

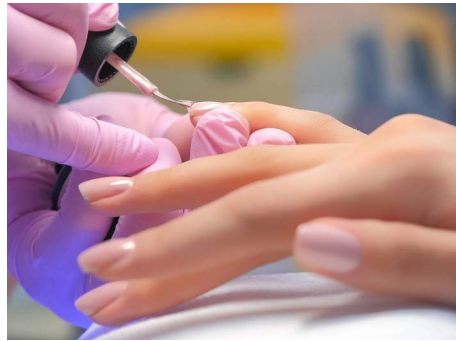
Guide for Operating

Personal Service Settings

in Simcoe Muskoka



Introduction



Personal service settings (PSS) in Ontario must register with the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) and are routinely inspected by public health inspectors to ensure they meet infection prevention and control (IPAC) requirements. These businesses can be found in commercial spaces, homes, or operate as mobile services and temporary vendors at events. PSS are businesses that offer services which could pose a risk of exposure to blood or body fluids. Examples of these services include:

- Ear and body piercing
- Eyebrow/lash tinting/lifts
- Eyelash extensions
- Facials
- Hair removal: waxing, laser, electrolysis
- Hairstyling and barbering
- Manicures and pedicures
- Microblading
- Microdermabrasion
- Microneedling
- Permanent make-up
- Tattooing

This document outlines the requirements that owners and operators of PSS must follow according to the [Health Protection and Promotion Act \(HPPA\)](#) and [Ontario Regulation 136/18 – Personal Service Settings](#) (O. Reg. 136/18). It is organized into sections that provide information on:



Legislation



Notification Requirements



Inspection Disclosure Program



General Requirements Checklist



Home-Based and Mobile Businesses



Regulated Health Professionals

Contact a public health inspector in the Infection Prevention and Control Program at **705-721-7520** or toll free at **1-877-721-7520 extension 8809** during our regular business hours Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Resources specific to PSS can be found on the health unit website: smdhu.org/pss



Health Protection and Promotion Act

In Ontario, the [*Health Protection and Promotion Act \(HPPA\)*](#) describes the powers of public health inspectors and sets the requirements for personal service settings (PSS). Each public health unit is responsible for enforcing regulations related to infection prevention and control in these settings. Under the HPPA, public health inspectors can order owners and operators to stop offering certain services if they cannot be done safely as well as remove equipment from a setting.

Personal Service Settings Regulation

PSS are regulated by the [*Ontario Personal Service Settings Regulation 136/18*](#) (O. Reg. 136/18). Anyone providing personal services must make sure they do so safely. Public health inspectors will inspect all PSS businesses to make certain they meet the rules listed in the regulation. If a business frequently fails to obey the rules, it may face enforcement actions. The regulation has [set fines](#) for non-compliance which can be charged to the owner/operator of the business.

Guide to Infection Prevention and Control in Personal Service Settings

O. Reg. 136/18 is supported by the [*Guide to Infection Prevention and Control in Personal Service Settings, 3rd edition*](#). This guide helps operators put infection prevention measures in place to lower the risk of infections in their businesses. Operators may find this resource helpful for:

- Choosing the right disinfectant
- Cleaning and disinfecting procedures
- Routine practices and risk assessments
- Occupational health practices
- Best practices for specific services
- Record keeping and aftercare

Notification Requirements



Under O. Reg. 136/18, you must provide written notice to the health unit at least 14 days in advance if you are:

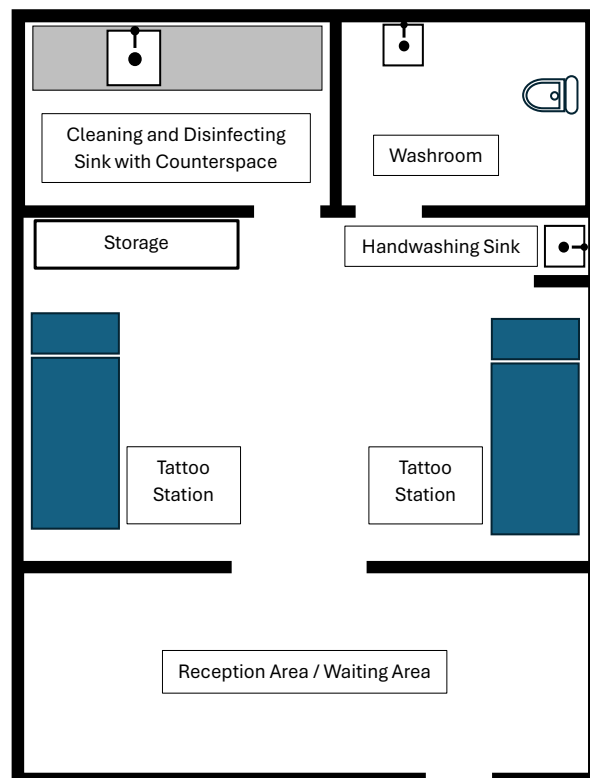
- Opening a new business **OR** have not notified the health unit of your current business.
- Changing the ownership of a business.
- Changing the address/location of the business.
- Expanding the services offered at your business.
- Reconstructing or renovating your existing business (beyond routine maintenance).

All businesses that offer services to the public, whether they operate from a home (like a house, apartment, or condo) or provide mobile services (going to a client's home), **MUST** report to the health unit for an inspection.

Complete Notification Form:

The notification form for PSS businesses is available on our website at smdhu.org/pss. The form will collect the following information:

- Business information (e.g., business name, site address)
- Ownership information (e.g., owner/operator name, business/cell phone number and email)
- Legal information (e.g., corporation name/number, corporate address, sole proprietorship, partnership)
- Date of opening or re-opening to the public
- Which services will be offered at your business
- Floor plans

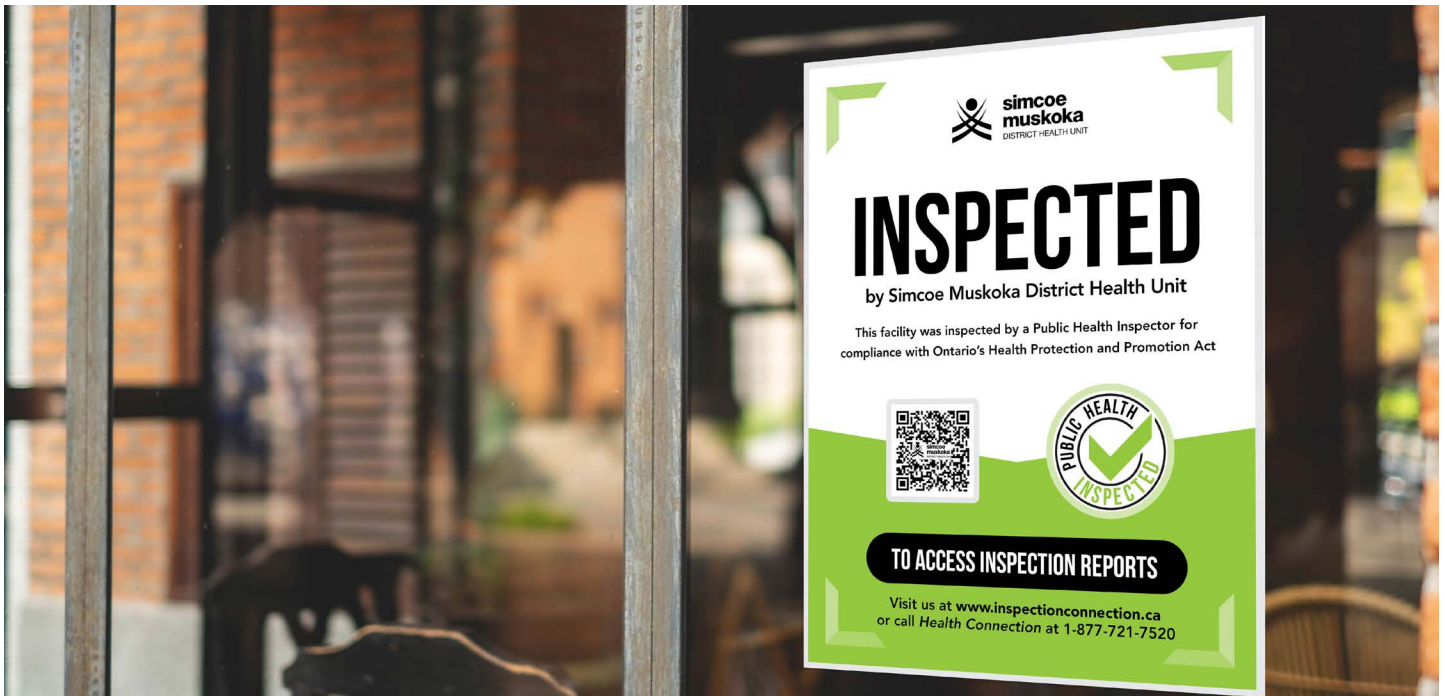


Example of a floor plan

Once the form is submitted, a public health inspector will contact you to discuss next steps and to schedule an inspection.

Contact your local municipality for information on business licensing, building approval, fire safety and zoning requirements.

Inspection Disclosure Program



Inspection Frequency

Public health inspectors inspect personal service settings (PSS) on a risk-based schedule. Services which break the skin or touch mucous membranes (e.g., eyes, mouth) are inspected more frequently. Additional inspections can happen when there is a complaint, a request from another agency or the operator, or following any emergency (e.g., sewage back-up, power outage).

Inspection Disclosure Program

In Ontario, public health units must publicly share a summary of their PSS inspection results. The health unit has a program called [Inspection Connection](#) that reports the findings from routine inspections, complaint inspections, re-inspections, and any enforcement actions. This helps the public make informed choices about which businesses to visit, as the inspection results are available online.

The Inspection Connection program includes personal service settings, child care centres, food establishments, small drinking water systems, public pools, and recreational camps. Each inspected business is provided with an inspection sign that is required to be posted in clear view of the public and clients. The sign indicates that the services being provided to the public have been inspected by a public health inspector and includes a quick-response (QR) code, as well as a link to www.inspectionconnection.ca and phone number. This phone number directs members of the public to the inspection results on the Inspection Connection website.

General Requirements Checklist



Public Health Notification

- ✓ **Written Notification:** Notify the health unit in writing about your plans to operate, renovate, or provide additional services **at least 14 days in advance.**
- ✓ **Submit Floor Plans:** Send a drawing of your planned setup before starting any construction or renovation. Not consulting in advance may lead to extra costs to meet the requirements.
- ✓ **Contact Local Municipality:** Check with your local municipality for any zoning, by-law, building, or fire safety requirements.

Physical Setting Requirements

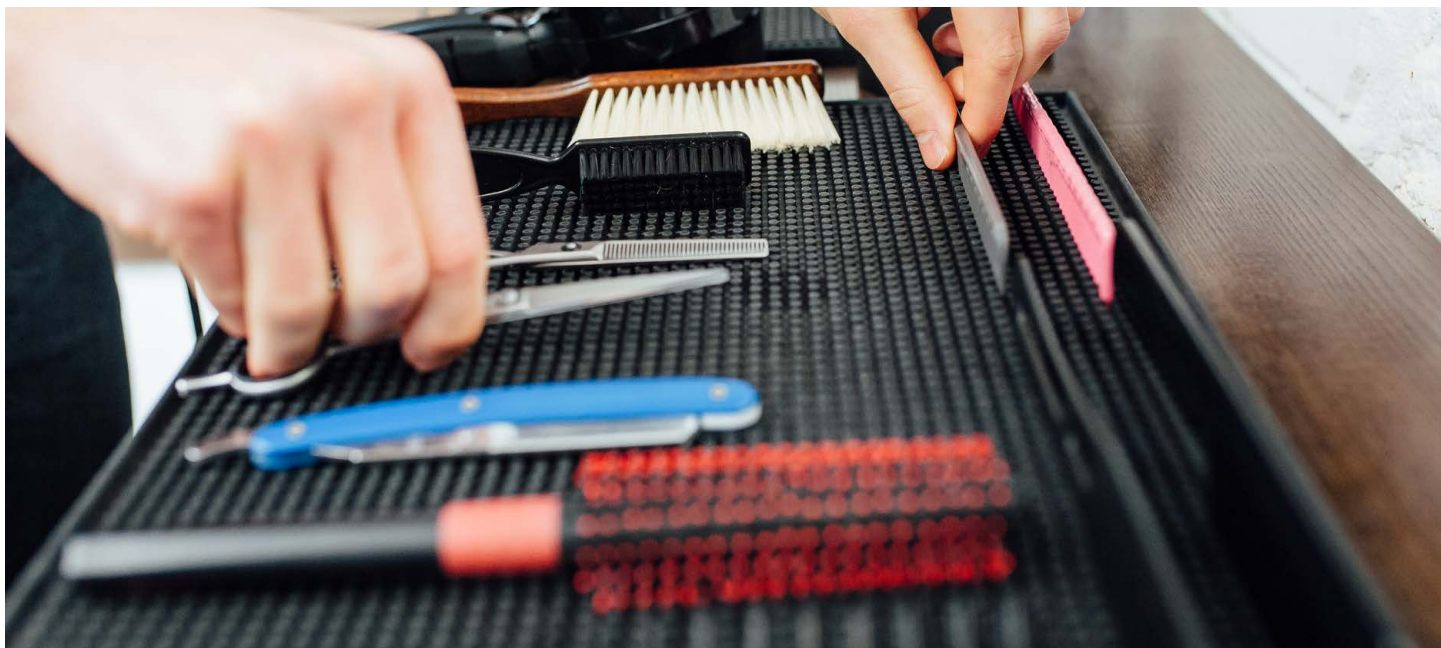
- ✓ **Storage:** Ensure enough space is available to store all equipment clean. Items that are not in use should not be left out in the open. Single-use and reusable items should be stored covered and protected from any contamination until they are used on a client. Packaged sterile items must not be stored in a way that could damage the package, such as punctures, tears or introducing moisture.
 - All personal items, food and staff belongings must be kept away from client service areas.
- ✓ **Ventilation and Lighting:** Provide adequate ventilation and lighting for safe and sanitary operation. Service areas should be well-lit to allow for proper cleaning and disinfecting.
- ✓ **Surfaces:** All surfaces (floors, walls, ceilings, tables, chairs, etc.) must be smooth, non-absorbent, easy to clean, and in good repair. Avoid lots of decorations on walls and ceilings. Carpeting in service areas is not permitted.

General Requirements Checklist



- ✓ **Service Provider Separation:** Ensure there is enough space between service providers. Walls or barriers may be needed for invasive services (e.g., tattooing or permanent make-up).
- ✓ **Waste Management:**
 - **Biomedical Waste and Sharps Disposal:** Provide approved containers and plan for storing and removing biomedical waste and sharps.
 - **Everyday Waste Removal:** Ensure there are enough garbage cans in proper locations and regularly remove waste from the setting. Garbage cans should have lids that can be opened without touching them when providing a service to a client.
 - **Laundry:** Laundry storage is available on site with a plan in place to launder items as needed. Laundering items off site such as at a laundromat or at the business operator's home, must be discussed with a public health inspector.
- ✓ **Water Supply:** Ensure constant access to potable hot and cold running water. Private water systems (e.g., a well on private property) may require routine testing; consult with your assigned public health inspector.
 - Specific types of water are needed for invasive services; consult with your assigned public health inspector.
- ✓ **Hand Washing Sinks:** Provide a hand washing sink that is:
 - **ONLY** used for washing hands.
 - Easily accessible where services are provided and **available at all times**.
 - Supplied with potable hot and cold running water under pressure.
 - Equipped with liquid soap in a dispenser.
 - Stocked with single-use towels or paper towels, stored in a clean manner.
- ✓ **Cleaning and Disinfecting Sink:** If reusable tools are used, a sink specific to cleaning and disinfecting equipment must be provided that is:
 - **NOT** the hand washing sink.
 - Large enough to fit the largest tool/equipment.
 - Located in a room without a toilet (cannot be in a washroom).
 - Set up with enough counter space to keep dirty and clean items separate.
 - Adequately separated from client service areas to avoid contamination.
- ✓ **Completion of Construction:** Before requesting an opening inspection, make sure all construction is finished and that you meet all the requirements listed above.

General Requirements Checklist



Equipment

- ✓ **Maintenance:** Ensure all equipment is in good repair and kept clean until next use. Equipment that is cracked, pitted, chipped, rusted or damaged in any way must be thrown out.
- ✓ **Single-Use Equipment:** Throw out single-use items immediately after use. Any equipment that cannot be properly cleaned and disinfected must be treated as single-use. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- ✓ **Documentation:** Keep manufacturer instructions for all disinfectants, sterilizers, and equipment on-site or accessible electronically. Provide these to your public health inspector upon request.
- ✓ **Prepackaged Sterile Equipment:** Have the manufacturer's name, address, contact information, lot numbers, and expiry dates available to confirm sterility. If you use needle cartridges, make sure you have documentation showing that the cartridge prevents backflow of fluids.
- ✓ **Single-Use Covers/Barriers:** If you use covers or barriers (e.g., bed/table covers, equipment bags, liners, barrier films), make sure to store these items clean and throw them out after each use.

Disinfection/Sterilization of Reusable Equipment

- ✓ **Cleaning and Disinfecting Tools:** All reusable equipment/tools, including work surfaces such as tables, chairs and stations, must be cleaned and disinfected between each client. After finishing a service, used tools are to be moved to the cleaning and disinfecting area. Refer to SMDHU resources for the steps for cleaning and disinfecting [aesthetics tools](#) and [hair service tools](#).

General Requirements Checklist



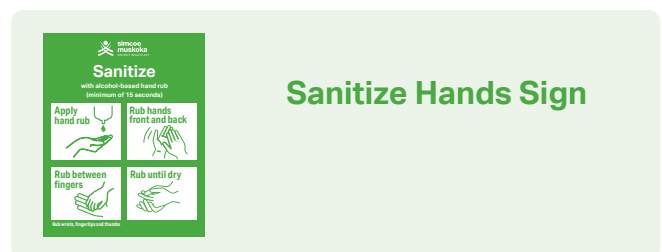
- ✓ **Approved Disinfectants:** Disinfectants used in the setting must be approved by Health Canada and have a drug identification number (DIN) or natural product number (NPN) on the label. For high-level disinfectants and chemical sterilants without a DIN or NPN, consult the [Medical Device Active License Listing](#) to confirm licensing with Health Canada. Household bleach is the only disinfectant that may not have Health Canada approval but can still be used for tool disinfection.
 - Disinfectants are chosen based on the level of infection risk. Use [this tool](#) to help determine the risk of different equipment, and refer to [this chart](#) to choose the right disinfectant. Consult with a public health inspector if you need help selecting the proper disinfectants.
 - All approved disinfectants must be used as the manufacturers intended to kill harmful germs. If you are using common products like alcohol or household bleach that do not have specific instructions, follow the SMDHU resources on how to use them properly:
 - [Household Bleach](#)
 - [70-90% Alcohol](#)
- ✓ **Sterilizers:** If you use sterilizers (autoclaves), they must be approved by Health Canada. You can check their approval by looking at the [Medical Device Active License Listing](#). Before purchasing a sterilizer, consult with a public health inspector to review the protocols and procedures for setup, operation, and equipment reprocessing.

General Requirements Checklist



Health and Safety

- ✓ **Sharps Handling:** All sharps used during services must be kept sterile up to the point they are used on a client. Throw out all opened sharps immediately in an approved sharps container.
- ✓ **Staff Training:** Make sure that any hired staff or contractors are trained in infection prevention and control practices related to the services offered at your business.
- ✓ **Product Storage and Dispensing:** Store and dispense all products in a way that prevents contamination. Use pump or squeeze dispensers whenever possible. If that is not an option, use single-use disposable applicators or reusable scoops and spatulas that are cleaned and disinfected between uses. Double dipping is not allowed, as it can contaminate the remaining product.
- ✓ **Personal Hygiene:** Make sure all staff maintain good personal hygiene and do not smoke or eat while providing services.
- ✓ **Hand Hygiene:** Operators must make sure that hands are cleaned before and after each service to prevent germs spreading. Handwashing should occur in the designated sink that is used only for the purposes of handwashing. Hand sanitizer can be used when hands are not visibly dirty. Hand sanitizer must be alcohol-based with a concentration between 70-90%. Ensure hand sanitizer has a natural product number (NPN) issued by Health Canada on the label and is not past the expiry date.



- ✓ **Glove Use:** Service providers using gloves must change them between clients or when switching tasks. Gloves do not replace handwashing; ensure hands are washed or use hand sanitizer when changing gloves. Do not wash hands with gloves on. Gloves must be worn when providing services that break the skin or come into contact with broken skin, blood, or body fluids.

General Requirements Checklist



Records

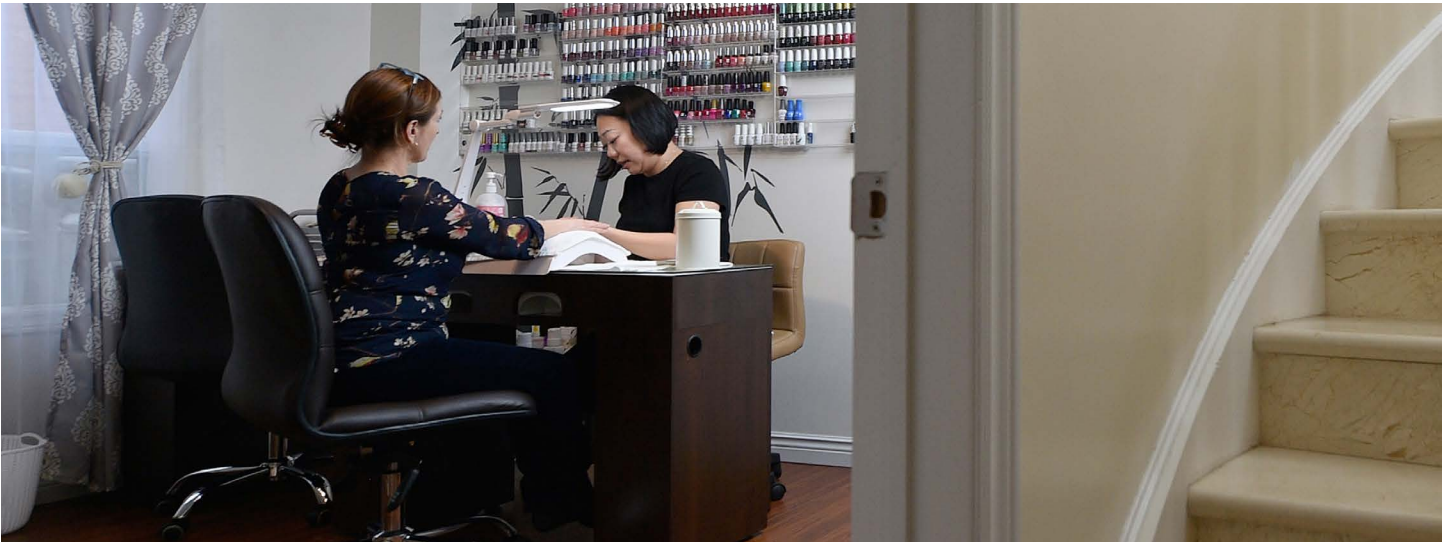
- ✓ **Record Keeping:** Required records must be securely stored on-site for at least one year from the time of service and then kept in a secure location for an additional two years (for a total of three years). Records can be maintained on paper or electronically, but must be available to the public health inspector upon request. Records that you may be required to keep include:
 - **Client Records:** Keep the names and contact information for all clients receiving services. This does not apply to clients who are only getting hairstyling or barbering services.
 - **Accidental Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids:** Record any accidents where someone was exposed to blood or body fluids. An [SMDHU Template](#) is available to help with documenting accidents properly. An [instruction poster](#) for cleaning and disinfecting is available to help with safely responding to an accident. Required information to have in this record includes:
 - the date of the accident,
 - the service being provided,
 - the part of the body exposed,
 - the name and contact information of the person exposed,
 - the name and contact information of the service provider, and,
 - actions taken.
 - **Disinfectant Log:** This is required if you use a high-level disinfectant. You need to record the name of the disinfectant, its concentration, the date it was prepared, and the date it was discarded. See the [SMDHU Template](#).
 - **Sterilization Logs:** If you use sterilizers (autoclaves), you must keep detailed records. Talk to a public health inspector before using a sterilizer. There are SMDHU templates available for [monitoring](#) and [maintenance](#) records.
 - **Invasive Procedures Record:** If you provide a service that breaks the client's skin, you must prepare a record that includes:
 - date of the procedure,
 - the name and contact information of the client and service provider,
 - which procedure was done,
 - the part of the body the procedure was done to, and,
 - the lot numbers and expiry date of the pre-packaged sterile equipment used.
 - **Explanation of Invasive Service and Risks:** If you provide a service that breaks the client's skin, you must provide an explanation of the service and the potential risks associated with the service (e.g., infection). You must keep a record that this explanation was given to the client. This can be done using a client waiver/registration form that the client reads and signs or it can be verbally explained to the client. If the explanation is done verbally by the service provider, this action must be recorded. This can be done, for example, by adding a check box on the client record or the invasive procedure record.

General Requirements Checklist



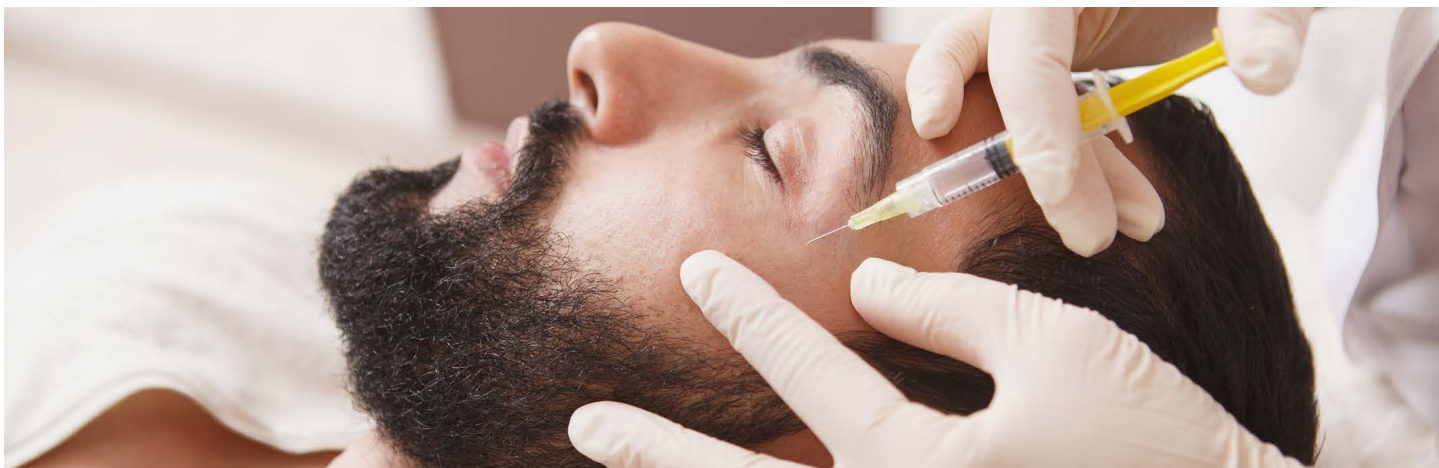
Prohibited Practices

- ✓ **Live Animals:** Maintain premises free from live animals, except for:
 - Service animals described in [subsection 80.45 \(4\)](#) of Ontario Regulation 191/11 (Integrated Accessibility Standards) made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*
 - People with service animals can be asked to show documentation from a regulated health professional such as a doctor or nurse stating that the animal is a service animal and needed for reasons of a disability.
 - Emotional support animals do not qualify as service animals.
 - Live aquatic species (e.g., fish) displayed or stored in sanitary tanks.
- ✓ **Prohibited Services:** The following services are not allowed in Ontario:
 - Ear candling/coning
 - Services involving live aquatic species (e.g., fish pedicures)
 - Scleral (eyeball) tattooing/staining
 - Implantation of eye jewellery under the conjunctiva



Personal service setting (PSS) owners/operators who have their business in their home or who advertise as mobile service providers must still be inspected and meet the requirements in O. Reg. 136/18. You must discuss your plan with the health unit before offering any services to the public from your home or through mobile services. Specific items to consider for these types of businesses are listed below.

- **Home-Based Businesses:** Consult with the health unit before starting any renovations or offering any services to the public. Service areas in the home must be separate from living spaces. If no separate entrance is available, a public health inspector may need to enter your home and move through living spaces to access your business. Check with the local municipality to ensure that running a business from your home is allowed.
- **Mobile Businesses:** If you provide services by travelling to your client, you must have a “touchdown” location that will be inspected. This location is where equipment should be stored in a clean manner and can be properly cleaned and disinfected. You must also be able to show how you transport equipment, provide services off-site, and keep the equipment safe and clean up until its use on the client.
- **Mobile Vehicle:** If your mobile business operates out of a vehicle, it is recommended to consult with the health unit and provide a plan for review before buying or renovating the vehicle.
- **Water Supply:** If your home or mobile business uses a private water supply (e.g., a well on private property), you must ensure that potable water is available. Consult with a public health inspector for guidance on how to proceed.
- **Household Pets:** Ensure that any animals that are not service animals are kept out of areas used for business services.



Personal service settings, medical aesthetic clinics, or medi-spas that are owned, operated, or fully overseen by [regulated health professionals](#) (RHPs) are not routinely inspected by the health unit. In Ontario, RHPs include professions such as physicians, nurses, massage therapists and naturopaths. Businesses operated by RHPs are still encouraged to notify the health unit about their operation, as the health unit is responsible for maintaining a list of such businesses.

Regulated health professionals are accountable to their regulatory colleges to operate in a manner that will not subject clients/patients to infection risk and/or transmission. The health unit will only be involved in the event the business receives a complaint. The [Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee on Infection Prevention and Control](#) (PIDAC-IPC) produces best practice documents that are available to RHPs for guidance:

- [Infection Prevention and Control for Clinical Office Practice](#)
- [Best Practices for Hand Hygiene in All Health Care Settings](#)
- [Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections in All Health Care Settings](#)
- [Best Practices for Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization of Medical Equipment/Devices in All Health Care Settings](#)

You can also use the following checklists from Public Health Ontario to self-audit your business:

- [IPAC Checklist for Clinical Office Practice - Core Elements](#)
- [IPAC Checklist for Clinical Office Practice - Reprocessing](#)

Regulated health professionals should contact the health unit if they become aware of an infection prevention and control (IPAC) lapse (a deviation from IPAC best practices) in their business resulting in possible infectious disease transmission to patients, clients or staff.

Glossary of Terms Used in this Guide

Biomedical waste: Waste that includes blood, body fluid, human flesh, items contaminated with blood and/or body fluid, and sharps. This type of waste must be treated before disposal in a landfill or sewer systems. Contact the local municipality for proper disposal instructions.

Body fluid: Fluid from a human body such as blood, urine, vomit, and saliva.

Cleaning: The physical removal of debris (e.g., dust, dirt, grime) and/or organic material (e.g., blood, body fluids, germs). Cleaning is achieved by scrubbing with water and detergent.

Disinfection: A process that kills or destroys most germs except for high numbers of bacterial spores. The [level of disinfection](#) needed depends on what the equipment or tool is used for. Equipment/tools are to be cleaned properly before disinfection can take place.

Drug identification number (DIN): A number issued by Health Canada that disinfectants are required to have on the label. This number shows that the disinfectant has passed checks on its active ingredients, labelling, and instructions for use. A disinfectant without a DIN is not in compliance with Canadian law and cannot be used in a personal service setting.

High-level disinfectant: A disinfectant that can kill all germs (bacteria, fungi, viruses) except large numbers of bacterial spores. Except for household bleach, high-level disinfectants must be approved by Health Canada and listed in the [Medical Devices Active License Listing](#). This level of disinfection is required for reusable equipment/tools that will contact broken skin or mucous membranes (e.g., eyes, nose, mouth).

Invasive procedure: A procedure that involves introducing sterile equipment/tools into the body or body openings by cutting, puncturing, or otherwise entering unbroken skin.

Natural product number (NPN): A number issued by Health Canada and found on the label after a product has been assessed and determined to be safe, effective, and of high quality (e.g., alcohol, hand sanitizer).

Sharps: Equipment or tool capable of causing punctures or cuts (e.g., needles, blades, lancets, razors, scalpels).

Sharps container: A dedicated, puncture-resistant, tamper-resistant (one-way opening), leak-proof container with a fill line that is intended for the safe disposal of sharps.

Sterilizer: A Health Canada approved device that commonly uses steam and high pressure to kill all germs, including bacteria, viruses, spores, and fungi. This is important to make sure equipment and tools used to break the skin or penetrate mucous membranes (e.g., eyes, nose, mouth) are safe to use and will not cause infections.