

# North Carolina Legislative Update

Cosmetology &amp; Barbering Bills — Current as of March 2026

[🔗 ACTIVE LEGISLATIVE SESSION](#) • [STAY INFORMED](#) • [TAKE ACTION](#)

## Why This Matters to You

Several bills currently before the North Carolina General Assembly directly affect cosmetologists, barbers, estheticians, nail technicians, natural hair care specialists, makeup artists, and salon owners. ACSP is monitoring each bill closely. Review the summaries below, track progress at [www.ncleg.gov](http://www.ncleg.gov), and make your voice heard.

■ COSMETOLOGY / COSMETIC ART BILL
 ■ BARBERING BILL
 ■ JOINT / REGULATORY REFORM

## Active Legislation

### S 656 Cosmetic Art Deregulation — Natural Hair Care, Blow-Dry Styling & Makeup Artistry

● Referred to Senate Rules & Operations Committee
 ■ Introduced Mar. 25, 2025  
👤 Senators Moffitt, Grafstein & Bradley (Primary)

A sweeping multi-part reform (GS Chapters 86B & 88B) that would **exempt three categories of services from licensure**: natural hair care, blow-dry styling, and makeup artistry. Converts the mandatory natural hair care specialist *license* to a voluntary *certificate* — practitioners may still work without it, but only certified individuals may advertise the title. Persons providing only these exempt services must complete a **one-time four-hour Board-approved sanitation & safety course**. Shops offering exclusively natural hair care, blow-dry styling, or makeup artistry would no longer require a cosmetic art shop license. Bipartisan sponsorship (7 co-sponsors). Effective date proposed: **October 1, 2025**.

[View Full Bill Text ↗](#)

### H 686 Safe Cosmetics Act — Hazardous Ingredient Restrictions & Disclosure

● Referred to House Rules, Calendar & Operations Committee
 ■ Introduced Apr. 1, 2025  
👤 Rep. Baker & 17 Co-Sponsors (Democratic)

Would establish **North Carolina's Safe Cosmetics Act**, restricting the use of certain hazardous substances and chemicals in cosmetic products sold or used within the state. The bill addresses safety standards for products used in salons and cosmetic art shops, with particular focus on ingredients posing health risks to salon workers and consumers. Affects all licensed cosmetologists, estheticians, nail technicians, and shop owners. Currently referred to committee with no further action reported.

[View Full Bill Text ↗](#)

### GS 86B Barbers — Apprenticeship & Licensing Pathway (Existing Law / Proposed Changes)

● Under Review — NC Board of Barber & Electrolysis Examiners
 ■ Ongoing 2025–2026 Session  
👤 NC Board of Barber & Electrolysis Examiners

Under current law (GS 86B), barber licensure in NC requires **completion of at least one year's apprenticeship** under a licensed barber, plus passing the Board examination. Apprentice licenses may not be held for more than three years without re-examination. Legislative discussions are ongoing regarding whether to modernize or streamline these requirements to align with national trends — mirroring efforts in neighboring states. Monitor [ncleg.gov](http://ncleg.gov) for any new bill filings targeting GS Chapter 86B during the 2025–2026 session.

[View Current Statute ↗](#)

### GS 88B NC Board of Cosmetic Art Examiners — Rulemaking & Regulatory Updates

● Active Rulemaking — NC Board of Cosmetic Art Examiners
 ■ 2025–2026 Session
 👤 NC Board of Cosmetic Art Examiners

If S 656 passes, the **NC Board of Cosmetic Art Examiners** would be authorized to adopt new rules implementing the deregulation changes, including developing and approving the free four-hour sanitation & safety course, updating licensing fee schedules, and transitioning existing natural hair care specialist licenses to voluntary certificates. The Board would also be required to post guidance on its website for affected practitioners. All cosmetologists, estheticians, manicurists, and shop owners should monitor Board communications for updates to **sanitary and safety rules for shops and schools**.

[NC Board of Cosmetic Art Examiners ↗](#)

## Key Resources



### NC General Assembly Website

Search bills, track legislation, find your NC legislators, and watch live or archived chamber sessions.

[www.ncleg.gov](http://www.ncleg.gov)



### NC Board of Barbers & Electrolysis

Official Board page for NC barber licensing, rules, inspections, and renewal information.

[www.bbee.nc.gov](http://www.bbee.nc.gov)



### UNC Legislative Reporting Service

Plain-language bill summaries and explanatory memos for NC legislation — ideal for practitioners tracking S 656 and other bills.

[lrs.sog.unc.edu](http://lrs.sog.unc.edu)

## Track NC Legislation on Your Phone



### NC Legislature — Stay Connected

Use the LegiScan app or the official NC General Assembly website to follow bills, set alerts for legislation you're tracking, watch live House & Senate sessions, and contact your representatives — all from your phone. Available for iPhone and Android via LegiScan.

[Track NC Bills — LegiScan](#)

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Association of Cosmetology Salon Professionals (ACSP)®

Keeping North Carolina's beauty professionals informed and empowered.

Track all legislation at [www.ncleg.gov](http://www.ncleg.gov) | NC General Assembly, 2025–2026 Session

This document is for informational purposes. Bill status may change. Always verify current status at [ncleg.gov](http://ncleg.gov).