




NATURAL HAIR  
PROFESSIONALS COALITION

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## What Happens If Illinois Cancels the Hair Braiding License?

### Right now in Illinois:

- 1** Licensed braiders (having completed 350 hours of training) can legally work in salons.
- 2** Cosmetologists (1,500 hours) and barbers (1,500 hours) can also legally work in salons.
- 3** The braiding license protects cultural hair braiders by giving them a legal, affordable, and relevant path into the beauty industry.

### If the license is eliminated:

- 1** Braiders would no longer be legally allowed to work in a salon unless they completed 1,500 hours of cosmetology training (which costs \$15,000–\$25,000 and covers mostly irrelevant content).
- 2** Independent braiding shops could be shut down because the law requires salons to employ only licensed practitioners.
- 3** Thousands of Illinois braiders would be pushed into the underground economy, where there's no health oversight or consumer protection.
- 4** This creates economic harm, career barriers, and loss of cultural representation in the licensed beauty industry.

***Canceling the braiding license also doesn't protect consumers — it erases career pathways, drives braiders out of salons, and harms both workers and clients.***

## HB3356 is CREATING a carrier to entry for hair braiders and here is why:

**Illinois State Law: A License is Required to Perform Hair Services**—Under 225 ILCS 410/1-7 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes—the Barber, Cosmetology, Esthetics, Hair Braiding, and Nail Technology Act of 1985—the law is crystal clear: “It is unlawful for any person to practice, or to hold himself or herself out to be a cosmetologist, esthetician, nail technician, hair braider, or barber without a license... issued by the Department.” It's also unlawful for any business to operate a salon, barber shop, or other facility offering these services without a valid certificate of registration issued by the Department.

- Anyone offering hair services—whether cutting, styling, braiding, or otherwise—must hold a valid state license (e.g., cosmetologist, hair braider).
- Salons or shops must be registered correctly under the same law to operate legally.

### To summarize:

- If HB3356 passes, hair braiders can braid hair without a license — but they could not legally work in a licensed salon.
- Illinois law requires salons to employ only licensed professionals recognized under the Act. If “hair braiding” is no longer in the Act, then braiders would not be recognized and could not be hired in salons.
- Braiders could only operate independently (from their homes, private studios, etc.) but not inside licensed salons — unless they attended cosmetology school and obtained a cosmetology license (1,500 hours, costing \$ 15,000–\$ 25,000).