

HOUSE No. 4978

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, January 28, 2026.

The committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure, to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 323) of Christine P. Barber for legislation to mandate domestic violence and sexual assault awareness education for certain licensed professionals, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4978) ought to pass.

For the committee,

TACKEY CHAN.

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In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act to promote domestic violence and sexual assault awareness education and training in the field of cosmetology and barbering.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 87T of chapter 112 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2024
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the definition of “Board” and inserting in
3 place thereof the following definition:-

4 “Board”, the board of registration of cosmetology and barbering established in section 42
5 of chapter 13.

6 SECTION 2. Section 87BB of said chapter 112, as so appearing, is hereby amended by
7 striking out the fifth paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:-

8 The board may establish rules and regulations as necessary for the proper conduct of
9 schools, instructor qualifications, courses of study, hours of study and standards of professional
10 training; provided, however, that the board shall require a school that teaches hairdressing to
11 require enrolled students to complete at least 1 hour of domestic violence and sexual assault
12 awareness training as approved by the board.

SECTION 3. Section 87CC of said chapter 112 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding at the end thereof the following new paragraph:-

The commissioner of the division of occupational licensure shall establish and promote the voluntary use of a free of charge standardized domestic violence and sexual assault awareness online training for licensees as approved by the board.

SECTION 4. Said chapter 112 is hereby further amended by inserting after section 87DD the following section:-

Section 87DD1/2. The board shall, in consultation with the attorney general, make available on their website a sample sign to persons owning a shop, school or mobile business engaged in cosmetology, which shall be displayed in such shop, school or mobile business in a conspicuous manner that is clearly visible to patrons and employees.

The sign shall be not less than 8 ½ inches high and 11 inches wide and shall contain the following notice:

“WARNING. Obtaining forced labor or services is a crime under Massachusetts law. If you or someone you know is being forced to engage in any activity using threats, harm, or restraint – whether it is commercial sex, housework, farm work or any other activity – call the National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888. You can remain anonymous, and the Hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.”

The notice text shall be provided on the sample sign in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Portuguese and any other language recommended by the board. Annually, the

board, in consultation with the attorney general, shall determine if the sample sign should be made available in any other language.

SECTION 5. Section 87JJ of said chapter 112, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the third paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:-

The board may establish rules and regulations as necessary for the conduct of post-secondary institutions, qualifications of instructors, courses of study, hours of study and standards of professional training; provided, however, that the board shall require a post-secondary institution that teaches hairdressing to require enrolled students to complete at least 1 hour of domestic violence and sexual assault awareness training as approved by the board.

SECTION 6. Chapter 258C of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 13 the following section:-

Section 13A. No licensee, student or regular student under sections 87T to 87KK, inclusive, of chapter 112, or the employer of such licensee, student or regular student, who has completed at least of 1 hour of domestic violence and sexual assault awareness training as approved by the board of registration of cosmetology and barbering shall be: (i) criminally liable for acting in good faith or failing to act on information obtained during the course of employment or enrollment in a school as defined in said section 87T of said chapter 112 concerning alleged domestic violence or sexual assault; or (ii) civilly liable for damages as a result of acts or omissions in providing or obtaining in good faith, or attempting to provide or obtain, such assistance or enrollment unless such acts or omissions constitute willful, wanton or reckless conduct.