

Tattoo Guidelines and Requirements for Conventions

All artists must obtain a permit from the Mecklenburg County Health Department prior to tattooing.

Artists must check in with the Health Department to request a permit inspection.

Artists should have their area set up as they are ready to begin tattooing prior to requesting an inspection.

To receive a Tattoo Permit, the Health Department will be checking for compliance with the State regulations. Artists are required to meet the following minimum standards.

- All equipment must meet the minimum North Carolina requirements:
 - All disposable needles, tubes, cartridges, and microblading tools must have expiration dates and the sterilization method present on the packaging
 - Needle cartridges must have protection against the backflow of ink into the machine
 - Stainless steel tubes must be in autoclave bags that are not torn or damaged. Damaged bags must be re-sterilized at the event provided autoclave
 - Machines with grommets and rubber bands must be changed after each patron
- Latex, nitrile or equivalent gloves, must be changed between clients or when soiled
- Pigments/inks while in use must be placed in disposable ink caps and discarded between clients
- Artists must wash hands with soap and water for 5 minutes prior to tattooing
 - A 2 to 3 minute hand wash is required between clients
- Artists must provide a nailbrush along with orange sticks or a nail file
- Chairs and other surfaces for tattooing must be free from tears and non-absorbent
- A sharps container and trash can with liner must be available
- Artists must use a new disposable razor for each client and must be discarded in a sharps container
- Artists must clean the skin with a germicidal solution prior to starting the tattoo
 - If alcohol is used, we recommend 70% isopropyl alcohol
- Artists must not tattoo on skin that is broken, has acne or boils, or any individual that has jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes)
- No tattooing is allowed on individuals under the age of 18
 - Parental consent is not accepted
 - Artists may be charged with a misdemeanor if tattooing under-aged individuals
- Artists must have a vinyl-ized apron, or a disposable lap cloth to be discarded after each client
- Tattooed areas must be covered with a sterile dressing upon completion
 - Gauze, bandages, or other products must state sterile on the packaging
 - Dressings on a roll are not considered sterile once opened, therefore are prohibited
 - Sterile dressings may not be required for microblade/permanent makeup
- Artists must maintain records of all clients tattooed that includes Name, Address, Telephone Number, Date of Birth and Signature

The Health Department will be on-site throughout the event to answer any questions or be of assistance.