

### **What is the impact of New York's new nail salon rules?**

Valley, a high-end nail salon on a leafy street in Manhattan, is spacious and sleek, its whitewashed walls adorned with contemporary art.

The salon has a loyal customer base of well-heeled New Yorkers willing to pay the higher-than-usual minimum fee of \$30 (£19) for a manicure.

Since she started the business in 2006, owner Nina Werman's approach to dealing with her employees has also set the salon apart.

She pays her nail technicians more than the minimum wage, provides paid lunch breaks, training, overtime and sick pay as well as protective masks and gloves.[...]

To reassure its customers after the expose, Valley put a "Handle with Care" sticker on its front door. It aims to encourage customers to tout salons with ethical labour practices.

But take up of the voluntary scheme has been low - so far just 10 stores have adopted it - and it has been rapidly overtaken by official measures to regulate the sector introduced by the state government of New York.

Among the new rules: salon owners must pay minimum wage and overtime hours, and provide eye protection, masks and gloves for those working with chemicals. Manicurists must be licensed with the state, and a new "Bill of Rights for Nail Workers" is now prominently displayed in salons. Inspections and fines on salons have increased, and legislation allows the state to quickly shut down shops which do not comply.[...]

Many business owners fear the changes could be counterproductive, but Werman is hopeful the regulations will make more salons operate like Valley.

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**255 Words**