail a certified check or money order for processing the application and the exam fee of \$93. **If you fail to attach the required documents or fail to complete all required fields of the application, your application will be considered incomplete and you will receive an e-mail notification.**

If you completed the electronic application and all required documents and payments have been received, you will receive an ELIGIBILITY notice via e-mail, along with an APPROVAL TO TEST notice with instructions on how to schedule your examination. If you need to reschedule your examination, you may do so by using web reservations on the Pearson VUE web site at <http://www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology>. Refer to the Cancellation and Rescheduling section in this handbook.

If you have submitted an incomplete application, you will be sent a LETTER OF DEFICIENCY via e-mail, specifying the outstanding requirements. Any outstanding requirements must be submitted within one (1) year of the application received date. After one (1) year, the application will expire and you will be required to complete a new application and pay the appropriate fees.

### BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

Candidates are required to respond to a series of background questions as part of the application process. Certain applications will need to be reviewed and approved by the State Board prior to candidates being approved to take the examination.

## ADDRESS & NAME CHANGES

Candidates must fax in proof of the change to 952-516-5435. Information on the Fax must include: Candidate ID, Name, and State and Program

## APPLICATION AND EXAM FEES

If you are taking the examinations for the first time, you must complete the correct application, the \$10 state application fee, the associated processing and examination fees, and supporting materials. Your Authorization to Test notice will contain details about how to schedule your examination.

EXAMINATION OR RETAKES	TOTAL FEE
Application Fee (One Time Fee)	\$10
Theory/Procedural Skills (First time or retakes)	\$93

The state's \$10 application fee will be required when completing the on-line application form, through PALS. The processing and examination fees must be in the form of money order, company check, or cashier's check made payable to Pearson VUE. **Personal checks are not accepted. Fees cannot be refunded and cannot be transferred to another person.** If you miss your examination, you are still responsible for the fee and must pay the rescheduling fee to schedule another examination.

Accepted forms of payment for retaking the examination are: credit card, debit card, voucher, or electronic check.

Send your exam fees with a copy of the cover letter from PALS to:

**Pearson VUE**  
**c/o Dasher, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 1652**  
**Harrisburg, PA 17105-1652**

## ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

Pearson VUE complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended. The purpose of accommodations is to provide candidates with full access to the test. Accommodations are not a guarantee of improved performance or test completion. Pearson VUE provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities who demonstrate a need for accommodations.

Test accommodations may include things such as:

- A separate testing room
- Extra testing time
- A Reader or Recorder, for individuals with mobility or vision impairments and cannot read or write on their own

Test accommodations are individualized and considered on a case-by-case basis. All candidates who are requesting accommodations because of a disability must provide appropriate documentation of

their condition and how it is expected to affect their ability to take the test under standard conditions. This may include:

- Supporting documentation from the professional who diagnosed the condition, including the credentials that qualify the professional to make this diagnosis
- A description of past accommodations the candidate has received

The steps to follow when requesting test accommodations vary, depending on your test program sponsor. To begin, go to <http://pearsonvue.com/accommodations>, and then select your test program sponsor from the alphabetized list. Candidates who have additional questions concerning test accommodations may contact the ADA Coordinator by e-mailing [accommodationspearsonvue@pearson.com](mailto:accommodationspearsonvue@pearson.com).

## APPROVAL TO TEST NOTICE

When your application, application fee, examination fee, transcripts, background questions, and other documents have been reviewed/received and evaluated for completeness, you will receive a notice of eligibility and an approval to test notice via email. The approval to test notice contains details about how to schedule your examination.

You may not give your approval to test notice to another person.

If you do not get your approval to test notice within ten (10) business days after submitting your application, call Pearson VUE/Dasher. (Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays are not business days.)

NOTE: Candidates who have responded "YES" to one of the background questions 3 through 7 may be asked to submit certified copies of relevant documents and should allow an additional 5-10 days for receipt of your authorization to test letter or notification from the Board regarding your application.

If your application is incomplete, or if you have not sent the correct fees or other documents, you will be sent a deficiency letter indicating that your application is incomplete. The e-mail will instruct you on what you still need to attach or send to Pearson VUE c/o Dasher. An approval to test notice will not be sent until you have completed the on-line application and attached/submitted all of the required documents and payment.

**Your approval to test notice has important information about the exam. Call Dasher if you do not get your letter within five (5) business days after submitting your application and mailing your required documentation and payment. Pearson VUE is NOT responsible for lost, misdirected, or delayed mail.**



## SCHEDULING LEAD TIMES

You must schedule your exam at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance.

## TEST SITES

The Exam will be given at a Pearson VUE computer-based testing facility. Once you have received your Authorization to Test notice, please schedule your test on-line by using the Pearson VUE web reservations site at: <https://www1.pearsonvue.com/testtaker/signin/SignInPage/PACOS>

Testing sites and testing frequency are as follow:

Harrisburg	2-3 days per week
Philadelphia	4 days per week
Pittsburgh (East)	2-3 days per week
Pittsburgh (West)	2-3 days per week
Allentown	2-3 days per week
Erie	1 day per week
Plymouth Meeting	1-2 days per week
Scranton	2-3 days per week
Newark, DE	2-3 days per week
Morgantown, WV	2-3 days per week
Cumberland, MD	1 Saturday per month

State Correctional Inst. Muncy	Quarterly
State Correctional Inst. Cambridge	Quarterly
State Correctional Inst. Camp Hill	Quarterly
State Correctional Inst. Pittsburgh	Quarterly

## CANCELLATION AND RESCHEDULING

If you cannot attend your Exam, you must contact Pearson VUE at least forty-eight (48) hours before the day of the exam to reschedule. If you do not attend your exam, and have not contacted Pearson VUE at least forty-eight (48) hours before the exam date, your exam fee will NOT be refunded and you cannot transfer the fee to another exam date. You may not give your exam date to another person.

## ABSENCE POLICY

Pearson VUE will consider excusing an absence from an exam. Acceptable excuses are:

- Illness of yourself or an immediate family member
- Death in the family
- Disabling traffic accident
- Court appearance or jury duty
- Military duty
- Weather emergency

Requests for excused absences must be made in writing within fourteen (14) days following the day of the exam that you missed. This request must include proof of the reason you were absent. For example, if you are absent because of illness of yourself or an immediate family member, you must provide an original doctor's note. Pearson VUE's decision regarding whether an absence is excused is final.

Mail your request to:

Attn: Regulatory Program Manager  
5601 Green Valley Dr.  
Bloomington, MN 55437

## WEATHER EMERGENCIES

Exams may be delayed or cancelled if severe weather or a natural disaster makes the test site unsafe or impossible to reach. Candidates will be notified if the exam is cancelled and may take the exam on another day at no additional cost.

# EXAM DAY

Upon arrival, candidates should check in with the test center administrator. The candidate's identification and other documentation will be reviewed and he/she will be photographed for the score report.

## WHAT TO BRING

**You MUST bring the following items with you to the Examination test site:**

- **Two (2) forms of current (unexpired) signature-bearing identification.** (One MUST be photo-bearing, see list below). **PLEASE NOTE:** The signature and names must match exactly to what was submitted on your application. **If you come to the test site without the proper ID, you will not be allowed to take the exam and you will lose your exam fee.**

*No other materials will be allowed.*

All exam questions, each form of the exam, and all other exam materials are copyrighted by and the property of Pearson VUE. Any distribution of the exam content or materials through any form of reproduction, or through oral or written communication, is strictly prohibited and punishable by law. Anyone who removes or tries to remove exam material or information from the test site will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

## ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF CANDIDATE IDENTIFICATION

Candidates must present two (2) forms of current signature identification. The primary identification must be government-issued and photo-bearing with a signature, and the secondary identification must contain a valid signature. Identification must be in English. Note: Candidates are not permitted to enlist another individual (proxy) to test on their behalf

### PRIMARY ID (PHOTOGRAPH AND SIGNATURE, NOT EXPIRED)

- Government-issued Driver's License
- U.S. Dept. of State Driver's License
- U.S. Learner's Permit (with photo and signature)
- National/State/Country ID card
- Passport
- Passport Card
- Military ID
- Military ID for spouses and dependents
- Alien Registration Card (Green Card, Permanent Resident Visa)

### SECONDARY ID (SIGNATURE, NOT EXPIRED)

- U.S. Social Security card
- Debit (ATM) card
- Photo-bearing School ID
- Any form of ID on the Primary ID list

If the ID presented has an embedded signature that is not visible (microchip), or is difficult or impossible to read, the candidate must present another form of identification from the Primary ID or

Secondary ID list that contains a visible signature.

Pearson VUE does not recognize grace periods. For example, if a candidate's driver's license expired yesterday and the state allows a 30-day grace period for renewing the ID, the ID is considered to be expired.

## PALM VEIN RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY

Candidates will be required to have their palm scanned using Palm Vein Recognition technology. Pearson VUE's company-owned sites are equipped with advanced palm vein recognition technology, which captures and recognizes the unique patterns in a candidate's palm veins using non-intrusive, near-infrared scanning technology.

New candidates are enrolled in the biometric system during their first test center admission; their identities are then automatically verified when candidates take and return from breaks, and again when they test in the future at any biometrically equipped location worldwide. Palm vein recognition is secure, privacy friendly, fast, highly accurate, and virtually impossible to forge, and has replaced digital fingerprinting to become the standard biometric technology for candidate identification.

## TESTING POLICIES

The following policies are observed at each test center:

### LATENESS

**Arrive at the test center thirty (30) minutes before your scheduled examination starts.** If you are late for your scheduled examination, or do not bring all of your required materials, you will **NOT** be allowed to test and your examination fee will **NOT** be returned (see *Cancellation* for more details).

### ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cellular phones, pagers or any other electronic devices are not permitted to be used and must be turned off during testing. There is no place for storage of personal belongings at the test centers.

### PERSONAL BELONGINGS/STUDY AIDS

You are not permitted to take personal belongings such as briefcases, large bags, study materials, extra books or papers into the examination room. Any such materials brought into the examination room will be collected and returned to you when you have completed the examination. Pearson VUE is not responsible for lost or misplaced items.

### EATING/DRINKING/SMOKING

You are not permitted to eat, drink, or smoke during the examination.

### MISCONDUCT

If you cause a disturbance of any kind or engage in any kind of misconduct, you will be dismissed from the examination and the incident will be reported to the Pennsylvania State Board of Cosmetology. Decisions regarding disciplinary measures are the responsibility of the Pennsylvania State Board of Cosmetology.

### GUESTS/VISITORS

Guests, visitors, pets, interpreters, or children are **NOT** allowed at the test centers.

# THE EXAM

## THEORY/PROCEDURAL SKILLS EXAM

When you arrive for your scheduled examination, you must show your two forms of signature identification. One **MUST** be a government-issued, unexpired, photo identification. In addition the names and signatures must match exactly. If you fail to provide these documents you will be denied admission to the examination and you will be liable for all fees.

If you have had a name change since submitting your application, you **MUST** request a **NAME CHANGE PRIOR** to arriving at the testing center. You must submit a request to Pearson VUE along with a copy of the official documentation affecting the name change (example: marriage certificate or divorce decree). Candidates must fax proof of the change to 952-516-5435. Information on the fax **MUST INCLUDE**: Candidate ID, Name, State, and Program

The examination will consist of multiple choice questions and “pretest” questions. (Pretest questions are questions on which information is being collected for use in making future exams. Your answers to pretest questions do not affect your score. Pretest questions are mixed in with the scored questions and are not identified.) The chart below identifies how many items you will see for both the general and state portion as well as the total time allotted for each examination.

EXAMINATION	TOTAL ITEMS	SCORED ITEMS	PRE-TEST ITEMS	EXAM TIME ALLOTTED
Cosmetologist	135	110	25	2 hours 15 min
Nail Technician	75	60	15	1 hour 45 min
Esthetician	100	85	15	1 hour 45 min
Teacher	75	60	15	1 hour 45 min
Natural Hair Braider	75	60	15	1 hour 45 min

If you give help to someone or receive help from anyone during the exam, you will be asked to leave the room immediately. The results will not be scored and the incident will be reported to the Pennsylvania State Board of Cosmetology. Anyone who takes or tries to take materials or information from the testing room is subject to prosecution.

The examinations are offered in the following languages:

EXAM	LANGUAGES OFFERED
Cosmetologist	English, Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese
Esthetician	English, Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese
Instructor	English
Nail Technician	English, Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese
Natural Hair Braider	English

# THEORY/PROCEDURAL SKILLS EXAM CONTENT OUTLINES

## CONTENT OUTLINE — COSMETOLOGIST

110 SCORED ITEMS (100 GENERAL, 10 STATE)

25 PRETEST ITEMS (20 GENERAL, 5 STATE)

### I. RULES, REGULATIONS, AND SAFETY (25% TO 35%)

- A. Safety
  - 1. Draping
    - a. Sanitation
    - b. Procedures
  - 2. Prevention of salon accidents
    - a. Maintaining safe working conditions
    - b. Labeling
    - c. Storing chemical products
    - d. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
    - e. Thermal appliances
  - 3. First aid/OSHA
    - a. Handling blood-contaminated tools
    - b. Disposing of blood-contaminated objects
- B. Sanitation and disinfection
  - 1. Personal hygiene
  - 2. Sanitation of implements and tools
  - 3. Single-use items
  - 4. Dispensing products
  - 5. Prevention of infectious disease/referral
  - 6. Cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces
- C. Client contact
  - 1. Ethics
  - 2. Communication
  - 3. Record keeping

### II. TRICHOLOGY (4% TO 10%)

- A. Structure of hair
- B. Hair type
  - 1. Pigment
  - 2. Wave pattern/follicle formation
  - 3. Texture
  - 4. Density
  - 5. Porosity
  - 6. Elasticity
- C. Hair growth phases

### III. SHAMPOO / SCALP ANALYSIS (4% TO 8%)

- A. Purpose and chemistry of shampoos and conditioners
- B. Scalp conditioning services
- C. Procedure
- D. Scalp massage
- E. Scalp analysis/Disorders and diseases of scalp
- F. Procedures for clients with special needs

### IV. STYLING (4% TO 10%)

- A. Determination of appropriate hair style
  - 1. Hair texture and types
  - 2. Hair condition
  - 3. Hair length
  - 4. Face shape
- B. Hair design techniques
  - 1. Wet styling
  - 2. Comb out
  - 3. Blow-dry styling
- C. Thermal styling
  - 1. Special considerations
  - 2. Tools
  - 3. Procedures
- D. Artificial hair
- E. Products and styling aids

### V. HAIRCUTTING (8% TO 12%)

- A. Shaping and cutting
- B. Determination of appropriate style
  - 1. Length, structure, and conditions
  - 2. Establishing guideline
- C. Blunt/one-length, graduated, and layered haircuts
  - 1. Elevation
- D. Thinning/texturizing
- E. Using a razor
- F. Using clippers
- G. Using scissors/shears

### VI. HAIR COLOR, BLEACHING/LIGHTENING, AND TINTING (13% - 17 %)

- A. Scalp and hair conditions that preclude coloring, bleaching/lightening, or tinting services
- B. Effects of hair structure and natural hair color on tone and intensity of outcome
- C. Preparing hair to receive coloring, bleaching/lightening, or tinting services
- D. Products
- E. Tools, implements, and materials
- F. Mixing
- G. Application, processing, and removal
- H. Highlighting techniques
  - I. Determining color level and tone
  - J. Corrective color
- K. Color-specific safety
- L. Special procedures - Color theory
  - 1. Overprocessed or damaged hair
  - 2. Hair with metallic dyes, compound dyes, and minerals
  - 3. Patch test and strand test

## VII. PERMANENT WAVING (13% TO 17%)

- A. Scalp and hair conditions that preclude permanent waving services
- B. Effects of hair structure and condition on desired outcome
- C. Preparation
- D. Products
- E. Tools, implements, and materials
- F. Applying, processing, and removing products
- G. Techniques of wrapping hair with rods and other tools
- H. Special Procedures
  - 1. Over processed or damaged hair
  - 2. Hair with metallic dyes, compound dyes, and minerals

## VIII. CHEMICAL STRAIGHTENING AND RELAXING (13% TO 17%)

- A. Scalp and hair conditions that preclude chemical straightening and relaxing services
- B. Effects of hair structure on desired outcome
- C. Preparation
- D. Products
- E. Tools, implements, and procedures
- F. Applying, processing, and removing products for chemical straightening and relaxing
- G. Curl reformation/soft curl perm
- H. Special procedures
  - 1. Overprocessed or damaged hair
  - 2. Hair with metallic dyes, compound dyes, and minerals
  - 3. Strand test

## IX. ESTHETICS (4% TO 8%)

- A. Skin conditions that preclude esthetic services
- B. Skin conditions that benefit from esthetic services
- C. Skin diseases and disorders
- D. Special procedures for skin services on sensitive, acne-prone, or aging skin
- E. Preparation
- F. Tools, implements, and materials
- G. Facial services
  - 1. Purpose and procedures
  - 2. Types of products
  - 3. Applying and removing products
  - 4. Using electric skin devices and equipment
  - 5. Extractions
- H. Massage manipulations
- I. Makeup application
  - 1. Procedures
  - 2. Products
  - 3. Removal
  - 4. Corrective makeup
  - 5. Color theory

- J. Hair removal
  - 1. Waxing and other depilatory techniques
  - 2. Tweezing

## X. NAILS (4% TO 8%)

- A. Nail structure
- B. Recognizing nail disorders and diseases
- C. Clients' health conditions that preclude service
- D. Massage
- E. Manicure/Pedicure
  - 1. Products
  - 2. Procedures
  - 3. Tools, implements, and materials
- F. Applying, maintaining, and removing nail enhancements/artificial nails

## **CONTENT OUTLINE — NAIL TECHNICIAN (MANICURIST)**

60 SCORED ITEMS (50 GENERAL, 10 STATE)  
15 PRETEST ITEMS (10 GENERAL, 5 STATE)

### **I. RULES, REGULATIONS, AND SAFETY (30% TO 40%)**

- A. Safety
  - 1. Preparation
    - a. Sanitation
    - b. Procedures
  - 2. Prevention of salon accidents
    - a. Maintaining safe working conditions
    - b. Labeling
    - c. Storing chemical products
    - d. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
- B. Sanitation and disinfection
  - 1. Personal hygiene
  - 2. Implements and tools
  - 3. Single-use items
  - 4. Applying creams
  - 5. Prevention of infectious disease
  - 6. Cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces
  - 7. Cleaning and disinfecting whirlpool pedicure foot tubs and filters
- C. Client contact
  - 1. Ethics
  - 2. Communication
  - 3. Record keeping

### **II. NAIL STRUCTURE AND NAIL ANALYSIS (15% TO 20%)**

- A. Nail structure
- B. Nail conditions that preclude treatment
- C. Health conditions that preclude treatment

### **III. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (30% TO 40%)**

- A. Massage
  - 1. Muscles, bones, and nerves of fingers/hands/arms
  - 2. Muscles, bones, and nerves of toes/feet/legs
- B. Manicure/Pedicure
  - 1. Products
    - a. Disposal
    - b. Handling
  - 2. Procedures
  - 3. Tools, equipment, and materials
  - 4. Preparing hands and feet for services
  - 5. Conditioning nails and cuticles
  - 6. Basic manicure/pedicure
    - a. Grooming and trimming cuticles
    - b. Buffing
    - c. Shaping
    - d. Polishing

### **IV. NAIL ENHANCEMENTS (12% TO 18%)**

- A. Application and removal
  - 1. Nail tips
  - 2. Gels and acrylics
- B. Tools, equipment, and products
- C. Maintenance
- D. Nail Repair

## CONTENT OUTLINE — ESTHETICIAN

85 SCORED ITEMS (75 GENERAL, 10 STATE)

15 PRETEST ITEMS (10 GENERAL, 5 STATE)

### I. RULES, REGULATIONS, AND SAFETY (30% TO 40%)

- A. Safety
  - 1. Draping
    - a. Sanitation
    - b. Procedures
  - 2. Prevention of salon accidents
    - a. Maintaining safe working conditions
    - b. Labeling
    - c. Storing chemical products
    - d. Material Safety Data Sheets
    - e. Thermal/electrical appliances
  - 3. First aid/OSHA
    - a. Handling blood-contaminated tools
    - b. Disposing of blood-contaminated objects
- B. Sanitation and disinfection
  - 1. Personal hygiene
  - 2. Sanitation and disinfection of implements and tools
  - 3. Single use items
  - 4. Product application
  - 5. Sanitation and disinfection of work surfaces
- C. Predisposition/Patch Tests
- D. Client contact
  - 1. Ethics
  - 2. Communication
  - 3. Record keeping

### II. ESTHETIC SCIENCE AND SKIN ANALYSIS (15% TO 20%)

- A. Skin structure and anatomy
- B. Purpose of skin analysis
- C. Skin conditions that benefit from services
- D. Skin conditions that preclude skin services
- E. Skin disorders and diseases

### III. FACIALS (20% TO 25%)

- A. Application, removal, and purpose of products
  - 1. Lotions and creams
  - 2. Exfoliants
  - 3. Masks/packs
- B. Tools, implements, materials, and equipment
- C. Facial procedures
- D. Special considerations
  - 1. Microdermabrasion
  - 2. Chemical peel
  - 3. Disincrustation
  - 4. Aromatherapy
- E. Massage/Anatomy

### IV. HAIR REMOVAL (16% TO 20%)

- A. Tweezing
- B. Waxing
- C. Tools, implements, materials, and equipment

### V. MAKEUP (10% TO 15%)

- A. Purpose
- B. Types of cosmetics
- C. Brushes and other implements, tools, and materials
- D. Color theory
- E. Application and removal procedures
- F. Corrective makeup
- G. Application and removal of artificial eyelashes

### VI. ELECTRICITY AND ELECTROTHERAPY (5% TO 10%)

- A. Galvanic current
- B. High frequency current
- C. Light therapy

## CONTENT OUTLINE — TEACHER

60 SCORED ITEMS (50 GENERAL, 10 STATE)

15 PRETEST ITEMS (10 GENERAL, 5 STATE)

### I. TEACHING METHODS (14%)

### II. ASSESSMENT TOOLS (16%)

- A. Why
- B. How
- C. What

### III. DETERMINING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION (36%)

- A. Establishing goals and objectives
- B. Determining essential knowledge, skills, and abilities
- C. Understanding outcomes

### IV. THE LEARNER AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (34%)

- A. Learning styles
- B. Individual differences
- C. Motivation
- D. Record keeping
- E. Classroom arrangement

## CONTENT OUTLINE – NATURAL HAIR BRAIDER

60 SCORED ITEMS (50 GENERAL, 10 STATE)  
15 PRETEST ITEMS (10 GENERAL, 5 STATE)

### I. RULES, REGULATIONS, AND SAFETY (30-40%)

- A. Safety
  - 1. Draping
    - a. Sanitation
    - b. Procedures
  - 2. Prevention of salon accidents
    - a. Maintaining safe working conditions
    - b. Labeling
    - c. Storing chemical products
    - d. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)/Safety Data Sheets (SDS)
    - e. Thermal appliances
  - 3. First aid/OSHA
    - a. Handling blood-contaminated tools
    - b. Disposing of blood-contaminated objects
- B. Sanitation and disinfection
  - 1. Personal hygiene
  - 2. Implements and tools
  - 3. Single-use items
  - 4. Applying products
  - 5. Prevention of infectious disease
  - 6. Cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces

### II. CLIENT CONSULTATION/CONTACT (8-12%)

- A. Ethics
- B. Communication/Consultation
- C. Record keeping
- D. Analysis to provide proper service
  - 1. Face shape and structure
  - 2. Scalp and hair analysis

### III. PHYSIOLOGY AND TRICHOLOGY (24-30%)

- A. Diseases and disorders of hair and scalp
- B. Anatomy of the head and neck
- C. Hair structure and growth cycle
  - 1. Hair type and wave pattern

### IV. SHAMPOO AND SCALP TREATMENTS (10-14%)

- A. Purpose and chemistry of shampoos and conditioners
- B. Scalp conditioning services
- C. Procedure
- D. Scalp Massage
- E. Procedures for clients with special needs

### V. BRAIDING (10-14%)

- A. Purpose, definitions, and techniques
- B. Tools, implements, materials, and products
- C. Placement, design, and direction
- D. Using extensions
- E. Maintenance
- F. Finishing techniques

### VI. LOCK STYLE AND PROCEDURES (6-10%)

- A. Purpose, definitions, and techniques
  - 1. Comb technique
  - 2. Palm roll
- B. Tools, implements, materials, and products
- C. Placement, design, and direction
- D. Developmental phases
- E. Maintenance



## SCORE REPORTING

Pearson VUE will provide you with your official examination results on the day of testing. If you lose your examination results and need to obtain another copy, please complete the form in the back of the handbook and submit your request for a duplicate score report. Examination results will not be given over the telephone nor can they be sent to your employer or to another third party.

### EQUATING AND SCALING

There are multiple versions of each of the licensing examinations. These versions are known as forms. Although all forms of an examination are developed based on the content outlines, the difficulty of the forms of an examination may vary slightly because different questions appear on each form. To ensure that no candidate is put at an unfair advantage or disadvantage due to the particular form of an examination that he or she is given, a statistical procedure known as equating is used to correct for differences in form difficulty.

For example, in an examination with two (2) forms, Form A and Form B, the state licensing agency determines that answering 30 questions correctly on Form A demonstrates the minimum amount of knowledge necessary to be licensed. It is further determined through the equating process that Form B contains slightly more difficult questions than Form A; therefore, answering 30 questions correctly on Form A would indicate the same level of knowledge as answering only 28 questions correctly on Form B. Under this set of circumstances, a score of 30 questions correct would be used as the passing score on Form A whereas a score of 28 questions correct would be used as the passing score on Form B.

A second statistical procedure known as scaling is used to derive the numerical score to report for each candidate. Scaling is used to place a raw score on a common reporting scale on which each scaled score represents a given level of knowledge regardless of the difficulty of the form on which the raw score was achieved.

To illustrate how scaling works, suppose that in the examination example used above, the state licensing agency decides to use a score of 500 as the passing score for reporting purposes. (Note that the score selected to be used as the reported passing score is not related to, and has no bearing on, the difficulty of the examination.) Based on the information provided above, a raw score of 30 on Form A would translate to a scaled score of 500; a raw score of 28 on Form B would also translate to a scaled score of 500 since a raw score of 30 on Form A represents the same level of knowledge as a raw score of 28 on Form B.

### SCALED SCORE

The passing scores of the licensing examinations were set by the Pennsylvania State Board of Cosmetology (in conjunction with Pearson VUE) after a comprehensive study was completed for each examination. Raw scores are converted into scaled scores that can range from 0 to 100. To avoid misuse of score information, numeric scores are only reported to failing candidates. The scaled score that is reported to you is neither the number of questions you answered correctly nor the percentage of questions you answered correctly. With a passing score of 75, any score below 75 indicates how close the candidate came to passing, rather than the actual number or percentage of questions the candidates answered correctly.

### PASSING

After you have successfully passed the Examination (and have completed the required hours), the State Board will issue your license within 10-15 business days. If you have not received your license in the mail within ten (10) business days of passing the examination, please contact Pearson VUE at 866-638-7502. If you have changed your address from the time you submitted your application, you must notify Pearson VUE prior to the printing of your license.

**Note:** If you have passed the exam under "Early Testing," the results will not be sent to the state until the final transcripts are received.

To verify whether or not a license has been issued, an applicant may search the State's web site using the following link: [www.licensepa.state.pa.us](http://www.licensepa.state.pa.us)

### FAILING AND RETAKING AN EXAMINATION

If you fail the Examination, your Score Report will provide you with information on how to re-take the examination. A new examination fee is required each time you re-take the examination.

To schedule a retake examination, use the web reservations on the Pearson VUE web site at <http://www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology>. Reservations for reexamination cannot be made at the test center, and you **must wait twenty-four (24) hours from your failed examination before making your reservation.**

### DUPLICATE SCORE REPORT

If you lose your Score Report or need a duplicate Score Report, complete the *Request for Duplicate Score Report Form* and mail it to Pearson VUE (see *Appendix A*).

**DIRECTIONS:** You may use this form to ask Pearson VUE for a copy of your Examination Score Report. Please print or type all information on this form, or your request will be returned.

**SEND TO:** Pearson VUE/Cosmetology Program  
**Duplicate Score Request**  
5601 Green Valley Drive  
Bloomington, MN 55437

or email the request to:  
**pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com**

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING FORM WITH YOUR CURRENT NAME AND ADDRESS. ALL INFORMATION MUST BE COMPLETE AND ACCURATE TO ENSURE PROPER PROCESSING.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ The last four (4) digits of your Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Exam \_\_\_\_\_ Theory or Practical (circle one) Exam Date \_\_\_\_\_

**IF THE ABOVE INFORMATION WAS DIFFERENT AT THE TIME YOU WERE TESTED, PLEASE INDICATE ORIGINAL INFORMATION. IF YOUR NAME HAS CHANGED, YOU MUST ATTACH A COPY OF A LEGAL DOCUMENT AUTHORIZING THE CHANGE (FOR EXAMPLE, A MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE OR A DIVORCE DECREE).**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**I HEREBY AUTHORIZE PEARSON VUE TO SEND ME AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE A DUPLICATE OF MY SCORE REPORT.**

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## TEST SITES

The Exam will be given at a Pearson VUE computer-based testing facility. Once you have received your Authorization to Test notice, please schedule your test on-line by using the Pearson VUE web reservations site at: [www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology](http://www.pearsonvue.com/pa/cosmetology)

Testing sites and testing frequency are as follow:

TESTING SITE LOCATION	TESTING FREQUENCY
Harrisburg	2-3 days per week
Philadelphia	4 days per week
Pittsburgh (East)	2-3 days per week
Pittsburgh (West)	2-3 days per week
Allentown	2-3 days per week
Erie	1 day per week
Plymouth Meeting	1-2 days per week
Scranton	2-3 days per week
Newark, DE	2-3 days per week
Morgantown, WV	2-3 days per week
Cumberland, MD	1 Saturday per month

## EXAMINATIONS

EXAMINATION	TOTAL ITEMS	SCORED ITEMS	PRE-TEST ITEMS	EXAM TIME ALLOTTED
Cosmetologist	135	110	25	2 hours 15 min
Nail Technician	75	60	15	1 hour 45 min
Esthetician	100	85	15	1 hour 45 min
Teacher	75	60	15	1 hour 45 min
Natural Hair Braider	75	60	15	1 hour 45 min

Note: Early Testing candidates will not receive a license until the required education hours are completed and submitted to Pearson VUE c/o Dasher.