South Dakota: the rules for aesthetic practice

What South Dakota's laws and boards say about who may do aesthetic treatments, who must supervise them, and who can own the practice.

Nurse practitioners: Full Practice Authority

Nurse practitioners

Full (AANP), after a supervised start. New CNPs practice at least 1,040 hours under a written collaborative agreement with a South Dakota licensed physician or CNP (AANP also lists certified nurse midwives); after that they practice without one. NPs evaluate, diagnose and prescribe; the Board of Nursing alone regulates NP licensure (SDCL 36-9A-5). Controlled-substance details weren't confirmed in November 2026.

Delegating to RNs, estheticians and staff

The Board of Nursing's practice statement on dermatological procedures lets trained RNs and LPNs, supervised by a South Dakota licensed physician, NP or PA and under a prescribed plan of care, do non-ablative light-based treatments, non-invasive peels, microdermabrasion, cold-based fat reduction and FDA-approved injectables such as Botox. Nurses may not inject dermal fillers, and only physicians, NPs and PAs may use lasers. LPNs need the prescriber physically present and may not do sclerotherapy. The prescriber carries final responsibility for what is delegated.

Who can own the practice

South Dakota law says a corporation may not practice medicine, but it may employ a physician if the agreement doesn't limit the physician's independent judgment, the corporation doesn't profit from the practice of medicine itself (it may charge for facilities, equipment and administration), and the agreement runs no more than 3 years before yearly renewal (SDCL 36-4-8.1). Nurses, NPs included, may form a nursing corporation or PLLC (SDCL 47-11E-1). Confirm the entity type with a South Dakota healthcare attorney.

The biggest risk in South Dakota. A new NP opening an independent practice before 1,040 collaborative hours, and RNs injecting fillers or running lasers.

Check it with your boards: South Dakota Board of Nursing - sdbon.org and South Dakota Board of Medical and Osteopathic Examiners - sdbmoe.gov. Checked November 3, 2026. Rules change, so read the current rule on the board's own site before you act.

Ask S.A.G.E. next. S.A.G.E., our AI practice advisor, answers from this same South Dakota reference, free in your TMAA account, which you can set up at go.medicalaestheticsassociation.com/start-here. Try:

1. I'm an RN in South Dakota. What has to be in place before I offer injectables?
2. What must my medical director agreement cover in South Dakota?
3. What can an esthetician do in South Dakota, and what needs an order?

S.A.G.E. is not legal advice. For a binding answer, talk to a healthcare attorney in your state.