

TATTOOING PROCEDURE

Every tattoo artist has his or her own procedure for applying a tattoo. Those procedures need to be evaluated to assure compliance with the rules and proper infection control procedures. The following description is a recommended tattooing procedure which meets the rules and includes the necessary infection control principles.

BEFORE TATTOO APPLICATION

- Handle all financial transactions.
- Get patron to complete a consent form which is required to contain at least the patron's name, address, phone number, date of birth and signature.
- Wash hands thoroughly using antiseptic soap, and scrub brush. Pay particular attention to fingernails and between fingers and scrub wrists and lower arms. Use fingernail file or orange stick as necessary to clean underneath fingernails.
- Dry hands thoroughly using disposable towels.
- Inspect hands for small cuts, abrasions, etc. and bandages any wounds.
- Put on clean disposable latex gloves. Gloves are required to be worn at all times during tattooing.
- Prepare work area by covering all items which will not be disinfected between clients. Spray bottles can not be disinfected and must be covered with a protective covering such as a plastic bag. All other items which may be touched by the tattoo artist or client during tattooing should be evaluated to determine whether covering or disinfection is most appropriate.
- Select appropriate gown or lap cloths to prevent contamination of clothing during tattooing.
- Prepare a clean surface such as a paper towel, disinfected tray or disinfected counter top on which to set out all items to be used during tattooing.
- Remove all items to be used from stock containers and place on the clean surface. This will generally include a razor, ink caps, paper towels or tissue, wrapped bandages, tape, tattoo machines and tools needed to make adjustments to machines.
- Pour pigment from stock bottles into disposable caps. Be sure you have enough pigment to complete the tattoo. For large tattoos where it will be necessary to pour more pigment remove extra caps from the stock container and avoid refilling contaminated caps. Protective coverings should be used when handling pigment bottles during tattooing because bottles are easy to contaminate and difficult to disinfect properly.

- Select the needle bars and needle tubes to be used on the patron and open the sterile packages in full view of the patron. This is a good time to explain infection control procedures to the patron. New needles are required for each patron and once used can not be used on another patron.
- Assemble the tattoo machine and make all necessary adjustments. If you plan to change needle bars or make adjustments during tattooing, the modulator knob needs to be covered with a protective covering. Tattoo machines can either be covered or carefully disinfected after tattooing. Power cords do not need to be covered unless there is a chance the cord will come in contact with the injured skin.
- Examine the skin to be tattooed. Do not tattoo any skin which has a rash, pimples, boils, infection or redness because these can be signs of infection which could infect the tattoo. Anyone with visible jaundice (yellowing of the eyes or skin) should not be tattooed because these are signs of potential hepatitis infection.
- Shave the skin to be tattooed using a sterile razor or new disposable razor.
- Apply a germicidal solution to the skin after shaving. If alcohol is used it must be at least 70% ethyl or isopropyl alcohol. Tincture of green soap is only 30% alcohol and is not considered to be germicidal. Other products labeled as skin antiseptics can be used for this purpose.
- Apply stencil or image to the skin. The agent used to transfer the stencils to the skin must be protected from contamination during this process. Use of the same piece of stick deodorant on more than one patron is an unsanitary practice which should not be used. Use of alcohol or tincture of green soap is preferred, but deodorant can be used if cut into pieces for individual use. Reuse of stencils is prohibited. If freehand drawing is used to apply a design to the skin, the pen should be used on only one patron and discarded or given to the patron.
- A thin coat of petroleum jelly can be applied to the skin before tattooing to help control bleeding and ease the cleanup of excess pigment.

DURING TATTOO APPLICATION

- Do not touch eyes, nose, mouth or hair with gloved hands.
- Do not smoke; eat or drink in the tattoo room.
- Check gloves periodically for pinhole tears. Petroleum jelly breaks down latex and gloves need to be changed if they are damaged.

- Be aware of everything you touch during tattoo application including telephones, lamps, clip cord, modular knobs, power supply, pigment bottles, tissue boxes, pens, machine, rubber bands, drawer pulls, cabinetry, etc. Those items are contaminated and must be disinfected. If you have to touch anything which cannot be easily disinfected, use a paper towel, tissue or piece of plastic to hold the item or remove contaminated gloves and put on clean ones first to avoid contamination.
- If more pigment is needed during tattooing, avoid handling pigment bottles with contaminated gloves. Use a paper towel, plastic or other protective covering for handling bottle or change gloves before handling pigment bottles. Do not allow tip of pigment bottle to come in contact with previously used ink. Use of a new ink cap is recommended to prevent accidental contamination of the pigment stock.
- When removing excess pigment from the tattoo use clean water or a antimicrobial soap solution and a clean tissue or paper towel and discard tissue or towel.
- When it is necessary to rinse needles between colors use a new disposable cup of clean water for rinsing. Do not rinse needles in the ultrasound tank. If ultrasound vibration is needed to remove pigments a cup of clean water can be suspended in the tank. Do not blow excess water out of the tube. A clean tissue can be used to blot out excess water. Needle bars and needle tubes removed from the tattoo machine during tattooing should be stored in a container used exclusively for storage of contaminated instruments.

AFTER TATTOO APPLICATION

- Upon completion of the tattoo, the tattooed skin must be cleaned by blotting away excess blood and body fluids with a clean tissue or paper towel. Clean water or a antimicrobial soap solution can be used to wash away excess ink and petroleum jelly. An ointment can then be applied to the skin.
- Bandage the tattoo with a sterile dressing. Non-stick bandages are preferred. Do not wrap a tattoo with plastic. The skin needs air to heal properly and sealing it with plastic can contribute to serious infections. Aftercare instructions can be given to the client before leaving the establishment.
- Put on a clean pair of gloves for disinfection routine.
- Move in a circular manner to avoid recontamination of surfaces.
- Begin with machines. Discard rubber bands, place used bars and tubes in the container of contaminated instruments, disinfect machines and put them away.
- Discard protective covering which may have become contaminated. If reusable gown or lap cloths are used, place them in a plastic bag for laundering. Disposable coverings are preferred.

- Using an EPA registered hospital disinfectant, disinfect all surfaces. Which might have been contaminated during tattoo application including pigment bottles, drawer pulls, cabinetry, telephone, clipcord, power supply, modulator knobs, lamps, chairs, countertops, spray bottles, sinks, ultrasonic tanks, floors, etc.
- At the end of each work day, remove bagged trash, laundry and contaminated instruments from the tattoo room.
- Place contaminated trash in an approved garbage container for pick up or in a medical waste container if a medical waste removal service is used.
- Laundry should be handled as little as possible before washing and should be subjected to a temperature of at least 170° F or washed with chlorine bleach.
- Using puncture resistant gloves and pliers, remove needles from the needle bar and place needles in a puncture resistant sharps container. Autoclaving needle bars before removing needles can help protect against possible infection from needle sticks.
- Clean needle bars and needle tubes in an ultrasound tank filled with detergent solution. Use small brushes to remove any caked on blood or pigment.
- Rebuild needle bars with new needles.
- Bag, date and seal needle bars and needle tubes in packages suitable for autoclaving. Needle bars and tubes to be used on the same patron can be packaged together in the same package.
- Autoclave packaged bars and tubes for sufficient time under sufficient heat and steam pressure to destroy bacterial endospores.

Temperature	Pressure	Time
121C/250F	15 PSI	15 minutes
126C/259F	20 PSI	10 minutes
134C/273F	29.4 PSI	3 minutes

- Test function of autoclave at least once a month using heat sensitive strips in each batch to assure adequate heating and test autoclave at least once a month using a live endospore destruction test.
- Disinfect all items which may have been contaminated as a result of handling and cleaning contaminated instruments.
- Clean autoclave weekly to maintain proper function.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
1993 SESSION
RATIFIED BILL

CHAPTER 670
HOUSE BILL 203

AN ACT TO REQUIRE THAT INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES ENGAGED IN THE PRACTICE OF TATTOOING OBTAIN A PERMIT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1: Article 8 of Chapter 130 A is amended by adding the following new Part to read:

Part 11 Tattooing.

130A-283. Tattooing regulated.

- (a) Definition.- As used in this Part. The term “tattooing” means the inserting of permanent markings or coloration, or the producing of scars upon or under human skin through puncturing by use of a needle or any other method.
- (b) Prohibited Practice. – No person shall engage in tattooing without first obtaining a tattooing permit from the Department. Licensed physicians as well as physicians assistants and nurse practitioners working under the supervision of a licensed physician, who perform tattooing within the normal course of their professional practice are exempt from the requirements of the Part.
- (c) Application. – To obtain a tattooing permit a person must apply to the Department. Upon receipt of the application the Department acting through the local health department shall inspect the premises instruments, utensils, equipment, and procedures of the applicant to determine whether the applicant meets the requirements for a tattooing permit set by the Commission. If the applicant meets these requirements the Department shall issue a permit to the applicant. A permit is valid for one year and must be renewed annually by applying to the Department for a permit renewal.
- (d) Violations—The Department may deny an application for a tattooing permit if an applicant does not meet the requirements sets by the Commission for the permit.

The Department may suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew a permit if it finds that tattooing is being performed in violation of this Part. In accordance with F.S. 130A24(a). Chapter 150B of the General Statutes the Administrative Procedure Act governs appeals concerning the enforcement of the Part.

- (e) Limitation-A permit issued pursuant to this Part does not authorize person to remove a tattoo from the body of a human being. Compliance with this Part is not bar to prosecution for a violation of F.S. 14-400.

Sec. 2.F.S.130A-39(g) reads as rewritten:

- (g) A local board of health may impose a fee for services to be rendered by local health department, except where the imposition of a fee is prohibited by statues or where an employee of the local health department is performing the services as an agent of the State. Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, a local board of health my impose cost-related fees for services performed pursuant to Article 11 of this Chapter, Wastewater Systems and for services performed pursuant to Part 10, Article 8 of this Chapter, Public Swimming Pools, and for services performed pursuant to Part 11 Article 8 of this Chapter Tattooing. Fees shall be based upon a plan recommended by the local health director and approved by the local board of health and the appropriate county board or boards of commissioners. The fees collected under the authority of this subsection are to be deposited to the account of the local health department so that they may be expended for public health purposes in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Acts.

Sec.3. G.S. 130A-29© reads as rewritten:

© The Commission shall adopt rules:

- (1) Repealed by Session Laws 1983 (Regular Session 1984), c.1022, s.5
- (2) Establishing standards for approving sewage treatment devices and holding tanks for toilets as provided in G.S. 75A5 (o), G.S 75A6(o).
- (3) Establishing specification for sanitary privies for schools where water-carried sewage facilities are unavailable as provided in G.S.115C522;
- (4) Establishing requirements for the sanitation of local confinement facilities as provided in Part 2 of Article 10 of Chapter 153 A of the General Statues.
- (5) Repealed by Session Laws 1989 (Regular Session 1990), c.1075, s.1.
- (6) Requiring proper treatment and disposal of sewage and other waste from chemical and portable toilets.
- (7) Establishing statewide health outcome objectives and delivery standards.
- (8) Establishing permit requirements for the sanitation of premises, utensils, equipment, and procedures to be used by a person engaged in tattooing as provided in Part 11 of Article 8 of this Chapter.

Sec. 4 Sections 1 and 2 of this act become effective January 1 1995. The remainder of this act is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 5th day of July 1994

Dennis Wicker
Dennis Wicker
President of the Senate

Daniel Blue Jr.
Daniel Blue Jr.
Speaker of the House of Representatives

GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS IN TATTOO ESTABLISHMENTS

EQUIPMENT

- 1. Sterilized or new disposable razors used for each patron.**
- 2. Separate or disposable styptic for each patron.**
- 3. Single-service individual containers of dye or ink used for each patron.**
- 4. Dye or ink container discarded immediately after completing work on each patron (includes any dye or ink in which the needles are dipped). Dyes and inks in which needles are dipped must be accessed from a container designated for a single patron.**
- 5. Only disposable needles shall be used, and a new needle or set of needles shall be used on each patron.**
- 6. All sharps shall be stored and disposed of in containers that are rigid, puncture-resistant; and leak-proof when upright. During use, containers for contaminated sharps shall be easily accessible to personnel and located as close as is feasible to the immediate area where sharps are used or can be reasonable anticipated to be found. Such containers shall be replaced routinely and not be allowed to overfill.**
- 7. Contaminated needles other contaminated sharps shall not be bent recapped or removed except through the use of a mechanical device or a one handed technique. Shearing or breaking of contaminated needles is prohibited.**
- 8. Protective-coverings, such as plastic wrap, aluminum foil, or imperviously-backed absorbent paper used to cover equipment and environmental surfaces, shall be removed and replaced as soon as feasible when they become overly contaminated or at the end of the work shift if they may have become contaminated during the shift.**
- 9. All equipment and environmental and working surfaces shall be cleaned and decontaminated after contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.**

GLOVES/HANDWASHING

- 10. Access to laboratories restricted to the tattoo artist.**
- 11. Antiseptic soap, germicidal solution, individual hand scrub brushes and fingernail files or orange sticks shall be available to each artist.**
- 12. Hand washing between each patron is mandatory. Gloves must be changed between each patron and whenever contaminated.**

13. **Tattoo artist shall wear clean disposable latex gloves and a clean or disposable gown or coat or a clean or disposable lap cloth while engaging in tattooing.**
14. **Hands and any other skin must be washed with soap and water, or mucous membranes flushed with water, immediately or as soon as feasible following contact of such body areas with blood or other potentially infectious materials.**
15. **Latex gloves shall be worn when exposure to blood, body fluids, mucous membranes or non-intact skin is anticipated.**
16. **Latex gloves shall be worn when touching surfaces or handling items which may be contaminated with blood or body fluids.**
17. **Gloves must be removed from the cuff, turning the glove in an “inside-out” fashion with the fingertips down and discarding into a trash can which contains a plastic liner.**
18. **Gloves shall be replaced as soon as practical when contaminated or as soon as feasible if they are torn, punctured or when their ability to function as a barrier is compromised.**
19. **Gloves shall not be washed or decontaminated for re-use.**

PREMISES

20. **No use of tobacco or smoking materials, eating of food or drinking of beverages in tattooing room by the tattoo artist.**
21. **Contaminated laundry shall be handled as little as possible and when handled gloves shall be worn.**
22. **Applying cosmetics, lip balm and handling contact lenses are prohibited in work areas where there is a reasonable likelihood of occupational exposure.**
23. **Contaminated work surfaces shall be decontaminated with an appropriate disinfectant after completion of procedures, immediately or as soon as feasible when surfaces are overly contaminated or after any spill of blood or other potentially infectious materials, and at the end of the work shift if the surface may have become contaminated since the last cleaning.**
24. **Broken glassware which may be contaminated shall not be picked up directly with the hands. It shall be cleaned up using mechanical means such as a brush and dust pan, tongs or forceps.**

14-400. (Effective until January 1, 1995) Tattooing prohibited

It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to tattoo the arm, limb or any part of the body of any other person under 18 years of age. Anyone violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed five hundred (\$500.00) imprisonment for not more than six months, or both.(1937, c. 112, ss. 1, 2; 1969, c. 1224, s. 8; 1971, c. 1231, s 1.)

Section Sec Out Twice-The section above is effective until January 1, 1995. For the section as amended effective January 1, 1995 see the following section, also numbered 14-400.

14-400 (Effective January 1,1995) Tattooing prohibited.

It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to tattoo the arm, limb, or any part of the body of any other person under 18 years of age. Anyone violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor, (1937, c 112, ss, 1,2; 1969, c. 1224, s. 8; 1971, c. 1231, s. 1; 1993, c 539, s 269)

Section Set Out Twice- The section above is effective January 1, 1995 for the section as in effect until January 1, 1995, see the preceding section, also numbered 14-400.

Editor's note- Sessions Laws 1993, c.539, which amended this section in a 1359, provided "Prosecutions for offenses committed before the effective date of this act are not abated or affected by this act, and the statured that would be applicable but for this act remain applicable to these prosecutions. Section 1359 of Chapter 539 provides that the act becomes effective January 1, 1995.

Effect of Amendments-The 1993 amendment effective January 1, 1995, and applicable to offenses occurring on or after that date, substituted "Class 2 misdemeanor" for misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed fine hundred dollars (\$500.00) imprisonment for not more that six months, or both.