



TACIR INSIGHT

TENNESSEE ADVISORY COMMISSION ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS
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COSMETOLOGY AND BARBERING IN TENNESSEE: AN IMPORTANT, GROWING, AND INCREASINGLY SPECIALIZED INDUSTRY

Background

Most people across diverse demographics and communities interact with the cosmetology and barbering industry, whether that be a regular haircut or an occasional pedicure. Nationwide, the demand for basic hair, nail, and skincare services, along with specialty services, is increasing. Public Chapter 102, Acts of 2025, directed the commission to study the economic effect of the cosmetology and barbering professions in Tennessee, including the revenue generated through services provided and retail sales, the number of jobs generated by the professions, training and education opportunities, and potential barriers to entry into the industry.

Findings and Recommendations

The commission finds two important nationwide trends in the industry: overall growth and specialization. Tennessee is seeing a trend similar to the national trend of growth in the cosmetology and barbering industry:

- The Professional Beauty Association, a national organization that tracks data for the salon industry, estimated that the salon industry in Tennessee generated \$1.8 billion in total revenue in 2022, a 38.5% increase from \$1.3 billion in 2019.
- Data provided by state agencies show that overall revenue for the cosmetology and barbering industry—including business gross sales, state and local taxes, and license fees—increased 35.6% between fiscal years 2018-19 and 2023-24, totaling an estimated \$1.1 billion in fiscal year 2023-24.
- In addition to revenue, the number of barber shops, beauty salons, employees, and active licenses and wages have all increased in Tennessee.

Specialization has also been a trend within the cosmetology and barbering industry. Although Tennessee has adapted by establishing discipline-specific licenses, the state has not established a hair styling license, which would provide an option requiring less time and money for individuals interested in only providing natural and chemical hair services but not the other services included in the barbering and cosmetology licenses. **The commission recommends that the state establish a hair styling license focused only on hair-related services that requires fewer hours of education than the existing cosmetology and master barber licenses.**

See TACIR's full report at the following link for additional information: <https://www.tn.gov/tacir/tacir-publications.html>.