

Deregulation Debates in Texas: Assessing the Impact on Barbering and Cosmetology Occupational Licensing

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ABSTRACT

The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) is responsible for issuing and regulating occupational licenses for a variety of professions and industries in the state, including barbering and cosmetology. TDLR plays a key role in safeguarding the health and safety of Texans seeking barbering and cosmetic services by ensuring that professionals can identify skin and hair ailments, understand sanitary practices, and otherwise avoid harm to their patrons. Currently, to become a licensed barber or cosmetologist in Texas, an individual must complete 1,000 classroom hours of curriculum-driven training at an accredited school and pass both written and practical examinations. The department also enforces regulations and investigates consumer complaints to maintain individual accountability. However, several bills aimed at deregulation and delicensing have been introduced in the past four Texas legislative sessions, with proponents citing these licensing requirements as an unnecessary economic burden.

Given that Texas leads the nation in the employment of barbers and cosmetologists, as per the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2023), a critical examination of the merits and drawbacks of deregulation is imperative. This policy analysis paper details the history and function of licensing for barbers and cosmetologists in Texas, explores the trend of deregulation of the professions, and discusses the practical implications of delicensing for practitioners and business owners within the state, and the broader cosmetology industry.

REFERENCES

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023, September 6). Barbers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists. Occupational Outlook Handbook. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/personal-care-and-service/barbers-hairstylists-and-cosmetologists.htm>