

Opening a Personal Service Facility in Alberta

Personal service facilities include those that offer hairstyling, esthetics, tattooing, piercing, electrolysis and more. The number of facilities opening across Alberta continues to grow. Those already operating, continue to expand the services they offer.

A successful business is one that is committed to the health and safety of its patrons. These facilities are expected to meet the legislated requirements set out in Alberta's Public Health Act, the Personal Services Regulation and the five related Health Standards and Guidelines.

STEP 1: IF YOU CAN... SUBMIT YOUR PLAN

Before you begin construction of your new facility, submit architect or hand-drawn plans for review by the Environmental Health Officer/Public Health Inspector (EHO/PHI). This will prevent adding costly structural components to the facility after initial construction is completed or after the studio has been opened.



Plans should:

- a) show the location of client service areas and any related equipment
- b) illustrate the location of storage areas, washrooms and the designated instrument reprocessing area
- c) provide information on the material finishes of floors, walls, counter tops and ceilings
- d) provide information on lighting and ventilation
- e) indicate the source of potable water supply and the designated disposal routes for both sewage and waste from client services

STEP 2: THE PLAN LOOKS FINE... LET'S TALK DESIGN

Work Surfaces and Client Contact Surfaces

All work surfaces and client contact surfaces must be smooth, easy to clean with tight joints, or covered with non-absorbent material. This will ensure that the surfaces will not absorb moisture and will allow for easy disinfection of the surfaces between clients. These surfaces can include client chairs, arm rests, counter tops and instrument trays.

Floors and Walls

Floors and walls in the client service areas must be constructed of non-absorbent, durable materials, be smooth and free of cracks. Examples of areas where this type of finish is required include:

- a) areas where client services are performed
- b) areas where equipment is cleaned
- c) washrooms containing water closets, lavatories, or showers
- d) garbage storage areas or rooms
- e) equipment storage areas

NOTE: Floors in client waiting or reception areas are not required to be made of non-absorbent materials. For example, carpet is acceptable in the reception area.



Storage Space

Ensure that adequate storage space exists in the facility. Inadequate storage space leads to clutter, disorganization and ultimately, a facility that is hard to keep clean.

Storage spaces should also be designed so that clean, ready-to-use instruments and equipment are kept separate from those that are dirty. Ready-to-use items should also be stored in a manner that prevents contamination.

When deciding how much storage space you will need, it is highly recommended that adequate space is provided for:

- a) storing staff personal effects, including their food in a suitable location
- b) shelving units used for extra client service and facility supplies
- c) storing cleaning equipment and chemicals
- d) drawers and compartments at the workstations
- e) storing client records and information



Handling of Waste

Before you begin, you must be aware of how waste material, from general trash to sharps disposal containers, will be removed from the facility. You will need to confirm the location of your waste disposal bin and pick-up times.

Lighting and Ventilation

Lighting in your facility must allow for operators to successfully perform their services and duties. The facility lighting must allow an operator to spot skin or hair conditions that may be unsuitable for service. Lighting must also allow for proper cleaning.

Ventilation must be adequate to prevent airborne hazards from chemical and biological sources in the facility. Your facility's ventilation should be professionally designed to promote the removal of air from the client service areas.

Sink requirements

The number of sinks required in your facility will depend on the type of services offered.

Every personal service facility must have a washroom that is readily accessible for client and staff use. This washroom must always have a sink associated with it. If only low-risk personal services such as hairstyling, barbering, tanning and massage are being offered, then this sink may also be used for washing hands before client services.

Except for facilities offering only low-risk personal services, all personal service facilities must have at least one stainless-steel sink, readily accessible to the work area, for handwashing and instrument cleaning. It is not acceptable or sanitary to use a washroom sink to clean instruments. (See Figure A)

Facilities that will be reprocessing (cleaning and sterilizing) critical instruments such as tattoo tubes, tattoo needle bars, piercing clamps and jewelry require an additional separate, designated stainless steel sink. Preferably a two-compartment sink to facilitate cleaning and rinsing, this sink must not be located in the client service area. (See Figure 2)

In general, all sinks must be equipped with hot and cold running potable water and permanently installed in commercial applications. Temporary sinks will not be permitted in permanent personal service settings. Sinks must have soap and a sanitary means to dry hands such as paper towels, single-use towels or hand driers.



Figure 1. Stainless Steel Sink for Handwashing and Instrument Reprocessing

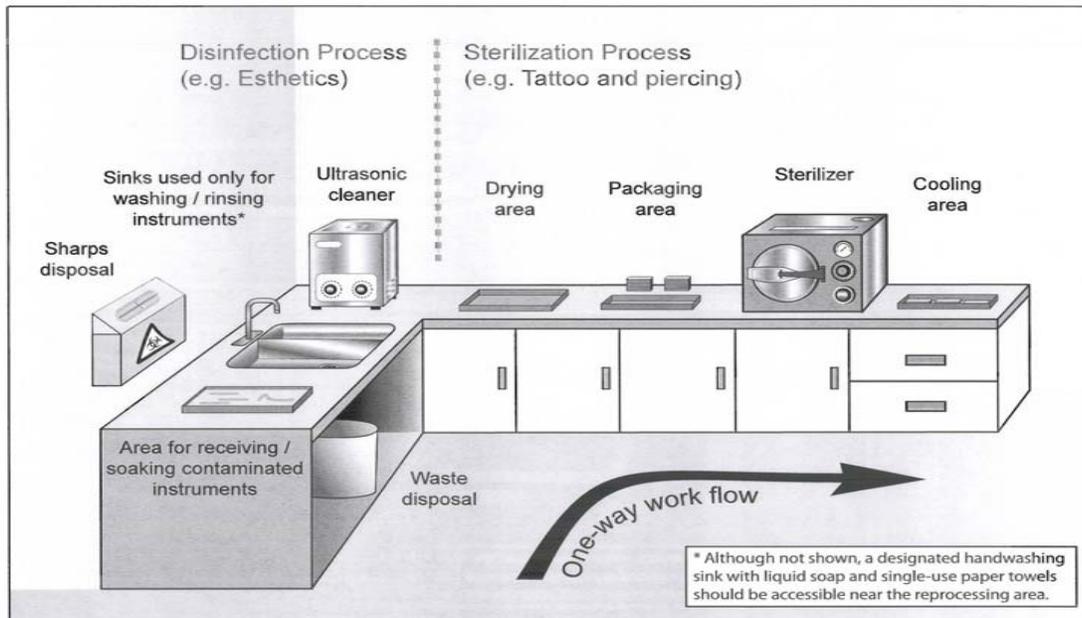


Figure 2. Additional Separate Designated Sink Area for Critical Instrument Reprocessing

STEP 3: DESIGN LOOKS GREAT... GET READY TO OPERATE

A well-designed facility is paramount to providing a safe experience for your clients. Now that your facility is constructed properly, you will need to get the products you require for performing safe procedures and general cleaning, disinfection and sterilization.

Equipment Standards

Operators are expected to choose products that comply with federal cosmetic and disinfectant regulations. This can include, but is not limited to, tattoo ink, eyelash glue, lash and brow tinting agents and disinfectants.

An EHO/PHI, who finds disinfectants and/or cosmetics that do not comply with Health Canada's guidelines, may restrict its use. To prevent this, consult with Health Canada or ask your EHO/PHI for advice on products and disinfectants before you purchase large quantities.

Disinfectants

Purchasing the right disinfectants can be confusing for operators. Disinfectants come in varying levels and are applied according to the type of surface or instrument in question. It is a good idea to call your EHO/PHI to discuss what disinfectants are required for your facility's surfaces and instruments.

All disinfectants must have a Drug Identification Number (DIN).

Low-level disinfectants

Low-level disinfectants will have a DIN and state the word "disinfectant" on the label. Low-level disinfectants are suitable for surfaces and equipment that would only, at most, come into contact with client's intact skin. This level of disinfectant is easy to find in retail stores.

Intermediate level disinfectants

Intermediate-level disinfectants will have a DIN, state the word "disinfectant" and will also have a "TB", "Tuberculocidal" or "Mycobacterium" claim on the label. These disinfectants are required for riskier surfaces and equipment such as those that may come into contact with non-intact skin. These disinfectants are harder to find in retail stores, but are readily available from cosmetic, dental or medical supply companies.

High-level disinfectants

High-level disinfectants will have a DIN and also carry the "TB", "Tuberculocidal" or "Mycobacterium" claim. These disinfectants will often indicate on their label that they are a high-

level disinfectant or a chemical sterilant. While stronger is not always better, high-level disinfectants can take the place of intermediate-level disinfectants in your studio.

Cleaning and Reprocessing of Equipment

The following are some things to consider when cleaning instruments and surfaces in your facility.

- If you plan to soak instruments in disinfectant, do you have appropriate containers?
- Are disposable gloves and appropriate scrubbing tools available for cleaning instruments?
- How will reusable linens be laundered between client services?
- Are there adequate amounts of single use, disposable items available so that operators are not tempted to reuse these items?
- Is there an adequate supply of gloves, aprons, masks and other personal protective equipment?

Sterilization

Items that puncture the skin and enter the sterile tissues of the body are required to be sterile at the point of use. Examples of facilities where sterile instruments are required include those offering tattooing, body piercing, ear piercing, electrolysis and dermal rolling.

Sterilization is a multi-faceted process that includes proper cleaning, packaging, monitoring, transport and storage of devices. Not all sterilizers are created equally and may not be suitable for the intended use of the instruments.

Some considerations for sterilization approval are as follows:

- The sterilizer must be approved and suitable for the type of instruments used.
- Proper chemical, biological and physical monitoring must be conducted.
- Records for sterilization for all client services must be available.
- Monthly spore tests must be sent to an approved laboratory and results forwarded to the local Environmental Public Health office.
- A protocol should be available outlining what to do if sterilization monitoring fails.

It is in your best interest to call your EHO/PHI before you purchase a sterilizer or perform sterilization.

For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health office.

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Calgary Main Office
Lethbridge Main Office*

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403-943-2295
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