

Hair and beauty industry calls for five client cap to be scrapped ahead of NSW reopening

The hair and beauty industry is calling on the NSW Government to reconsider restrictions on personal services ahead of reopening next month.

The Australian Hair Council (AHC), the Australian Workers' Union through Hair Stylists Australia (HSA), and the Aesthetic & Beauty Industry Council (ABIC) have come together due to serious concerns over the 'five clients per premises' rule.

The NSW Government's Roadmap states that once NSW passes the 70 per cent double vaccination target, personal services may open with one person per four square metres, with up to five clients per premises permitted.

"Our members were among the first forced to close and have been without work for almost 12 weeks. This cap will make it even harder for them to recover from the financial devastation they have already experienced," said Daniel Walton, AWU National Secretary.

"We are deeply concerned that as an unintended consequence of this rule, many small and medium sized businesses will fail, resulting in thousands of workers left unemployed and ineligible for government financial assistance."

AHC Chief Executive Sandy Chong said: "This measure will not help control COVID transmission within hair and beauty venues in any meaningful way.

"Where a salon or premises is large enough, these venues can safely and effectively operate under the four square metre rule without the conditional cap of five people.

"These restrictions are also completely inconsistent with other industries such as fitness and hospitality, which bear similar, if not greater risks of transmission, and will be able to operate without such a restrictive cap.

"We believe the hair and beauty industry can and should be allowed to operate with one person for each four-square metre, along with sensible precautions including compulsory QR code check-ins, client screenings, cleaning of stations, the use of screens and protective glasses where appropriate as well as the use of masks and gloves for staff for the rest of the year."

ABIC Director and Chair Reika Roberts said: "The NSW Government has failed to consider the significant skills and qualifications of hair and beauty workers in the areas of hygiene and infection control.

"These matters are pressing and important to the survival of the industry which has been one of the hardest hit by the COVID pandemic.

“Small businesses, workers and the broader community deserve clarity before we reopen and should not be an afterthought.”

Contact: