

Barbers' Board Meeting

Monday, April 14, 2025

A meeting of the State Board of Barbers was held on Monday, April 14, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. by teleconference.

Board Member Attendees

Mr. Larry Franklin - *Chairperson*
Mr. Andrew Campbell - *Industry Member*
Mr. Wade Menendez - *Industry Member*
Ms. Toni Wallace - *Industry Member*
Mr. Channing Trent- *Industry Member*
Ms. Lanine Swann, *Consumer Member*
Ms. Yasmine Young- *Consumer Member*

Other Staff Attendees

Ms. Nicole Fletcher- *Executive Director*
Ms. Breona Scott- *Assistant Executive Director*
Ms. Leslie Braxton- *Licensing Supervisor*
Mr. Jacob Guy- *Board Administrator*
Ms. Fatmata Rahman- *Administrative Specialist III*
Ms. Ashley Thompson- *Office Secretary*
Mr. Kenneth Sigman- *Advice Counsel*
Ms. Renee Robertson- *Continuing Education Coordinator*
Ms. Karina Papavasiliou- *Inspector*
Mr. Welton Simpson- *Inspector*

Agenda

Quorum Announced, and Meeting Called to Order

A quorum was announced by Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin and the meeting was called to order at 10:13 a.m.

Approval of Agenda

Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin requested a motion for approval of the agenda. Mr. Andrew Campbell made a motion to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Ms. Toni Wallace, and the agenda was unanimously approved.

Approval of February 10, 2024 Minutes

Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin then asked for a motion to approve the February 10, 2024, meeting minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Andrew Campbell to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Wade Menendez and the motion unanimously passed.

New Business

A. RECAP OF FEBRUARY 10, 2025 MEETING

Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin opened April's meeting by providing a recap of February's Board meeting. In February, Board members were introduced to the newest member of the administrative team, Mr. Welton Simpson, a full time inspector. The Board also discussed the allocation of theoretical vs. practical training hours for Limited Barber Stylist licensure. No conclusion was reached during February's meeting, and Board members have since submitted proposals to Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher that will be reviewed and voted upon during April's meeting.

B. OCTOBER 2025 MEETING

Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin announced that the Barber Board meeting for October 2025, falls on October 13, which is a holiday and State offices are closed. Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin requested a motion to move the meeting date to October 20, 2025. Mr. Andrew Campbell made a motion to move the meeting date, seconded by Ms. Toni

Wallace, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of doing so. The meeting for October 2025 is now scheduled to be held on the 20th.

C. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES - HB 1547 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS TRAINING

Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher stated that she learned of HB1547 in March, and details have been shared with Board members via email. Ms. Fletcher then provided the following synopsis of the bill: Requiring the State Board of Barbers and the State Board of Cosmetologists, beginning January 1, 2026, to require as a condition for licensure and initial renewal of a license an applicant or a licensee to complete certain training in domestic violence awareness; requiring the Maryland Department of Labor to approve certain domestic violence awareness training that is offered in person and virtually, includes guidance on certain topics, and has a duration of at least 1 hour; etc.

Following the synopsis provided by Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher, Industry Member Channing Trent asked for clarification regarding repercussions for licensees that do not come into compliance with the newly passed bill. Advice Counsel Mr. Kenneth Sigman replied stating that failure to complete the course could be grounds for termination of licensure. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher explained that the administrative process is still to be ironed out, as it is not written into the law and those policies will need to be implemented by the Board. Advice Counsel Kenneth Sigman provided further clarification that the bill has been amended so that the Board will not be administering the training program, and instead will identify and approve existing training programs to make available to licensees. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher added that there are a plethora of training programs already created, including one by Milady that is offered for about \$10 and meets the requirements written in the bill.

Old Business

A. BARBER STYLIST CURRICULA

Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher refreshed everyone on the subject, stating that there is no breakdown of theoretical vs. practical training hours written into COMAR for the Limited Barber Stylist license. During the previous Board meeting in February the subject was discussed, and Board members had the opportunity to submit proposals to Ms. Fletcher. Limited Barber Stylist training requires 900 total hours of instruction, and Ms. Toni Wallace spoke about her proposed breakdown, which included 272 theoretical training hours and 628 practical training hours. Ms. Wallace stated that she wanted the theoretical training to be equitable to

requirements that exist for the Barber license, while removing the subject matter that is outside the scope of the limited license. Additionally, in comparison to the Barber curriculum, Ms. Wallace stated that the main reduction of theoretical hours was for the men's haircut subject matter, as there had to be reduction somewhere, with the lower total hours requirement. Ms. Yasmine Young responded asking for clarification regarding the removal of the chemical application subject, which Mr. Andrew Campbell confirmed is outside the scope of practice for the Limited Barber license. It was further explained to Ms. Young that the license was originally introduced by former Board President Mr. Phillip Mazza for those interested in simply cutting hair. Next, the curriculum used by Mr. Andrew Campbell and his barbering school was displayed as a refresher, as it had been discussed in depth during February's meeting. The hours breakdown for this curriculum is 370 theoretical hours vs. 530 practical hours. Finally, Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin discussed the curriculum used at his instruction institution which includes 200 theoretical hours and 700 practical hours. While breaking down Mr. Franklin's syllabus, Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher explained that recent trends in testing have shifted to a heavier emphasis on infection control and safety. The discussion was moved to a vote, and Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher explained that after a conclusion was reached the proposal must go through the legal process before being implemented into COMAR. Voting in favor of the 370 theoretical hours vs. 530 training hours was Ms. Yasmine Young. Voting in favor of the 272 theoretical hours vs. 628 training hours was Ms. Toni Wallace, Mr. Wade Menendez, Ms. Lanine Swann, Mr. Channing Trent, and Mr. Larry Franklin. With a majority vote, the Board voted in favor of the proposal submitted by Ms. Toni Wallace for a Barber Stylist curriculum to include 272 theoretical hours and 628 practical hours. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher stated that she would submit the necessary documentation to start the process to implement this regulatory change.

B. INSPECTION SUMMARY

Licensing Supervisor Ms. Leslie Braxton provided an Inspection Summary for today's meeting. The data was collected from February 7, 2025 - April 10, 2025.

8	New shop applications received
1	New shops pending inspections - to be assigned
7	Complaints received
0	Complaints - open / to be assigned
3	Complaints - inspections completed
110	Inspections conducted
30	Inspections passed
50	Inspections failed
0	Failed - new shop inspections
4	Failed - late renewal inspections
1	Failed - complaint
10	Failed - per board inspections
36	Failed - routine inspections
18	Closed at time of inspection

Ms. Yasmine Young replied to Ms. Braxton's presentation of the inspection summary asking about the standard turnaround time for a new shop application. Ms. Braxton replied stating that this can be impacted by multiple factors and vary greatly depending on how quickly the inspection team is able to get to the shop. This can be impacted by the location of the shop, inspector staffing, and several other factors. It was further explained that once new shop applicants have submitted their proper documentation they receive a temporary license to practice while they are in queue for initial inspection. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher added that the tentative goal is a 30 to 40 days process from application to inspection, and that the inspection team has done a great job in prioritizing new shop inspections. Ms. Fletcher also

emphasized the point made by Licensing Supervisor Ms. Leslie Braxton that the speed of the process can be limited by the number of inspectors on staff. This prompted Ms. Toni Wallace to ask what would be the ideal number of inspectors given the high volume of shops and salons throughout the state. Ms. Braxton responded that ideally she would like a team of 10-12 inspectors, and currently works with 2 full time inspectors and 3 per diem inspectors. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher stated that as it currently stands, the board cannot afford to hire more inspectors. Ms. Fletcher stated that the team is committed to fulfilling the regulatory duties of the unit and will continue to do its best working with the resources available. The discussion then turned to ways in which the Board could generate more money. Ms. Fletcher stated the simplest ways would be to increase licensing and fine costs for licensees and noted that Board members have the power to use their positions to push for such changes. Board members also spoke regarding the deposit of funds generated by the Board through consent orders, fines, and licensing costs into the state's general fund before the needs of their own board have been met, something they would like to see change. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher encouraged Board members to review laws and regulations and reach out to her with suggested legislative changes.

C. CURRICULUM APPROVAL

Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin provided an update regarding Cortiva Institute located at 517 Progress Drive Suites A-L in Linthicum Maryland which had their barbering curriculum approved March 17, 2025.

Public Comment

Brian White - Mr. White spoke to add to the previous conversation regarding the understaffed inspector position and the lack of funds available. Mr. White brought up the idea of a volunteer inspector position, a person who could be certified through the Board, and assist with maintaining industry standards. Board members Ms. Toni Wallace, Wade Menendez, and Yasmine Young each agreed that any assistance that would potentially be offered the Board should be willing to accept. Advice Counsel Kenneth Sigman spoke to some possible legal and ethical issues including potential conflict of interest between competing businesses and a lack of compensation for the individual. Mr. Sigman stated that he would need to further research the idea. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher added that there could also be some administrative challenges that she would need to investigate further.

Mr. White also spoke regarding the Limited Barber Stylist license and his concern that industry standards are being lowered in an effort to lower barriers to entry. Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin clarified that Limited Barber Stylists are being taught and held to the same standards as full barbers when it comes to cutting hair. The only difference is that these licensees are not being taught to work with chemicals or apply heat to the hair. Mr. Andrew Campbell also responded to Mr. White offering that when the Limited Barber Stylist license was first introduced he shared the same concerns, however, through his experiences as an educator, he has seen that there is actually a great demand from individuals who simply want to learn to cut hair. Ms. Toni Wallace stated that she agrees with the notion of upholding industry standards and that the focus should be with educational institutions and making sure that they are properly training individuals. She also spoke to the initial creation of the Limited Barber Stylist license stating that one of the main purposes originally was to make a license available to incarcerated individuals who could not legally work with chemicals, and this way could have work available to them upon their release.

Janeen Butler - Ms. Butler commented that while she understands the need to raise more funds to uphold industry standards she does not believe that the costs should fall on the practitioners, perhaps raising fines for shops out of compliance would work. Ms. Toni Wallace replied stating that relative to other states Maryland has some of the lowest fees across the country, and with the general cost of living increasing, things like licensing fees are going to follow suit. Ms. Yasmine Young spoke to inquire about the maximum increase which can be applied to fees. Advice Counsel Mr. Kenneth Sigman informed everyone that the fee increases are capped at 12.5%, and with fees having increased recently administration is hesitant to do so in the near future. An additional factor being that fees can not be for the purpose of revenue generation, only to cover expenses. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher echoed each of the sentiments offered in response to Ms. Butler, and added that staffing inspectors would not be the only purpose for increasing fees.

Lauro Rodriguez - Mr. Rodriguez spoke to the potential for conflict of interest with the previously discussed volunteer inspectors. Mr. Rodriguez offered his idea to prevent such conflict by applying a distance radius which would prevent a volunteer inspector from inspecting a neighboring shop. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher responded that she liked that idea, and if the Board were to move forward with the idea of volunteer inspectors that would be something to consider.

Adjournment

Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin requested a motion to call the meeting to adjournment at 11:22 A.M. Mr. Andrew Campbell made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Channing Trent and the motion unanimously passed.

APPROVED BY: _____ on June 9, 2024.