DIVISION OF
Environmental Health

Environmental Health Services

Florida Department of Health
Division of Environmental Health
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Body Piercing

10 Frequently Asked Questions

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10 Frequently Asked Questions About Body Piercing in Florida

1) **Q:** Is body piercing being regulated in Florida?

A: Yes, in 1999 the legislature passed a law to regulate body piercing salons. The intent of the law is to reduce the chance of getting an infection or a disease from a body piercing.

2) **Q:** Are body piercing salons required to have a license?

A: Yes, a license must be obtained annually from a county health department. The current license must be displayed in a public area of the salon. Ear piercing establishments that use a mechanized, pre-sterilized piercing gun to pierce only the lobe or outer rim of the ear are not required to be licensed. Using any other system or piercing any other part of the ear requires a license.

3) **Q:** Are body piercing salons inspected?

A: Yes, inspection teams from a county health department inspect salons at least once a year. Inspection teams are made up of an environmental specialist and a nurse.

4) **Q:** What kind of training is required for body piercers?

A: Before being allowed to pierce, body piercers must be trained in safety, sanitation, sterilization, and methods for preventing the spread of infectious diseases. After that, refresher training in one of these areas is required every year.

5) **Q**: Must a new needle be used on every customer?

A: Yes, only single-use, sterilized needles can be used. Also, all instruments and jewelry used must be sterile. Piercers must wear disposable, sterile medical gloves when performing a piercing.

6) **Q:** Can minors be pierced?

A: A minor under the age of 18 may not be pierced without the written notarized consent of the minor's parent or legal guardian. If a minor under the age of 16 is to be pierced, not only is the written notarized consent required, but the minor also must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

7) **Q:** Must a piercer give me any information before I get pierced?

A: Yes, verbal and written educational information approved by a county health department must be provided to a customer before a piercing procedure begins. Upon request, a customer must be given a copy of a statement signed by both the customer and the piercer that says that the educational information was received and discussed.

8) **Q:** Can I smoke, eat, or drink in a body piercing area?

A: No, these actions are prohibited in areas where body piercing procedures are performed, except for first aid purposes. Also, body piercing cannot be done in a bar or an establishment that serves food.

9) **Q:** Can I get pierced at the fair or at bike week?

A: Only if the business is licensed as a " temporary establishment." This type of license can last only up to 14 days and the business must meet all the requirements of a permanent salon.

10) **Q:** How can I file a complaint against a body piercing salon?

A: Complaints can be made to the county health department. The salon must post in public view the procedure for filing a complaint.

Questions or Comments, Contact: The Florida Department of Health
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