



## General Requirements for Operating a Skin Penetration Establishment

### WHAT IS A SKIN PENETRATION PROCEDURE?

A skin penetration procedure is a procedure in which –

- (a) the skin is cut, punctured, torn or shaved; or
- (b) mucous membrane is cut, punctured or torn.

Examples of skin penetration procedures include;

- Tattooing
- Body piercing
- Acupuncture
- Depilatory waxing
- Electrolysis
- Cosmetic Tattooing
- Lancing

### WHAT HEALTH REGULATIONS MUST A SKIN PENETRATION OPERATOR COMPLY WITH?

Anyone who wishes to operate a commercial skin penetration business must comply with the following:

- *Health (Skin Penetration Procedure) Regulations 1998*
- Code of Practice for Skin Penetration Procedures

It is mandatory for a skin penetration operator to comply with the above legislation. The owner of an establishment who fails to comply with the Regulations or the Code may be fined up to \$1000.

The *Health (Skin Penetration Procedure) Regulations 1998* can be purchased from State Law Publishing, Ground Floor, 10 William Street, PERTH WA 6000 Ph: (08) 9321 7688, or downloaded from the website at <http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/index.html>

A copy of the Code of Practice for Skin Penetration can be obtained by contacting the Applied Environmental Health Branch at the Department of Health on (08) 9388 4911 or by downloading a copy from the Department of Health website at [www.population.health.wa.gov.au/Environmental/re\\_sources\\_environ.cfm](http://www.population.health.wa.gov.au/Environmental/re_sources_environ.cfm)

### WHY HAVE HEALTH LEGISLATION GOVERNING THE SKIN PENETRATION INDUSTRY?

It is important to have standards for infection control for operators within the skin penetration industry. Such legislation helps prevent the spread of infectious diseases associated with the skin penetration industry, such as;

- Viral infections (hepatitis B, hepatitis C, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), AIDS).
- Bacterial infections (*Staphylococcus aureus*, *Staphylococcus epidermidis*)
- Fungal infections (*Candida albicans*)

### WHAT MUST I DO BEFORE STARTING UP A SKIN PENETRATION ESTABLISHMENT?

Before opening a skin penetration establishment approval is required from the relevant local government in which the establishment will reside. Local government Environmental Health Officers need to be provided with details of the establishment including the name and address.

It is also recommended that local government is provided with a layout of the establishment, including details of the location of fixtures such as hand basins and sinks, and materials used in the premises for shelving and flooring etc.

The Environmental Health Officer will then ensure the establishment complies with the Code of Practice and regulations prior to the business commencing operation.



Local Government Environmental Health Officers are also responsible for inspecting skin penetration establishments throughout the year to ensure operators are complying with the regulations and the Code of Practice.

### ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC DESIGN REQUIREMENTS FOR A SKIN PENETRATION ESTABLISHMENT?

There are specific requirements for the layout of a skin penetration establishment which have been outlined in section 7 of the Code of Practice, and further clarified below;

#### **Skin penetration procedures area**

The skin penetration procedures area is the area where the skin penetration procedure will be performed. For example, the area where the client will be pierced, tattooed, or waxed.

Design requirements for this area include;

- All floors, floor coverings, walls, ceiling, shelves, fittings and other furniture shall be constructed of materials suitable for the procedures undertaken and shall be kept clean and in good repair.

It is important to ensure all surfaces are smooth and impervious to help prevent surfaces from harbouring bacteria, moulds and other microorganisms, and allow for easy cleaning and disinfection.

- Surfaces that come into direct contact with a clients skin or mucous membrane must be smooth, impervious and in good repair. For example client chairs or beds must be made of a material that can be easily cleaned after use by a client.
- A hand basin supplied with hot and cold water, soap and paper towels must be available in the **immediate area** where skin penetration procedures are undertaken.

Immediate area: The intent is for the handbasin to be located **within** the area where skin penetration procedures are to be carried out. The hand basin should be easily accessible to allow the operator to wash their hands thoroughly before and after performing a skin penetration procedure.

It is recommended that liquid soap from a pump dispenser is used when washing hands.



- For new premises or premises that are undergoing refurbishment an approved hand free type handbasin supplied with hot and cold water through a single outlet must be installed in the immediate area where a skin penetration procedure is undertaken. The handbasin shall be supplied with soap and disposable paper towels.

A hands free type handbasin is a basin which can be operated without using your hands. Alternatives include foot, elbow or sensor operated basins.

### Work space/Preparation area

The work space is the area where appliances are stored, e.g. autoclave. The preparation area is the area where appliances are prepared before use on a client.

The work space and preparation area are must be separate from the client treatment area.



This area must have at least two sinks;

- Sink designated for hand

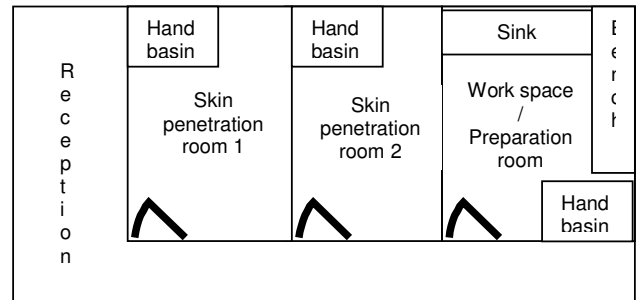
washing only; and;

- Sink designated for cleaning and decontaminating equipment only. All sinks must be made of suitable materials e.g. stainless steel.

- All work surfaces shall be smooth and impervious, and the floors must be smooth and impervious and non slip.

- There should be sufficient bench space to accommodate necessary equipment.

### Example layout



### Other relevant information

#### Age limit for tattooing and branding

The *Children and Community Services Bill 2003* is currently being introduced into WA Parliament. Once the legislation is proclaimed, it will repeal the *Child Welfare Act 1947*. Relevant sections include;

#### **103. Tattooing or branding**

*A person must not in any manner tattoo or brand any part of the body of a child unless the person has first obtained the written consent of a parent of the child to tattoo or brand the child in that manner and on that part of the child's body.*

Penalty: \$12 000 and imprisonment for one year.

For further details contact the Department for Community Development, Office for Children and Youth, Ph (08) 9476 2000.

#### WorkSafe

The Department of Consumer and Employment Protection, WorkSafe branch, deal with issues relating to Occupational Safety and Health in the workplace. Relevant topics include;

- Code of Practice on the Management of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis at Workplaces.
- Material Safety Data Sheets
- Chemicals at work
- Personnel protective equipment

For further information visit the website at [www.safetyline.wa.gov.au](http://www.safetyline.wa.gov.au)