

PENNSYLVANIA COSMETOLOGY CONTENT OUTLINES

Current as of October 2024

THEORY EXAM CONTENT OUTLINES

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Note: State-specific content is referenced to the Regulations, Act 86 of 1933, and Act 48 of 1993 (Schedule of Civil Penalties) which can be found on the [Board's website](#), and does not reflect the temporary waivers in effect due to the Governor's emergency declaration related to COVID-19.

THEORY/PROCEDURAL SKILLS EXAM CONTENT OUTLINES

CONTENT OUTLINE — COSMETOLOGIST

110 scored items (100 general, 10 state)

25 pretest items (20 general, 5 state)

I. Rules, Regulations, and Safety (27% to 32%)

- A. Safety
 - 1. Draping
 - a. Sanitation
 - b. Procedures
 - 2. Prevention of salon accidents
 - a. Maintaining safe working conditions
 - b. Labeling
 - c. Storing chemical products
 - d. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)/ Safety Data Sheets (SDS)
 - e. Implements/tools
 - 3. First aid/OSHA
 - a. Handling blood-contaminated tools
 - b. Disposing of blood-contaminated objects
- B. Sanitation and disinfection
 - 1. Personal hygiene
 - 2. Implements and tools
 - 3. Single-use items
 - 4. Dispensing products
 - 5. Identifying infectious disease/referral
 - 6. Work surfaces
- C. Client contact & communication
 - 1. Ethics
 - 2. Consultation
 - 3. Record keeping

II. Trichology (5% to 8%)

- A. Structure of hair
- B. Hair type
 - 1. Pigment
 - 2. Wave pattern/follicle formation
 - 3. Texture
 - 4. Density
 - 5. Porosity
 - 6. Elasticity
- C. Hair growth phases

III. Shampoo / Scalp Analysis (4% to 6%)

- A. Purpose and chemistry of shampoos and conditioners
- B. Scalp conditioning services
- C. Procedures
- D. Scalp massage
- E. Scalp analysis/Disorders and diseases of scalp
- F. Procedures for clients with special needs

IV. Styling (5% to 8%)

- A. Determination of appropriate hair style
 - 1. Hair texture and types/Hair analysis
 - 2. Hair length
 - 3. Face shape
- B. Hair design techniques
 - 1. Wet styling
 - 2. Comb out
 - 3. Blow-dry styling
- C. Thermal styling
 - 1. Special considerations
 - 2. Tools
 - 3. Procedures
- D. Artificial hair
- E. Products and styling aids

V. Haircutting (9% to 11%)

- A. Shaping and cutting principles
- B. Determination of appropriate haircut
 - 1. Length, structure, and conditions
 - 2. Establishing guideline
- C. Blunt/one-length, graduated, and layered haircuts
 - 1. Elevation
 - 2. Sectioning/parting
- D. Thinning/texturizing
- E. Using a razor
- F. Using clippers/trimmers
- G. Using scissors/shears

VI. Haircolor & Lightening (13% to 15%)

- A. Scalp and hair conditions that preclude haircoloring or lightening services
- B. Effects of hair structure and natural hair color on tone and intensity of outcome
- C. Preparing hair to receive haircoloring or lightening services
 - 1. Patch test
 - 2. Strand test
- D. Determining color level and tone/color theory
- E. Products
- F. Tools, implements, and materials
- G. Formulation

- H. Application, processing, and removal
 - I. Highlighting techniques
 - J. Corrective color
- K. Special considerations
 - 1. Overprocessed or damaged hair
 - 2. Hair with metallic-based, compound-based, or mineral-based color

VII. Permanent Waving (12% to 14%)

- A. Scalp and hair conditions that preclude permanent waving services
- B. Effects of hair structure and condition on desired outcome
- C. Preparation
- D. Products
- E. Tools, implements, and materials
- F. Applying, processing, and removing products
- G. Techniques of wrapping hair with rods and other tools
- H. Special considerations
 - 1. Over processed or damaged hair
 - 2. Hair with metallic-based, compound-based, or mineral-based color
 - 3. Test curl

VIII. Chemical Straightening and Relaxing (12% to 14%)

- A. Scalp and hair conditions that preclude chemical straightening and relaxing services
- B. Effects of hair structure on desired outcome
- C. Preparation
- D. Products
- E. Tools, implements, and procedures
- F. Applying, processing, and removing products for chemical straightening and relaxing
- G. Curl reformation/soft curl perm
- H. Keratin-based smoothing treatments
 - I. Special considerations
 - 1. Overprocessed or damaged hair
 - 2. Hair with metallic-based, compound-based, or mineral-based color
 - 3. Strand test

IX. Esthetics (5% to 7%)

- A. Skin conditions that preclude esthetic services
- B. Skin conditions that benefit from esthetic services
- C. Skin diseases and disorders
- D. Special procedures for skin services on sensitive, acne-prone, or aging skin

- E. Preparation
- F. Tools, implements, and materials
- G. Facial services
 - 1. Purpose and procedures
 - 2. Types of products
 - 3. Applying and removing products
 - 4. Using electric skin devices and equipment
 - 5. Extractions
- H. Massage manipulations
 - I. Makeup application
 - 1. Procedures
 - 2. Products
 - 3. Removal
 - 4. Corrective makeup
 - 5. Color theory
 - J. Hair removal
 - 1. Waxing and other depilatory techniques
 - 2. Eyebrow shaping with tweezers

X. Nails (5% to 7%)

- A. Nail structure
- B. Recognizing nail disorders and diseases
- C. Clients' health conditions that preclude service
- D. Massage
- E. Manicure/Pedicure
 - 1. Products
 - 2. Procedures
 - 3. Tools, implements, and materials
- F. Applying, maintaining, and removing nail enhancements/artificial nails

CONTENT OUTLINE — NAIL TECHNICIAN (MANICURIST)

60 scored items (50 general, 10 state)

15 pretest items (10 general, 5 state)

I. Rules, Regulations, and Safety (30% to 40%)

- A. Safety
 - 1. Preparation
 - a. Sanitation
 - b. Procedures
 - 2. Prevention of salon accidents
 - a. Maintaining safe working conditions
 - b. Labeling
 - c. Storing chemical products
 - d. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)/
Safety Data Sheets (SDS)
- B. Sanitation and disinfection
 - 1. Personal hygiene
 - 2. Implements and tools
 - 3. Single-use items
 - 4. Applying creams
 - 5. Prevention of infectious disease
 - 6. Cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces
 - 7. Cleaning and disinfecting whirlpool pedicure
foot tubs and filters
- C. Client contact
 - 1. Ethics
 - 2. Communication
 - 3. Record keeping

II. Nail Structure and Nail Analysis (15% to 20%)

- A. Nail structure
- B. Nail conditions that preclude treatment
- C. Health conditions that preclude treatment

III. Professional Services (30% to 40%)

- A. Massage
 - 1. Muscles, bones, and nerves of fingers/hands/
arms
 - 2. Muscles, bones, and nerves of toes/feet/legs
- B. Manicure/Pedicure
 - 1. Products
 - a. Disposal
 - b. Handling
 - 2. Procedures
 - 3. Tools, equipment, and materials
 - 4. Preparing hands and feet for services
 - 5. Conditioning nails and cuticles
 - 6. Basic manicure/pedicure
 - a. Grooming and trimming cuticles
 - b. Buffing
 - c. Shaping
 - d. Polishing

IV. Nail Enhancements (12% to 18%)

- A. Application and removal
 - 1. Nail tips
 - 2. Gels and acrylics
- B. Tools, equipment, and products
- C. Maintenance
- D. Nail Repair

CONTENT OUTLINE — ESTHETICIAN

85 scored items (75 general, 10 state)

15 pretest items (10 general, 5 state)

I. Rules, Regulations, and Safety (30% to 40%)

- A. Safety
 - 1. Draping
 - a. Sanitation
 - b. Procedures
 - 2. Prevention of salon accidents
 - a. Maintaining safe working conditions
 - b. Labeling
 - c. Storing chemical products
 - d. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)/ Safety Data Sheets (SDS)
 - e. Thermal/electrical appliances
 - 3. First aid/OSHA
 - a. Handling blood-contaminated tools
 - b. Disposing of blood-contaminated objects
- B. Sanitation and disinfection
 - 1. Personal hygiene
 - 2. Sanitation and disinfection of implements and tools
 - 3. Single use items
 - 4. Product application
 - 5. Sanitation and disinfection of work surfaces
- C. Predisposition/Patch Tests
- D. Client contact
 - 1. Ethics
 - 2. Communication
 - 3. Record keeping

II. Esthetic Science and Skin Analysis (15% to 20%)

- A. Skin structure and anatomy
- B. Purpose of skin analysis
- C. Skin conditions that benefit from services
- D. Skin conditions that preclude skin services
- E. Skin disorders and diseases

III. Facials (20% to 25%)

- A. Application, removal, and purpose of products
 - 1. Lotions and creams
 - 2. Exfoliants
 - 3. Masks/packs
- B. Tools, implements, materials, and equipment
- C. Facial procedures
- D. Special considerations
 - 1. Microdermabrasion
 - 2. Disincrustation
 - 3. Aromatherapy
- E. Massage/Anatomy

IV. Hair Removal (16% to 20%)

- A. Tweezing
- B. Waxing
- C. Tools, implements, materials, and equipment

V. Makeup (10% to 15%)

- A. Purpose
- B. Types of cosmetics
- C. Brushes and other implements, tools, and materials
- D. Color theory
- E. Application and removal procedures
- F. Corrective makeup
- G. Application and removal of artificial eyelashes

VI. Electricity and Electrotherapy (5% to 10%)

- A. Galvanic current
- B. High frequency current
- C. Light therapy

CONTENT OUTLINE — TEACHER

60 scored items (50 general, 10 state)

15 pretest items (10 general, 5 state)

I. Teaching Methods (14%)

II. Assessment Tools (16%)

- A. Why
- B. How
- C. What

III. Determining Effective Instruction (36%)

- A. Establishing goals and objectives
- B. Determining essential knowledge, skills, and abilities
- C. Understanding outcomes

IV. The Learner and Learning Environment (34%)

- A. Learning styles
- B. Individual differences
- C. Motivation
- D. Record keeping
- E. Classroom arrangement

CONTENT OUTLINE — NATURAL HAIR BRAIDER

60 scored items (50 general, 10 state)
15 pretest items (10 general, 5 state)

I. Rules, Regulations, and Safety (30-40%)

- A. Safety
 - 1. Draping
 - a. Sanitation
 - b. Procedures
 - 2. Prevention of salon accidents
 - a. Maintaining safe working conditions
 - b. Labeling
 - c. Storing chemical products
 - d. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)/
Safety Data Sheets (SDS)
 - e. Thermal appliances
 - 3. First aid/OSHA
 - a. Handling blood-contaminated tools
 - b. Disposing of blood-contaminated
objects
- B. Sanitation and disinfection
 - 1. Personal hygiene
 - 2. Implements and tools
 - 3. Single-use items
 - 4. Applying products
 - 5. Prevention of infectious disease
 - 6. Cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces

II. Client Consultation/Contact (8-12%)

- A. Ethics
- B. Communication/Consultation
- C. Record keeping
- D. Analysis to provide proper service
 - 1. Face shape and structure
 - 2. Scalp and hair analysis

III. Physiology and Trichology (18-24%)

- A. Diseases and disorders of hair and scalp
- B. Anatomy of the head and neck
- C. Hair structure and growth cycle
 - 1. Hair type and wave pattern

IV. Scalp and Hair Care (10-14%)

- A. Product knowledge
- B. Scalp conditioning services

V. Braiding (12-16%)

- A. Purpose, definitions, and techniques
- B. Tools, implements, materials, and products
- C. Placement, design, and direction
- D. Using extensions
- E. Maintenance
- F. Finishing techniques

VI. Lock Style and Procedures (10-14%)

- A. Purpose, definitions, and techniques
 - 1. Comb technique
 - 2. Palm roll
- B. Tools, implements, materials, and products
- C. Placement, design, and direction
- D. Developmental phases
- E. Maintenance