

Beauty, body art and skin penetration industries



This fact sheet outlines rules for skin penetration procedures under the *Public Health Act 2010* and *Public Health Regulation 2022*.

What is a 'skin penetration procedure'?

The *Public Health Act 2010* (the Act) defines a skin penetration procedure as: "Any procedure (whether medical or not) that involves skin penetration (such as acupuncture, tattooing, ear piercing or hair removal or the penetration of a mucous membrane), and includes any procedure declared by the regulations to be a skin penetration procedure."

These procedures can include:

- tattooing
- manicures and pedicures
- cosmetic tattooing
- waxing
- piercing
- microdermabrasion
- colonic lavage.

If you are unsure whether a procedure is a skin penetration procedure, contact your [local council](#) or [Public Health Unit](#) for further information.

Note: skin penetration procedures carried out by a health practitioner registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, or by a person acting under the direction or supervision of a registered health practitioner, while providing a health service are not skin penetration procedures for the purpose of the Act or the Public Health Regulation 2022 (the Regulation).

Who do the requirements of the Act apply to?

The skin penetration requirements of the Act and Regulation apply to all businesses that carry out skin penetration procedures.

There are additional rules in the Regulation that apply to the person carrying out a skin penetration procedure, such as:

- tattooists
- colonic lavage practitioners
- beauticians, nail technicians and unregistered practitioners who carry out acupuncture or dry needling.

What are the risks of skin penetration procedures?

Skin penetration procedures can spread viral, bacterial and fungal infections from one person to another through contaminated equipment and surfaces. This can include diseases such as Hepatitis C and B, and staphylococcal, streptococcal and pseudomonas infections.

Businesses that use effective infection control procedures greatly reduce the risk of infection.

Regulation of the skin penetration industry

Businesses carrying out skin penetration must be registered with the local council, meet all necessary planning and building standards, and have all necessary approvals before opening. Authorised Officers from local councils can inspect skin penetration businesses to ensure they are meeting their health obligations, including:

- The business meets all design and construction standards and is in a clean condition.
- All needles, sharps and other skin penetrating equipment are sterile.
- All sharps are appropriately disposed of.
- Good infection control practices are used.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn by operators.

If you have questions about the role of Authorised Offices and how to prepare for an inspection, please contact your [local council](#) (see fact sheet titled 'Powers of authorised officers').

Further advice

- Contact your [local council](#).
- Contact your local [Public Health Unit](#) by calling 1300 066 055.

Further information

The following resources are also available to help skin penetration businesses and practitioners understand the requirements of the *Public Health Act 2010* and Public Health Regulation 2022. Visit our [Skin penetration resources](#) page on the NSW Health website:

Fact sheets

- Beauty treatment businesses
- Body piercing businesses
- Cleaning and disinfection of foot spas
- Colonic lavage businesses
- Hairdressers and barbers
- How to clean and sterilise reusable equipment and instruments
- Nail treatment businesses
- Roles and powers of authorised officers
- Skin penetration business design and construction

- Body art and tattooing businesses
- Waxing

Poster

- Cleaning and sterilising reusable equipment and instruments

Video

- [NSW Health Infection control tutorial for skin penetration practitioners](#)

Standards

- [AS/NZS 4815:2006](#)