

Information Sheet

Information about Applying for a Licence to Use Laser Apparatus for Cosmetic Purposes

The Radiation Safety Act 1999 requires all persons who operate laser apparatus (class 4 lasers that could reasonably be used to carry out a diagnostic, therapeutic or cosmetic procedure) to hold a use licence. Use licences are granted by the Director-General of the Department of Health (*chief executive*). Only an individual may apply for a use licence.

Use licences may be issued only to persons who have appropriate skills and knowledge of radiation safety and protection, as well as expertise in the use of the laser apparatus. This information sheet has been developed as a guideline to assist persons who wish to apply for a licence authorising the use of laser apparatus for cosmetic purposes in Queensland.

Who may apply for a licence?

Applicants who may seek a licence to use laser apparatus for cosmetic purposes typically include medical practitioners, registered nurses, enrolled nurses and beauty therapists.

Applicants may apply for a licence allowing them to conduct the following cosmetic procedures using laser apparatus:

- Hair removal
- Skin rejuvenation
- Tattoo removal
- Superficial vascular lesion treatment
- Superficial pigmented lesion treatment

To ensure clients are protected by well informed medical advice, and to ensure use licensees are informed by appropriate medical guidance, all licensees are required to observe the advice of a 'knowledgeable medical practitioner' to reduce to a minimum any possible adverse health outcomes for the client as a result of the cosmetic procedure. This 'knowledgeable medical practitioner' must be registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and be familiar with the biological effects of the radiation from the laser apparatus to be, or being used during the cosmetic procedure. The advice should be in written form and provided by the client to the licensee prior to commencement of the procedure.

Additionally, for all procedures other than hair removal, this knowledgeable medical practitioner must provide advice in writing and the advice must specifically refer to the type of cosmetic procedure that the client is seeking to commence. If the cosmetic procedure being requested by the client is for superficial pigmented lesion reduction or removal, a 'knowledgeable medical practitioner' must also examine the client's pigmented lesion before commencement of the procedure.

What is a 'Trainee Licence'?

Persons who have satisfactorily completed approved radiation safety training, but who have not commenced or completed their practical training may be issued a cosmetic laser trainee licence so that they may perform procedures on another person for the purpose of their practical training. Before commencing practical training, a person is required to hold an appropriate use licence issued under the Radiation Safety Act 1999. A use licence granted for training purposes is colloquially known as a 'trainee licence'.

A trainee licence states that the use of laser apparatus is to be conducted in the presence and under the supervision of a person who holds an unrestricted licence to use laser apparatus for the type of procedure proposed to be undertaken. This trainee licence will enable persons to gain practical competency and experience in the range of laser procedures permitted by the licence.

The trainee licence will help ensure protection of the client and staff whilst the trainee is participating in a learning environment. The intent of granting this type of licence is that the trainee may commence a defined program of work to become as competent as possible in the conduct of the cosmetic procedures nominated in the licence.

Eligibility for a licence

SCENARIO 1

For applicants who intend to gain their practical training in Queensland, there is a two-step process in relation to gaining a full licence to use laser apparatus for cosmetic purposes.

Step 1 - Trainee licence

As the chief executive recognises that applicants with known qualifications, experience and other attributes are typically successful in being granted licences, a 'fast-track' licensing arrangement for such applicants has been developed.

Other applicants who may not satisfy the criteria for the 'fast-track' arrangement will need to complete a standard form (Form 2) to apply for their licences.

- **'Fast-track' application (Form 3) process**

The Form 3 - *Application for a licence to use laser apparatus – cosmetic purposes* application form is intended for electronic completion to facilitate fast-tracking of use licence applications made by the majority of cosmetic laser applicants. If an applicant is unable to complete any aspect of this form using the selections available within the form, the applicant should complete Form 2 instead.

It is important that all the required evidence and supporting information is included with the application to ensure the application is managed within the target timeframes. It is intended that by using this form, successful applicants should receive their licence within 10 working days. It should be noted that hand written applications will not be dealt with via the fast track route.

- **Application for a licence to use a radiation source (Form 2) process**

The Form 2 - *Application for a licence to use a radiation source* application is designed for use by persons who do not meet the very specific criteria detailed in the 'fast-track' Form 3 application form. It is important to clearly identify the procedures the applicant is seeking a licence to undertake.

Applicants will be considered eligible for a trainee licence if, in addition to completing the application form and providing the appropriate application and licence fees, they:

1. submit verification that they have satisfactorily completed a course in radiation safety which has been endorsed for this purpose by the department; **and**
2. provide a copy of their qualifications; **and**
3. provide a copy of their professional registration certificate if the applicant is registered by the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency; **and**
4. for procedures other than hair removal, submit verification that the applicant has satisfactorily completed a course in infection control if the person is not a medical practitioner or a registered nurse (division 1).

Once the applicant has been granted a trainee licence, the trainee licence holder may commence their practical training. During this period, trainee licence holders must maintain a log book. This log book is to list the procedures performed, the time taken to perform them, and the skin type of the client. Each log book entry is to be signed and dated by the trainee and countersigned by the trainee's supervising licensee.

Indicative number of hours required to achieve appropriate competency and experience:

- 25 hours for hair removal
- 50 hours for skin rejuvenation
- 50 hours for superficial vascular lesion treatment
- 75 hours for superficial pigmented lesion treatment
- 100 hours for tattoo removal

Step 2 – Full licence

Once the trainee licence holder's supervisor has assessed the trainee as being competent in the conduct of a specific procedure, the trainee may apply for a new licence to replace their current licence by completing and submitting a Form 2 - *Application for a licence to use radiation sources*.

In making a submission, it is important for the applicant to clearly identify that he or she currently holds a licence and that the application is for the purpose of seeking the removal of the trainee status from a specific procedure type referred to in the licence. Applicants will be considered eligible for a changed licence if, in addition to completing the application form and providing the appropriate application fee, they:

1. include a copy of the countersigned log book referred to in Step 1; **and**
2. include a letter from the applicant's licensed supervisor verifying that the applicant is now competent in the use of laser apparatus for the type of procedure and can do so safely and without supervision.

If the chief executive is satisfied with the certification, the 'trainee' status will be removed from the cosmetic procedure specified in the licence.

SCENARIO 2

Certain applicants may have received practical training and competency in another jurisdiction under the supervision of a knowledgeable medical practitioner. In this scenario, if a person wishes to use a laser apparatus for specific cosmetic purposes, he or she must complete and submit a Form 2 - *Application for a licence to use radiation sources*. It is important that the procedures for which the applicant is seeking a licence to use laser apparatus are clearly identified.

Applicants will be considered eligible for a use licence if, in addition to completing the application form and providing the appropriate application and licence fees, they:

1. submit verification that they have satisfactorily completed a course in radiation safety which has been endorsed for this purpose by the department; **and**
2. provide a copy of their qualifications; **and**
3. provide a copy of their professional registration certificate if the applicant is registered by the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency; **and**
4. for procedures other than hair removal, submit verification that they have satisfactorily completed a formal course in infection control if the person is not a medical practitioner or a registered nurse (division 1); **and**
5. provide evidence of their experience in the use of laser apparatus for certain types of cosmetic laser procedures by submitting either:
 - a. a letter from the applicant's former supervisor verifying he or she is satisfied that the applicant is competent to perform such procedures safely and without supervision. This letter will only be accepted if the supervisor is a registered medical practitioner; **or**
 - b. a copy of an equivalent, and current, licence issued in another Australian jurisdiction.

Term of Use Licence

A use licence may have a term of one, two or three years. Under the Radiation Safety Act 1999, applications for renewal of licences must be made prior to the expiry of a current licence.

Enquiries

For further information, please contact the Radiation Health, Health Protection Unit of the Department of Health. The contact details for Radiation Health are:

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