



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Public Health  
Bureau of Environmental Health  
Radiation Control Program  
Schrafft Center, Suite 1M2A  
529 Main Street, Charlestown, MA 02129  
(617) 242-3035 (617) 242-3457 - Fax

DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

JUDYANN BIGBY, MD  
SECRETARY

JOHN AUERBACH  
COMMISSIONER

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**AGENCY INFORMATION NOTICE 09-01**

**LASER TATTOO REMOVAL**

**Addressees**

All Massachusetts Local Boards of Health

**Purpose**

The Massachusetts Radiation Control Program (RCP) is issuing this information notice to provide guidance to local Boards of Health regarding the practice of laser tattoo removal, and to describe the RCP regulatory requirements associated with this practice.

**Background**

The RCP has become aware that persons offering laser tattoo removal services are appearing at body art conventions in Massachusetts, and some are traveling from town to town offering their services at tattoo shops. Lasers capable of removing tattoo ink are powerful, and can cause temporary or permanent tissue damage, including blindness, if used improperly. Because of the risk of injury, lasers of this type are regulated by the commonwealth, and operators are required to comply with 105 CMR 121.000, *Regulations for the Control of Lasers*.

Among other things, 105 CMR 121.000 requires operators of laser facilities to:

- register their laser facility with the RCP prior to operating the laser
- post the registration certificate at the place where the laser is being operated
- use laser devices whose design meets accepted national standards
- maintain records showing receipt, transfer and disposal of all lasers
- submit to inspections by RCP staff

In addition to the above requirements, if the laser is being brought into Massachusetts from outside the commonwealth, the laser operator **must provide at least ten (10) working days written notice** to the RCP before the laser is used in Massachusetts.

The use of lasers for certain cosmetic procedures is considered to be the practice of medicine in Massachusetts, and is regulated by the Board of Registration in Medicine (BORIM). Regulatory changes being proposed by BORIM may encompass laser tattoo removal.

**Action Requested**

Local Boards of Health are requested to contact the RCP should they become aware of anyone providing, or proposing to provide, laser tattoo removal services in their city or town. The point of contact at the RCP for laser registration issues is William Sellers, who can be reached at (617) 242-3035, Extension 2052, or by e-mail at <william.sellers@state.ma.us>.

Sincerely,

/s/

Robert Walker  
Director