

June 25, 2019 – Head Lice

Question 1: Is the treatment of head lice within the scope of hair design or barbering?

Answer 1: No. The administration of head lice medication (whether over the counter or prescription) is not within the scope of any cosmetology field of practice.

The Board of Cosmetology does not regulate the administration of any medications on a client — the Board of Cosmetology regulates cosmetic services, not medical services.

Question 2: Is the treatment of head lice regulated by other agencies or laws?

Answer 2: This not a question that Health Licensing Office (HLO) can answer for you. The Board of Cosmetology regulates cosmetic services, not medical, so this question is outside our authority to answer.

Question 3: Are hair design and barber authorization holders prohibited by the Board of Cosmetology from treating head lice?

Answer 3: No. The treatment of head lice is not prohibited by the Board of Cosmetology for its authorization holders. You will not be penalized by the Board of Cosmetology if you provide over the counter medication to treat head lice as part of other cosmetology services so long as you are following all the sanitization and safety requirements of the Board of Cosmetology [statutes or rules](#).

With that said, we can't speak for any other agencies or boards, only the Board of Cosmetology. You will have to determine if other laws effect these types of services if you are offering head lice treatments in your salon or barbershop.

Question 4: I primarily offer head lice treatment — do I need a hair design or barbering license?

Answer 4: If you are offering hair design or barbering services in conjunction with the head lice treatment, you will need a hair design or barbering license (known as an authorization) from HLO for those cosmetic services.* For example, if you are offering to shampoo, condition, cut or style the client's hair in conjunction with head lice treatment, these are hair design and barbering services and would fall under the authority of the Board of Cosmetology.

Question 5: I work in a clinic or similar setting and use a comb only to apply head lice medication to the clients. Do I need a hair design or barbering license?

Answer 5: The use of a comb only to apply the head lice medication would itself not be a cosmetic service and would not require a hair design or barbering license.

Question 6: I'm unhappy with the treatment I received at head lice salon. How do I complain?

Answer 6: If your complaint relates to the cosmetic services you received, HLO has a [complaint form](#) that you can fill out and submit to HLO.

Once the complaint is received, HLO will investigate to determine if there has been a violation of HLO's [statute or rules](#).

Please know that if your complaint is not related to the cosmetic services that were provided but instead relates to the effectiveness of the head lice treatment itself, that is not an issue within HLO's authority to investigate or determine.

Important Note: The Board and HLO do not provide personal legal advice to licensees or members of the public. The information provided here is specific to only those questions asked. Even slight changes in the scope or content of the question or matter may change the application of the above information in a different situation. Please consult your own attorney for legal advice regarding Oregon laws and administrative rules.

Oregon Revised Statutes related to exemptions under the Board of Cosmetology can be located at https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors690.html.