

Extra resource 4



Skin penetration

Tattoos, body piercing, branding, scarification, dermal anchors and three dimensional art or body modifications such as beading are all forms of body art.

Most people go to established studios who are required by law to work with high standards of infection control to reduce the spread of infectious diseases such as hepatitis B, C and HIV/AIDS. Others may place their health at risk by going to amateurs or cheaper options overseas.



WA establishments are required to notify the local government in which they intend to operate in and must comply with the [Health \(Skin Penetration Procedures\) Regulations 1998](#) (External link) (External link) and Code of Practice for Skin Penetration Procedures. The Regulations and Guidelines outline minimum standards of infection control such as basic hygiene, disinfection and sterilisation requirements.

Before undergoing any form of body art you are encouraged to read the [Health body art \(PDF 907KB\)](#) brochure so you know the right questions to ask your tattooist or piercer, and what to look out for.

Making a complaint

If you have concerns about a particular skin penetration establishment and their level of infection control you are encouraged to raise your concerns with the local government Environmental Health Officer in which the establishment is located. The Environmental Health Officer has

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the power to inspect the establishment and enforce the Skin Penetration Regulations. Refer to the [Western Australia Local Government Authority website](#) (External link) for a list of local government contact details.

Age limit for body piercing, tattooing and branding

The [Department for Child Protection](#) (External link)(DCP) is the State Government agency responsible for setting age limits for body piercing, tattooing and branding.

An age limit has been established in legislation for tattooing and branding (18 years of age or with parent or guardian consent). The penalty for tattooing a minor could be as much as \$12,000 and includes imprisonment for one year.

New age limits have been established for body piercing. Please contact the [Department for Child Protection](#) (External link) for updated information relating to these new age limits.

If you have concerns with an operator piercing a minor please contact the [DCP](#) (External link) or refer to their website for up-to-date information on age limits.

Industry guidelines and legislation

- [Code of Practice for Skin Penetration Procedures \(PDF 325KB\) Health \(Skin Penetration Procedures\) Regulations 1998](#) (External link) (External link)
- [Infection Control Guidelines for the Prevention of Transmission of Infectious Diseases in the Health Care Setting](#) (External link)

Fact sheets

For skin penetration operators

- [General Requirements for Operating a Skin Penetration Establishment \(PDF 258KB\)](#)
- [Advice for the Beauty Therapy Industry \(PDF 241KB\)](#)
- [Body Art Equipment Cleaning, Disinfecting & Sterilising Schedule \(PDF 105KB\)](#)
- [Cut Throat Razors \(PDF 133KB\)](#)



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- [Guide for Cleaning and Disinfection of Reusable Instruments and Equipment \(PDF 179KB\)](#)
- [Henna Tattooing \(PDF 135KB\)](#)
- [Massage Therapy \(PDF 191KB\)](#)

For public

- [Health body art \(PDF 907KB\)](#)
- [Healthy Body Art booklet \(PDF 525KB\)](#)
- [Body Art and Piercing Sites - Potential Risks \(PDF 108KB\)](#)
- [Methyl Methacrylate \(MMA\) \(PDF 135KB\)](#)
- [Use of Ear Piercing Guns \(PDF 137KB\)](#)

For further information contact the Environmental Health Directorate on (08) 9388 4999 or email ehinfo@health.wa.gov.au