

Issues Faced by the AAPI Community in the Kentucky Board of Cosmetology

Issues and Recommendations:

- 1) The current licensing test is only offered in English. Given the majority of nail technicians are from the AAPI community, we recommend tests in Cambodian, Vietnamese, and other languages.
- 2) The current policy restricts retakes – three failures lead to a 6-month ban, taking eighty hour Brush Up Course and two more failures result in a three-year ban. We suggest removing the cap on test retakes to allow for continuous learning and perseverance.
- 3) The board's responsiveness is sluggish, often requiring legal intervention for a response. We advise establishing a more transparent communication channel that promptly addresses the public's concerns.
- 4) Jason Back, a male inspector, lacks a cosmetology background. His approach to inspections is often abrupt and detrimental, shutting down businesses. There's a need for proper training for inspectors and a more humane approach to inspections.
- 5) Salons are frequently shut down without prior warning. We believe a notice system that provides warnings and directions for improvement would be more constructive than immediate shutdowns.
- 6) Current fines range from \$10,000 to \$25,000 and are only accepted via money order or cashier's check. This system lacks transparency and often results in confusion. We suggest an overhaul to the fine system with reduced amounts and a more transparent payment system.

Overall Impact:

Many small business nail salons are either shut down by the board or face a shortage of licensed nail technicians due to these barriers. Furthermore, skilled technicians from other states are reluctant to work in Kentucky because of the need to retake tests and retrain. The lack of prompt responses and clarity from the board exacerbates these issues.

Legislative Actions:

- 1) Include multiple languages in tests and remove the cap on retakes.
- 2) Establish a public forum or a helpline where concerns are addressed promptly.
- 3) Ensure inspectors have adequate knowledge of cosmetology and are trained to handle inspections tactfully.
- 4) Before any punitive actions, salons should be given a chance to rectify their shortcomings.
- 5) Fines should be reasonable, and multiple payment methods, including electronic transactions, should be accepted for better transparency.

By addressing these concerns, legislators can facilitate a smoother workflow for nail salon businesses and ensure that individuals, irrespective of their language proficiency, can pursue their careers without undue hindrances.