

**Oklahoma State Department of Health  
Tattooing and Body Piercing  
Title 21 Section 842.1 et seq.**

**Section 842.1 - Unlawful Body Tattooing, Body Piercing, and Scleral Tattooing - Exception for Practitioner of the Healing Arts**

A. It shall be unlawful for any person to perform or offer to perform body piercing or tattooing on a child under eighteen (18) years of age. No person under eighteen (18) years of age shall be allowed to receive a tattoo. No person under eighteen (18) years of age shall be allowed to receive a body piercing procedure unless the parent or legal guardian of such child gives written consent for the procedure, and the parent or legal guardian of the child is present during the procedure. No person shall be allowed to purchase or possess tattoo equipment or supplies without being licensed either as an Oklahoma medical micropigmentationologist or as an Oklahoma tattoo artist.

B. Tattooing shall not be performed upon a person impaired by drugs or alcohol. A person impaired by drugs or alcohol is considered incapable of consenting to tattooing and incapable of understanding tattooing procedures and aftercare suggestions.

C. It shall be unlawful for any person to perform or offer to perform scleral tattooing upon a person.

D. As used in this section and Sections 842.2 and 842.3 of this title:

1. "Body piercing" means a procedure in which an opening is created in a human body solely for the purpose of inserting jewelry or other decoration; provided, however, the term does not include ear piercing;
2. "Tattooing" means the practice of producing an indelible mark or figure on the human body by scarring or inserting a pigment under the skin using needles, scalpels, or other related equipment; provided, that medical micropigmentation, performed pursuant to the provisions of the Oklahoma Medical Micropigmentation Regulation Act, shall not be construed to be tattooing;
3. "Body piercing operator" means any person who owns, controls, operates, conducts, or manages any permanent body piercing establishment, whether actually performing the work of body piercing or not. A mobile unit, including, but not limited to, a mobile home, recreational vehicle, or any other nonpermanent facility, shall not be used as a permanent body piercing establishment;
4. "Tattoo operator" means any person who owns, controls, operates, conducts, or manages any permanent tattooing establishment whether performing the work of tattooing or not, or a temporary location that is a fixed location at which an individual tattoo operator performs tattooing for a specified period of not more than seven (7) days in conjunction with a single event or celebration, where the primary function of the event or celebration is tattooing;
5. "Artist" means the person who actually performs the body piercing or tattooing procedure;
6. "Apprentice" means any person who is training under the supervision of a licensed tattoo artist. That person cannot independently perform the work of tattooing. Apprentice also means any person who is training under the supervision of a licensed body artist. That person cannot independently perform the work of body piercing; and
7. "Scleral tattooing" means the practice of producing an indelible mark or figure on the human eye by scarring or inserting a pigment on, in, or under the fornix conjunctiva, bulbar conjunctiva, ocular conjunctive, or other ocular surface using needles, scalpels or other related equipment.

E. Sections 842.1 through 842.3 of this title shall not apply to any act of a licensed practitioner of the healing arts performed in the course of practice of the practitioner.

F. Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be punished as provided in Section 842.2 of this title.

*Laws 1998, HB 2547, c. 123, § 1, eff. November 1, 1998; Amended by Laws 2006, SB 806, c. 141, § 1, eff. November 1, 2006 ([superseded document available](#)); Amended by Laws 2009, SB 844, c. 319, § 1, emerg. eff. July 1, 2009 ([superseded document available](#)).*

### **Section 842.2 - Penalties for Violations**

Any person convicted of violating the provisions of Section 842.1 of this title or rules promulgated pursuant thereto shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment in the county jail not to exceed ninety (90) days, a fine of not more than Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00), or by both such fine and imprisonment.

*Laws 1998, SB 173, c. 123, § 2, eff. November 1, 1998; Amended by Laws 2006, SB 806, c. 141, § 2, eff. November 1, 2006 ([superseded document available](#)).*

### **Section 842.3 - License Required - Rules - Regulation by City or County - Pending Application - Notice – Penalties**

A. All body piercing operators, tattoo operators and artists shall be prohibited from performing body piercing or tattooing unless licensed in the appropriate category by the State Department of Health. The State Board of Health shall promulgate rules regulating body piercing and tattooing which shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Artist temporary and permanent licensure;
2. Facility operator temporary and permanent licensure;
3. Body piercing and tattoo facility requirements;
4. Equipment setup and requirements;
5. Procedures for sanitary body piercing and tattooing;
6. Forms to be completed prior to performing body piercing and tattooing including, but not limited to, applications and parental consent forms;
7. Hand washing and general health;
8. Body piercing and tattoo site preparation and application;
9. Procedure following body piercing and tattoo application;
10. Limits and prohibitions concerning body piercing and tattooing;
11. Facility inspection documents including, but not limited to, equipment inspection;
12. Administrative fines structure;
13. Education and training; and
14. A surety bond in the principal sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) to be in a form approved by the Attorney General and filed in the Office of the Secretary of State for all body piercing and tattoo operators.

B. A city or county may adopt any regulations that do not conflict with, or are more comprehensive than, the provisions of this section or with the rules promulgated by the Department. This section does not limit the ability of a city or county to require an applicant to obtain any further business licenses or permits that the city or county deems appropriate.

C. 1. The State Department of Health shall not grant or issue a license to a body piercing or tattoo operator if the place of business of the body piercing or tattoo operator is within one thousand (1,000) feet of a church, school, or playground.

2. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to the renewal of licenses or to new applications for locations where body piercing or tattoo operators are licensed at the time the application is filed with the Department.

3. As used in this subsection:

- a. "church" means an establishment, other than a private dwelling, where religious services are usually conducted,

- b. "school" means an establishment, other than a private dwelling, where the usual processes of education are usually conducted, and
- c. "playground" means a place, other than grounds at a private dwelling, that is provided by the public or members of a community for recreation.

D. A body piercing or tattoo operator applying for license renewal or for a new license to perform at an existing body piercing or tattoo place of business shall pay a certification fee established by the Department by rule to determine if the exemptions provided for in paragraph 2 of subsection C of this section apply.

E. A body piercing or tattoo operator applying for license renewal or for a new license under subsection C of this section shall publish notice of the license application or renewal at least once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation nearest to the proposed location of the business and most likely to give notice to interested citizens of the county, city, and community in which the applicant proposes to engage in business. The publication shall identify the exact location at which the proposed business is to be operated.

F. The State Department of Health may notify the district attorney of any violation of Section 842.1 of this title or rules promulgated pursuant thereto and, in addition to any criminal penalty imposed, the Department may impose an administrative fine not to exceed Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) per violation per day, and may suspend, revoke or deny the license of the establishment, or may impose both such administrative fine and suspension, revocation or denial for any such violation.

*Laws 1998, SB 173, c. 123, § 3, eff. November 1, 1998; Amended by Laws 2006, SB 806, c. 141, § 3, eff. November 1, 2006 ([superseded document available](#)).*

### **Section 842.3 - Promulgation of Rules Regulating Body Piercing**

A. The State Board of Health shall promulgate rules regulating body piercing which shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Artist temporary and permanent licensure;
2. Facility operator temporary and permanent licensure;
3. Body piercing facility requirements;
4. Equipment setup and requirements;
5. Recommended procedures for sanitary body piercing;
6. Forms to be completed prior to performing body piercing including, but not limited to, applications and parental consent forms;
7. Hand washing and general health;
8. Body piercing site preparation and application;
9. Procedure following body piercing application;
10. Limits and prohibitions concerning body piercing;
11. Facility inspection documents including, but not limited to, equipment inspection; and
12. Administrative fines structure.

B. The Board may notify the district attorney of any violation of Section 1 of this act or rules promulgated pursuant thereto and, in addition to any criminal penalty imposed, the Board may impose an administrative fine not to exceed Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00), may suspend the establishment's license, or may impose both such administrative fine and suspension for any such violation.

*Laws 1998, SB 173, c. 123, § 3, eff. November 1, 1998.*