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**HOUSE BILL 2159**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

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**By** Representatives Eslick, Schmidt, and Tharinger

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1 AN ACT Relating to establishing a pathway for qualifying to  
2 become a journey level electrician based on experience working with a  
3 small electrical contractor; and amending RCW 19.28.006, 19.28.191,  
4 and 19.28.161.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 19.28.006 and 2013 c 23 s 27 are each amended to  
7 read as follows:

8 The definitions in this section apply throughout this subchapter.

9 (1) "Administrator" means a person designated by an electrical  
10 contractor to supervise electrical work and electricians in  
11 accordance with the rules adopted under this chapter.

12 (2) "Basic electrical work" means the work classified in (a) and  
13 (b) of this subsection as class A and class B basic electrical work:

14 (a) "Class A basic electrical work" means the like-in-kind  
15 replacement of a: Contactor, relay, timer, starter, circuit board, or  
16 similar control component; household appliance; circuit breaker;  
17 fuse; residential luminaire; lamp; snap switch; dimmer; receptacle  
18 outlet; thermostat; heating element; luminaire ballast with an exact  
19 same ballast; ten horsepower or smaller motor; or wiring, appliances,  
20 devices, or equipment as specified by rule.

1 (b) "Class B basic electrical work" means work other than class A  
2 basic electrical work that requires minimal electrical circuit  
3 modifications and has limited exposure hazards. Class B basic  
4 electrical work includes the following:

5 (i) Extension of not more than one branch electrical circuit  
6 limited to one hundred twenty volts and twenty amps each where:

7 (A) No cover inspection is necessary; and

8 (B) The extension does not supply more than two outlets;

9 (ii) Like-in-kind replacement of a single luminaire not exceeding  
10 two hundred seventy-seven volts and twenty amps;

11 (iii) Like-in-kind replacement of a motor larger than ten  
12 horsepower;

13 (iv) The following low voltage systems:

14 (A) Repair and replacement of devices not exceeding one hundred  
15 volt-amperes in Class 2, Class 3, or power limited low voltage  
16 systems in one and two-family dwellings;

17 (B) Repair and replacement of the following devices not exceeding  
18 one hundred volt-amperes in Class 2, Class 3, or power limited low  
19 voltage systems in other buildings, provided the equipment is not for  
20 fire alarm or nurse call systems and is not located in an area  
21 classified as hazardous by the national electrical code; or

22 (v) Wiring, appliances, devices, or equipment as specified by  
23 rule.

24 (3) "Board" means the electrical board under RCW 19.28.311.

25 (4) "Chapter" or "subchapter" means the subchapter, if no chapter  
26 number is referenced.

27 (5) "Department" means the department of labor and industries.

28 (6) "Director" means the director of the department or the  
29 director's designee.

30 (7) "Electrical construction trade" includes, but is not limited  
31 to, installing or maintaining electrical wires and equipment that are  
32 used for light, heat, or power and installing and maintaining remote  
33 control, signaling, power limited, or communication circuits or  
34 systems.

35 (8) "Electrical contractor" means a person, firm, partnership,  
36 corporation, or other entity that offers to undertake, undertakes,  
37 submits a bid for, or does the work of installing or maintaining  
38 wires or equipment that convey electrical current.

39 (9) "Equipment" means any equipment or apparatus that directly  
40 uses, conducts, insulates, or is operated by electricity but does not

1 mean: Plug-in appliances; or plug-in equipment as determined by the  
2 department by rule.

3 (10) "Industrial control panel" means a factory-wired or user-  
4 wired assembly of industrial control equipment such as motor  
5 controllers, switches, relays, power supplies, computers, cathode ray  
6 tubes, transducers, and auxiliary devices. The panel may include  
7 disconnect means and motor branch circuit protective devices.

8 (11) "Journey level electrician" means a person who has been  
9 issued a journey level electrician certificate of competency by the  
10 department.

11 (12) "Like-in-kind" means having similar characteristics such as  
12 voltage requirements, current draw, and function, and being in the  
13 same location.

14 (13) "Master electrician" means either a master journey level  
15 electrician or master specialty electrician.

16 (14) "Master journey level electrician" means a person who has  
17 been issued a master journey level electrician certificate of  
18 competency by the department and who may be designated by an  
19 electrical contractor to supervise electrical work and electricians  
20 in accordance with rules adopted under this chapter.

21 (15) "Master specialty electrician" means a person who has been  
22 issued a specialty electrician certificate of competency by the  
23 department and who may be designated by an electrical contractor to  
24 supervise electrical work and electricians in accordance with rules  
25 adopted under this chapter.

26 (16) "Small electrical contractor" means an electrical contractor  
27 with 20 or fewer employees.

28 (17) "Specialty electrician" means a person who has been issued a  
29 specialty electrician certificate of competency by the department.

30 **Sec. 2.** RCW 19.28.191 and 2023 c 95 s 1 are each amended to read  
31 as follows:

32 (1) Upon receipt of the application, the department shall review  
33 the application and determine whether the applicant is eligible to  
34 take an examination for the master journey level electrician, journey  
35 level electrician, master specialty electrician, or specialty  
36 electrician certificate of competency.

37 (a) To be eligible to take the examination for a master journey  
38 level electrician certificate of competency, the applicant must have

1 possessed a valid journey level electrician certificate of competency  
2 for four years.

3 (b) To be eligible to take the examination for a master specialty  
4 electrician certificate of competency, the applicant must have  
5 possessed a valid specialty electrician certificate of competency, in  
6 the specialty applied for, for two years.

7 (c) To be eligible to take the examination for a journey level  
8 certificate of competency, the applicant must have:

9 (i) Successfully completed the work experience and education  
10 requirements of an 8,000 hour electrical construction trade  
11 apprenticeship program approved under chapter 49.04 RCW. Four  
12 thousand of the hours must be new industrial or commercial electrical  
13 installations under the supervision of a master journey level  
14 electrician or journey level electrician and not more than a total of  
15 4,000 hours in all specialties under the supervision of a master  
16 journey level electrician, journey level electrician, master  
17 specialty electrician working in that electrician's specialty, or  
18 specialty electrician working in that electrician's specialty.  
19 Specialty electricians with less than a 4,000 hour work experience  
20 requirement cannot credit the time required to obtain that specialty  
21 towards qualifying to become a journey level electrician. The holder  
22 of a specialty electrician certificate of competency with a 4,000  
23 hour work experience requirement shall be allowed to credit the work  
24 experience required to obtain that certificate towards apprenticeship  
25 requirements for qualifying to take the examination for a journey  
26 level electrician certificate of competency. An apprenticeship  
27 program may grant up to 3,000 hours of experience credit to an  
28 applicant who has previously completed at least 3,000 hours of new  
29 industrial or commercial electrical installations under the employ  
30 and supervision of one or more small electrical contractors pursuant  
31 to (c) (v) of this subsection;

32 (ii) Successfully completed an 8,000 hour electrical construction  
33 trade apprenticeship program in another jurisdiction equivalent to an  
34 apprenticeship program approved under chapter 49.04 RCW. Four  
35 thousand of the hours must be new industrial or commercial electrical  
36 installations;

37 (iii) An out-of-state journey level electrician certificate  
38 obtained through examination by a state licensing jurisdiction  
39 requiring at least 8,000 hours of supervised experience in the  
40 electrical construction trade installing and maintaining electrical

1 wiring and equipment for installations of a type regulated under this  
2 chapter. Four thousand of the hours must be new industrial or  
3 commercial electrical installations. All experience applied toward  
4 qualifying for examination must be experience gained in the state  
5 that issued the certificate or military experience not exceeding that  
6 allowed under this chapter, or both;

7 (iv) At least 16,000 hours of out-of-state experience in the  
8 electrical construction trade installing and maintaining electrical  
9 wiring and equipment for installations of a type regulated under this  
10 chapter. Four thousand of the hours must be new industrial or  
11 commercial electrical installations; ((~~or~~))

12 (v) At least 8,000 hours of trainee experience in the electrical  
13 construction trade installing and maintaining electrical wiring and  
14 equipment for installations of a type regulated under this chapter,  
15 while in the employ, and under the supervision of, one or more small  
16 electrical contractors. Four thousand of the hours must be new  
17 industrial or commercial electrical installations; or

18 (vi) Eight thousand hours of experience in the electrical  
19 construction trade installing and maintaining electrical wiring and  
20 equipment for installations of a type regulated under this chapter  
21 while serving in a construction battalion in the armed forces of the  
22 United States.

23 (d) To be eligible to take the examination for a specialty  
24 electrician certificate of competency, the applicant must have:

25 (i) Worked in the residential (as specified in WAC  
26 296-46B-920(2)(a)), pump and irrigation (as specified in WAC  
27 296-46B-920(2)(b)), sign (as specified in WAC 296-46B-920(2)(d)),  
28 limited energy (as specified in WAC 296-46B-920(2)(e)),  
29 nonresidential maintenance (as specified in WAC 296-46B-920(2)(g)),  
30 or other new nonresidential specialties as determined by the  
31 department in rule under the supervision of a master journey level  
32 electrician, journey level electrician, master specialty electrician  
33 working in that electrician's specialty, or specialty electrician  
34 working in that electrician's specialty for a minimum of 4,000 hours;

35 (ii) Worked in the appliance repair specialty as determined by  
36 the department in rule, restricted nonresidential maintenance as  
37 determined by the department in rule, the equipment repair specialty  
38 as determined by the department in rule, the pump and irrigation  
39 specialty other than as defined by (d)(i) of this subsection or  
40 domestic pump specialty as determined by the department in rule, or a

1 specialty other than the designated specialties in (d)(i) of this  
2 subsection for a minimum of the initial ninety days, or longer if set  
3 by rule by the department. The restricted nonresidential maintenance  
4 specialty is limited to a maximum of 277 volts and 20 amperes for  
5 lighting branch circuits and/or a maximum of 250 volts and 60 amperes  
6 for other circuits excluding the replacement or repair of circuit  
7 breakers. The department may alter the scope of work for the  
8 restricted nonresidential maintenance specialty by rule. The initial  
9 period must be spent under one hundred percent supervision of a  
10 master journey level electrician, journey level electrician, master  
11 specialty electrician working in that electrician's specialty, or  
12 specialty electrician working in that electrician's specialty. After  
13 this initial period, a person may take the specialty examination. If  
14 the person passes the examination, the person may work unsupervised  
15 for the balance of the minimum hours required for certification. A  
16 person may not be certified as a specialty electrician in the  
17 appliance repair specialty or in a specialty other than the  
18 designated specialties in (d)(i) of this subsection, however, until  
19 the person has worked a minimum of 2,000 hours in that specialty, or  
20 longer if set by rule by the department;

21 (iii) Successfully completed an approved apprenticeship program  
22 under chapter 49.04 RCW for the applicant's specialty in the  
23 electrical construction trade; or

24 (iv) In meeting the training requirements for the pump and  
25 irrigation or domestic pump specialties, the individual shall be  
26 allowed to obtain the experience required by this section at the same  
27 time the individual is meeting the experience required by RCW  
28 18.106.040(1)(d). After meeting the training requirements provided in  
29 this section, the individual may take the examination and upon  
30 passing the examination, meeting additional training requirements as  
31 may still be required for those seeking a pump and irrigation, or a  
32 domestic pump specialty certificate as defined by rule, and paying  
33 the applicable fees, the individual must be issued the appropriate  
34 certificate. The department may include an examination for specialty  
35 plumbing certificate defined in RCW 18.106.010(14)(c) with the  
36 examination required by this section. The department, by rule and in  
37 consultation with the electrical board, may establish additional  
38 equivalent ways to gain the experience requirements required by this  
39 subsection. The department shall establish a single document for  
40 those who have received both an electrical specialty certification as

1 defined by this subsection and have also met the certification  
2 requirements for the specialty plumber as defined by RCW  
3 18.106.010(14)(c), showing that the individual has received both  
4 certifications. No other experience or training requirements may be  
5 imposed.

6 (e) Any applicant for a journey level electrician certificate of  
7 competency who has successfully completed a two-year program in the  
8 electrical construction trade at public community or technical  
9 colleges, or not-for-profit nationally accredited technical or trade  
10 schools licensed by the workforce training and education coordinating  
11 board under chapter 28C.10 RCW, may substitute up to two years of the  
12 technical or trade school program for two years of work experience  
13 under a master journey level electrician or journey level electrician  
14 required under the apprenticeship program. The applicant shall obtain  
15 the additional two years of work experience required in industrial or  
16 commercial electrical installation prior to the beginning, or after  
17 the completion, of the technical school program. Any applicant who  
18 has received training in the electrical construction trade in the  
19 armed service of the United States may be eligible to apply armed  
20 service work experience towards qualification to complete an  
21 apprenticeship and take the examination for the journey level  
22 electrician certificate of competency.

23 (f) An applicant for a specialty electrician certificate of  
24 competency who, after January 1, 2000, has successfully completed a  
25 two-year program in the electrical construction trade at a public  
26 community or technical college, or a not-for-profit nationally  
27 accredited technical or trade school licensed by the workforce  
28 training and education coordinating board under chapter 28C.10 RCW,  
29 may substitute up to one year of the technical or trade school  
30 program for one year of work experience under a master journey level  
31 electrician, journey level electrician, master specialty electrician  
32 working in that electrician's specialty, or specialty electrician  
33 working in that electrician's specialty. Any applicant who has  
34 received training in the electrical construction trade in the armed  
35 services of the United States may be eligible to apply armed service  
36 work experience towards qualification to take the examination for an  
37 appropriate specialty electrician certificate of competency.

38 (g) The department must determine whether hours of training and  
39 experience in the armed services or school program are in the  
40 electrical construction trade and appropriate as a substitute for

1 hours of work experience. The department must use the following  
2 criteria for evaluating the equivalence of classroom electrical  
3 training programs and work in the electrical construction trade:

4 (i) A two-year electrical training program must consist of 3,000  
5 or more hours.

6 (ii) In a two-year electrical training program, a minimum of  
7 2,400 hours of student/instructor contact time must be technical  
8 electrical instruction directly related to the scope of work of the  
9 electrical specialty. Student/instructor contact time includes  
10 lecture and in-school lab.

11 (iii) The department may not allow credit for a program that  
12 accepts more than 1,000 hours transferred from another school's  
13 program.

14 (iv) Electrical specialty training school programs of less than  
15 two years will have all of the above student/instructor contact time  
16 hours proportionately reduced. Such programs may not apply to more  
17 than fifty percent of the work experience required to attain  
18 certification.

19 (v) Electrical training programs of less than two years may not  
20 be credited towards qualification for journey level electrician  
21 unless the training program is used to gain qualification for a 4,000  
22 hour electrical specialty.

23 (h) No other requirement for eligibility may be imposed.

24 (2) The department shall establish reasonable rules for the  
25 examinations to be given applicants for certificates of competency.  
26 In establishing the rules, the department shall consult with the  
27 board. Upon determination that the applicant is eligible to take the  
28 examination, the department shall so notify the applicant, indicating  
29 instructions for taking the examination.

30 (3) No noncertified individual may work unsupervised more than  
31 one year beyond the date when the trainee would be eligible to test  
32 for a certificate of competency if working on a full-time basis after  
33 original application for the trainee certificate. For the purposes of  
34 this section, "full-time basis" means 2,000 hours.

35 **Sec. 3.** RCW 19.28.161 and 2018 c 249 s 2 are each amended to  
36 read as follows:

37 (1) No person may engage in the electrical construction trade  
38 without having a valid master journey level electrician certificate  
39 of competency, journey level electrician certificate of competency,



1 master specialty electrician certificate of competency, or specialty  
2 electrician certificate of competency issued by the department in  
3 accordance with this chapter. Electrician certificate of competency  
4 specialties include, but are not limited to: Residential, pump and  
5 irrigation, limited energy system, signs, nonresidential maintenance,  
6 restricted nonresidential maintenance, and appliance repair.

7 (2) (a) A person (~~who~~) may work in the electrical construction  
8 trade if supervised by a certified master journey level electrician,  
9 journey level electrician, master specialty electrician in that  
10 electrician's specialty, or specialty electrician in that  
11 electrician's specialty if the person is: (i) Registered in an  
12 apprenticeship program approved under chapter 49.04 RCW or equivalent  
13 apprenticeship program approved by the department for the electrical  
14 construction trade; (ii) learning the electrical construction trade  
15 while working in a specialty; (~~or~~) (iii) learning the electrical  
16 construction trade in a program described in RCW 19.28.191(1) (e) or  
17 (f) (~~for a journey level certificate of competency may work in the~~  
18 ~~electrical construction trade if supervised by a certified master~~  
19 ~~journey level electrician, journey level electrician, master~~  
20 ~~specialty electrician in that electrician's specialty, or specialty~~  
21 ~~electrician in that electrician's specialty)); or (iv) learning the  
22 electrical construction trade while working as a trainee under RCW  
23 19.28.191(1) (c) (v).~~

24 (b) All apprentices and individuals learning the electrical  
25 construction trade shall obtain an electrical training certificate  
26 from the department. The certificate shall authorize the holder to  
27 learn the electrical construction trade while under the direct  
28 supervision of a master journey level electrician, journey level  
29 electrician, master specialty electrician working in that  
30 electrician's specialty, or specialty electrician working in that  
31 electrician's specialty. The certificate may include a photograph of  
32 the holder. The holder of the electrical training certificate shall  
33 renew the certificate biennially. At the time of renewal, the holder  
34 shall provide the department with an accurate list of the holder's  
35 employers in the electrical construction industry for the previous  
36 biennial period and the number of hours worked for each employer. The  
37 holder shall also provide proof of forty-eight hours of: Approved  
38 classroom training covering this chapter, the national electrical  
39 code, or electrical theory; or equivalent classroom training taken as  
40 part of an approved apprenticeship program under chapter 49.04 RCW or

1 an approved electrical training program under RCW 19.28.191(1)(e). A  
2 biennial fee shall be charged for the issuance or renewal of the  
3 certificate. The department shall set the fee by rule. The fee shall  
4 cover but not exceed the cost of administering and enforcing the  
5 trainee certification and supervision requirements of this chapter.

6 (c)(i) Apprentices and individuals learning the electrical  
7 construction trade shall have their electrical training certificates  
8 in their possession at all times that they are performing electrical  
9 work. They shall show their certificates to an authorized  
10 representative of the department at the representative's request.

11 (ii) Unless working in a specialty or as a trainee under RCW  
12 19.28.191(1)(c)(v), apprentices and individuals learning the  
13 electrical construction trade must also have in their possession  
14 proof of apprenticeship or training program registration. They shall  
15 show their apprenticeship or training program registration documents  
16 to an authorized representative of the department at the  
17 representative's request.

18 (3) Any person who has been issued an electrical training  
19 certificate under this chapter may work(~~(a) If that person is~~  
20 ~~under supervision, and is (b) unless working in a specialty,~~) if the  
21 person is: (a) Under supervision; and (b)(i) registered in an  
22 approved journey level apprenticeship program, as appropriate; ((e))  
23 (ii) learning the electrical construction trade in a program  
24 described in RCW 19.28.191(1)((e)) (c)(v) or (e) for a journey  
25 level certificate of competency; or (iii) working in a specialty.  
26 Supervision shall consist of a person being on the same jobsite and  
27 under the control of either a certified master journey level  
28 electrician, journey level electrician, master specialty electrician  
29 working in that electrician's specialty, or specialty electrician  
30 working in that electrician's specialty. Either a certified master  
31 journey level electrician, journey level electrician, master  
32 specialty electrician working in that electrician's specialty, or  
33 specialty electrician working in that electrician's specialty shall  
34 be on the same jobsite as the noncertified individual for a minimum  
35 of seventy-five percent of each working day unless otherwise provided  
36 in this chapter.

37 (4) The ratio of noncertified individuals to certified master  
38 journey level electricians, journey level electricians, master  
39 specialty electricians, or specialty electricians on any one jobsite  
40 is as follows:

1 (a) When working as a specialty electrician, not more than two  
2 noncertified individuals for every certified master specialty  
3 electrician working in that electrician's specialty, specialty  
4 electrician working in that electrician's specialty, master journey  
5 level electrician, or journey level electrician, except that the  
6 ratio requirements are one certified master specialty electrician  
7 working in that electrician's specialty, specialty electrician  
8 working in that electrician's specialty, master journey level  
9 electrician, or journey level electrician working as a specialty  
10 electrician to no more than four students enrolled in and working as  
11 part of an electrical construction program at public community or  
12 technical colleges, or not-for-profit nationally accredited trade or  
13 technical schools licensed by the workforce training and education  
14 coordinating board under chapter 28C.10 RCW. In meeting the ratio  
15 requirements for students enrolled in an electrical construction  
16 program at a trade school, a trade school may receive input and  
17 advice from the electrical board; and

18 (b) When working as a journey level electrician, not more than  
19 one noncertified individual for every certified master journey level  
20 electrician or journey level electrician, except that the ratio  
21 requirements shall be one certified master journey level electrician  
22 or journey level electrician to no more than four students enrolled  
23 in and working as part of an electrical construction program at  
24 public community or technical colleges, or not-for-profit nationally  
25 accredited trade or technical schools licensed by the workforce  
26 training and education coordinating board under chapter 28C.10 RCW.  
27 In meeting the ratio requirements for students enrolled in an  
28 electrical construction program at a trade school, a trade school may  
29 receive input and advice from the electrical board.

30 An individual who has a current training certificate and who has  
31 successfully completed or is currently enrolled in an approved  
32 apprenticeship program or in an electrical construction program at  
33 public community or technical colleges, or not-for-profit nationally  
34 accredited technical or trade schools licensed by the workforce  
35 training and education coordinating board under chapter 28C.10 RCW,  
36 may work without direct on-site supervision during the last six  
37 months of meeting the practical experience requirements of this  
38 chapter.

39 (5) For the residential (as specified in WAC 296-46B-920(2)(a)),  
40 pump and irrigation (as specified in WAC 296-46B-920(2)(b)), sign (as

1 specified in WAC 296-46B-920(2)(d)), limited energy (as specified in  
2 WAC 296-46B-920(2)(e)), nonresidential maintenance (as specified in  
3 WAC 296-46B-920(2)(g)), restricted nonresidential maintenance as  
4 determined by the department in rule, or other new nonresidential  
5 specialties, not including appliance repair, as determined by the  
6 department in rule, either a master journey level electrician,  
7 journey level electrician, master specialty electrician working in  
8 that electrician's specialty, or specialty electrician working in  
9 that electrician's specialty must be on the same jobsite as the  
10 noncertified individual for a minimum of seventy-five percent of each  
11 working day. Other specialties must meet the requirements specified  
12 in RCW 19.28.191(1)(d)(ii). When the ratio of certified electricians  
13 to noncertified individuals on a jobsite is one certified electrician  
14 to three or four noncertified individuals, the certified electrician  
15 must:

16 (a) Directly supervise and instruct the noncertified individuals  
17 and the certified electrician may not directly make or engage in an  
18 electrical installation; and

19 (b) Be on the same jobsite as the noncertified individual for a  
20 minimum of one hundred percent of each working day.

21 (6) The electrical contractor shall accurately verify and attest  
22 to the electrical trainee hours worked by electrical trainees on  
23 behalf of the electrical contractor.

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