



# Issue Response

## OREGON HEALTH LICENSING AGENCY

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### Cosmetology – Hair Design

**April 12, 2012**

The Oregon Health Licensing Agency (Agency) has received several inquiries regarding hair extensions and attaching hair feathers and whether or not it is within the scope of practice for hair design.

Upon consideration and request by the Board of Cosmetology, the Agency consulted with its General Counsel at the Department of Justice who responded to the following questions:

**Issue #1:** *Does the attachment of hair extensions require a license in hair design?*

**Short Answer #1:** Yes, qualified.

**Descriptive Answer #1:** Hair extensions alter the style of one's hair by adding volume and sometimes length, and typically include activities that are the practice of "hair design" under the law. Furthermore, the risk of damage to the hair and scalp through the most common hair extension methods likely brings the attachment of hair extensions within the scope of the Oregon Health Licensing Agency's public protection responsibilities. However, when attaching one or a very limited number of single section clip-in extensions as a mere accent to an existing hairstyle, an individual is likely not required to hold a hair design license.

**Issue #2:** *Does the attachment of feather extensions require a license in hair design?*

**Short Answer #1:** No, qualified.

**Descriptive Answer #2:** "Feather extensions do not generally alter a hairstyle, but are typically applied in very small numbers to minimally accent an existing hairstyle instead. In fact, it is common to wear only one feather at a time. As a rule, hair feathers alter an existing hairstyle less than even the clipping of one barrette would because they are not typically used to hold back or clip up any segments of hair. Additionally, unlike hair extensions, the consumer risk involved in the most common attachment method for hair feathers is minimal. However, feather extensions that are attached in such a large number that they actually create a hairstyle of their own [e.g., a feather Mohawk, or a number of striped or dappled feathers so large that they give the hair a "crimped" appearance], or hair feathers that are attached by a method that poses consumer health or safety risks, appear to require the individual attaching them to hold hair design licensure."

***Important Note:*** The Agency does not provide personal legal advice to licensees or members of the public. The responses listed here are specific to only those questions asked. Even slight changes in the scope or content of the question may change the applicability of these responses in a different situation. Please consult your own attorney for legal advice regarding Oregon laws and administrative rules.