

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 5391

---

---

**C 412 L 09**  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Regulating body art, body piercing, and tattooing practitioners, shops, and businesses.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Kastama, Haugen, Fairley, Roach and Pflug).

**Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care**

**House Committee on Health Care & Wellness**

**House Committee on Ways & Means**

**Background:** The Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH) has established requirements for the sterilization of needles and instruments used by tattoo artists. These rules address both sterilization procedures and universal precautions for preventing the spread of disease. There are no similar provisions for body art or body piercing.

The practices of body art, body piercing, and tattooing are not currently regulated in Washington State.

**Summary:** A license is required to practice body art, body piercing, and tattooing.

Body art is defined as the practice of invasive cosmetic adornment including the use of branding and scarification. Body piercing is the practice of penetrating the skin to insert an object, including jewelry for cosmetic purposes. Tattooing is to pierce or puncture the human skin with a needle or other instrument for the purpose of implanting an indelible mark or pigment into the skin

The Department of Licensing (DOL) must administer licensing for these practices according to minimum safety and sanitation standards set by DOH. A license is required for individual practitioners and for body art, body piercing, and tattooing businesses. DOL will inspect businesses every two years or upon receipt of a complaint. Business and individual licenses must be renewed annually.

Minimum standards are established by DOL for body art, body piercing, and tattooing businesses. DOH will establish sterilization standards for body art, body piercing, and

---

*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

tattooing. Individual practitioners of body art, body piercers, and tattoo artists are subject to the Uniform Regulation of Business and Professions Act.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	47	1	
House	95	2	(House amended)
Senate	45	2	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** July 26, 2009  
July 1, 2010 (Sections 1-21)