
Consumer Protection & Business Committee

HB 1400

Brief Description: Creating alternative professional licensing standards.

Sponsors: Representatives Vick, Kirby and Dufault.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows the Department of Licensing to consider competency-based standards for professional licenses.
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Hearing Date: 2/8/21

Staff: Serena Dolly (786-7150).

Background:

The Department of Licensing (DOL) regulates a number of businesses and professions. For regulated professions, the DOL issues licenses and ensures compliance with professional standards and laws.

Examples of professions regulated directly by the DOL, or in coordination with a board or commission, include:

- architects;
- cosmetologists;
- funeral directors;
- real estate brokers; and
- security guards.

Requirements for a professional license, certificate, registration, or permit vary considerably.

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Some professions may require:

- college-level coursework;
- experience;
- an examination;
- some type of background check;
- a surety bond, insurance, or other minimum financial standards;
- minimum safety standards;
- continuing education for licensees; or
- duties of care for clients.

Many professions have provisions for some form of reciprocity or consideration of experience from other states or military service. In addition, the DOL and other licensing authorities must expedite the issuance of a broad range of professional licenses, certificates, registrations, or permits for qualified military spouses.

Summary of Bill:

The DOL may issue a professional license, without regard to other requirements, to an applicant who meets all competency-based licensing requirements for that specific professional license.

"Competency-based licensing requirement" is defined as a practical assessment of knowledge and skills that clearly demonstrate a person is prepared to engage in a profession regulated by the DOL. The DOL must determine the competency-based licensing requirement is at least as effective as examination-based licensing requirements at demonstrating proficiency and protecting the health and safety of the public. A competency-based licensing requirement may include, but is not limited to, any combination of training, experience, testing, or observation.

When a reciprocity agreement is in place with a national organization to facilitate the licensing of out-of-state professionals, the DOL must continue to regulate the licensing in accordance with that agreement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 1, 2021.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2022.