

1 HOUSE BILL NO. 808
2 INTRODUCED BY S. GUNDERSON
3
4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING LAWS RELATING TO SURETY BAIL
5 BOND INSURANCE; PROVIDING QUALIFICATIONS FOR A SURETY BAIL BOND INSURANCE LICENSE;
6 PROVIDING LICENSE REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING; PROVIDING FOR THE ARREST AUTHORITY OF
7 THE BAIL BOND SURETY INSURANCE PRODUCER PRODUCERS; REVISING SURPLUS LINES
8 INSURANCE LAWS; REVISING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY BY THE COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE;
9 AMENDING SECTIONS ~~33-2-306~~, 33-17-212, 33-26-106, 33-26-108, 46-9-401, AND 46-9-510, MCA; AND
10 PROVIDING EFFECTIVE DATES."

11
12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

13
14 NEW SECTION. Section 1. Special qualifications for surety bail bond insurance license. (1)
15 Before approving an application for a surety bail bond insurance license, the commissioner shall verify that the
16 individual:
17 (a) is a natural person at least 21 years of age;
18 (b) is a citizen of the United States or is lawfully entitled to remain and work in the United States;
19 (c) has obtained a high school diploma, a general equivalency diploma or equivalent document, or
20 an equivalent education as determined by the commissioner;
21 (d) has complied with the requirements of 33-17-211; and
22 (e) has successfully completed the training required in [section 2].
23 (2) An individual may not receive, renew, or hold a surety bail bond license if the individual:
24 (a) has been convicted of a felony in this state or of any offense committed in another state that
25 would be a felony if committed in this state; or
26 (b) has been convicted of an offense involving dishonesty, a breach of trust, violence, threatened
27 violence, or the unlawful use, sale, or possession of a controlled substance.

Amendment - 1st Reading/2nd House-blue - Requested by: Steve Gunderson - (S) Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs

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Drafter: Erin Sullivan, 406-444-3594

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1 (ii) cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

2 (3) In lieu of completing the basic course of training required by subsection (1), an applicant may
3 submit proof to the commissioner that the applicant has completed a course of training required by a municipal,
4 state, or federal law enforcement agency or a branch of the armed forces to carry out the duties of a peace
5 officer.

6 (4) An applicant for a surety bail bond insurance license shall complete the training required by this
7 section within 12 months after the date the applicant is employed by a licensed surety bail bond agent. The
8 commissioner may issue a temporary license to an applicant who has not completed the training if the applicant
9 is otherwise qualified to be issued a license as a surety bail bond agent. The temporary license:

10 (a) authorizes the applicant to act as a surety bail bond agent while employed by a licensed surety
11 bail bond agent;

12 (b) is valid for up to 12 months; and

13 (c) may not be renewed.

14
15 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Arrest by surety bail bond insurance producer.** (1) A surety bail bond
16 insurance producer who has probable cause to believe that a principal insured by the surety insurer to which
17 the producer is appointed ~~has violated the conditions of the principal's release as set by the court, violated the~~
18 ~~bond conditions set by the surety, or failed to remain law abiding, will fail to appear in court, in violation of 46-9-~~
19 ~~503(2), or has violated a condition of the principal's release~~ may use reasonable force to arrest and detain the
20 principal only as described in 46-9-510 and this section.

21 (2) The producer shall:

22 (a) except under exigent circumstances, prior to and no more than 6 hours before attempting to
23 apprehend the principal, notify the local police department or sheriff's office of the intent to apprehend the
24 principal in that jurisdiction by telephoning nonemergency dispatch and providing:

25 (i) the name and producer license number of the individual who will be effecting the arrest; and

26 (ii) the name and approximate location of the principal; and

27 (b) immediately after the arrest of the principal, notify the local police department or sheriff's office

1 by telephoning nonemergency dispatch and providing:

2 (i) the name and producer license number of the individual who effected the arrest;

3 (ii) the name of the principal arrested and the description of the location of the arrest; and

4 (iii) if no notification was given under subsection (2)(a), a detailed explanation of the reasons a
5 notification could not be given.

6 (3) As used in this section, the following definitions apply:

7 (a) "Principal" means a defendant or a witness who has been admitted to bail and who is obligated
8 to appear in court as required on penalty of forfeiting bail under a commercial bail bond.

9 (b) "Surety bail bond insurance producer" or "producer" means an insurance producer who is
10 licensed to sell, solicit, or negotiate commercial bail bonds pursuant to Title 33, chapters 17 and 26.

11

12 **Section 4.** Section 33-2-306, MCA, is amended to read:

13 ~~"33-2-306. Surplus lines insurance producer's authority under license—acceptance of~~
14 ~~business from other insurance producers. (1) Under a surplus lines insurance producer's license, the~~
15 ~~licensee may place surplus lines insurance, in compliance with this part, with a foreign or alien insurer not~~
16 ~~authorized to transact insurance in this state and may act as a surplus lines insurance producer in this state for~~
17 ~~the insurer.~~

18 ~~(2) The surplus lines insurance producer may accept surplus lines insurance from a licensed~~
19 ~~insurance producer of an authorized insurer or, if the commissioner agrees in advance, through an individual or~~
20 ~~business entity that has not been appointed as an insurance producer in this state and may provide~~
21 ~~compensation for the service, notwithstanding 33-17-1103.~~

22 ~~(3) (a) A surplus lines insurance producer who places or renews surplus lines insurance in~~
23 ~~accordance with subsection (1) may collect an inspection fee for the actual costs of inspecting the risk to be~~
24 ~~covered.~~

25 ~~(b) A surplus lines insurance producer who provides surety appearance bonds shall collect a~~
26 ~~minimum premium of 10% of the guaranteed amount of the surety appearance bond. Premium must be~~
27 ~~collected in full, and a receipt must be provided with the surety appearance bond and power in accordance with~~

1 ~~46-9-401."~~

2

3 **Section 4.** Section 33-17-212, MCA, is amended to read:

4 **"33-17-212. Examination required -- exceptions -- fees.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (6),
5 an individual applying for a license is required to pass a written examination. The examination must test the
6 knowledge of the individual concerning each kind of insurance listed in subsection (5) for which application is
7 made, the duties and responsibilities of an insurance producer, and the insurance laws and rules of this state.
8 The examination must be developed and conducted under rules adopted by the commissioner.

9 (2) (a) The commissioner may conduct the examination or make arrangements, including
10 contracting with an outside testing service, for administering the examination. The commissioner may arrange
11 for the testing service to recover the cost of the examination from the applicant.

12 (b) The commissioner may not charge a fee for an applicant taking an examination pertaining to
13 prepaid legal insurance. However, the commissioner may contract with an outside testing service for
14 administering the examination, and the commissioner may arrange for the testing service to recover the cost of
15 the examination from the applicant.

16 (3) An individual who fails to appear for the examination as scheduled or fails to pass the
17 examination may reapply for an examination and shall remit all forms before being rescheduled for another
18 examination.

19 (4) Except as provided in subsection (6), if the applicant is a business entity, each individual who is
20 to be named in the license as having authority to act for the applicant in its insurance transactions under the
21 license must meet the qualifications provided for in this section.

22 (5) Examination of an applicant for a license must cover only the kinds of insurance for which the
23 applicant has applied to be licensed, as constituted by any one or more of the following classifications:

24 (a) life insurance;

25 (b) disability insurance;

26 (c) property insurance, which for the purposes of this provision includes marine insurance;

27 (d) casualty insurance;

1 indicate that the insurance producer is or was licensed in good standing for the lines of authority requested."

2

3 **Section 5.** Section 33-26-106, MCA, is amended to read:

4 **"33-26-106. Cost of surety bond to be allowed in account of officer.** (1) Any court or officer whose
5 duty it is to pass upon the account of any person or corporation required by law to give a bond may, whenever
6 such person or corporation has given any such surety company as surety upon such bond, allow in the
7 settlement of such account a reasonable sum for the expense of procuring such surety.

8 (2) A surety bail bond insurance producer who provides surety appearance bonds shall collect a
9 minimum premium of 10% of the guaranteed amount of the surety appearance bond. Premium must be
10 collected in full and a receipt provided with the surety appearance bond and power in accordance with 46-9-
11 401."

12

13 **Section 6.** Section 33-26-108, MCA, is amended to read:

14 **"33-26-108. Rulemaking authority for surety insurers.** The commissioner may adopt rules
15 regarding surety insurers who sell, solicit, or negotiate commercial bail bonds and effect arrests or surrenders
16 pursuant to Title 46, chapter 9. The rules must include but are not limited to rules regarding the receipt of
17 collateral, the description of collateral received, the penalty for failure to return collateral, ~~and~~ an annual list of
18 forfeitures of bonds, and the form and manner for reporting surrenders and arrests effected under Title 46,
19 chapter 9."

20

21 **Section 7.** Section 46-9-401, MCA, is amended to read:

22 **"46-9-401. Forms of bail.** (1) Bail may be furnished in the following ways:

23 (a) by a deposit with the court of an amount equal to the required bail of cash, stocks, bonds,
24 certificates of deposit, or other personal property approved by the court;

25 (b) by pledging real estate situated within the state with an unencumbered equity, not exempt,
26 owned by the defendant or sureties at a value double the amount of the required bail;

27 (c) by posting a written undertaking executed by the defendant and by two sufficient sureties;

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1 (d) by posting a commercial surety bond executed by the defendant and by a qualified agent for
2 and on behalf of the surety company, with proof of the full premium payment collected by surety; or

3 (e) by posting an offender's driver's license in lieu of bail if the summons describes a violation of
4 any offense as provided in 61-5-214 and if the offender is the holder of an unexpired driver's license.

5 (2) The amount of the bond must ensure the appearance of the defendant at all times required
6 through all stages of the proceeding including trial de novo, if any, and unless the bond is denied by the court
7 pursuant to 46-9-107, must remain in effect until final sentence is pronounced in open court.

8 ~~(3) This chapter does not prohibit a surety from surrendering the defendant pursuant to 46-9-510 in a~~
9 ~~case in which the surety feels insecure in accepting liability for the defendant.~~

10 ~~(4)~~(3) Whenever a driver's license is accepted in lieu of bail, the judge shall return the driver's license
11 to the defendant:

12 (a) after the required bail has been posted or there has been a final determination of the charge;
13 and

14 (b) if the defendant pleaded guilty or was convicted, after a \$25 administrative fee has been paid
15 to the court."

16

17 **Section 8.** Section 46-9-510, MCA, is amended to read:

18 **"46-9-510. Surrender of defendant.** (1) ~~At any time before the forfeiture of bail or within 90 days after~~
19 ~~forfeiture:~~ The surety may arrest the defendant pursuant to [section 3]:

20 (a) before the forfeiture of bail; or

21 (b) within 90 days after the notice of forfeiture.

22 (2) The surety who has authority to arrest a person pursuant to [section 3], by written authority
23 endorsed on a certified copy of the bail bond, may empower any peace officer to make an arrest of the
24 defendant.

25 (3) ~~(a) the The defendant may surrender to the court or any peace officer of this state; or;~~

26 ~~(b) the The surety company or a surety bail bond insurance producer licensed to sell, solicit, or~~

27 negotiate commercial bail bonds pursuant to Title 33, chapter 17, may arrest the defendant pursuant to [section

1 3] and surrender the defendant to the court, any peace officer, or any detention center facility of this state. Any
2 arrest or surrender made pursuant to this subsection (3) must be reported to the commissioner of insurance on
3 a form and in a manner to be determined by the commissioner.

4 ~~(4)~~ The defendant may surrender to the court or any peace officer of this state.

5 ~~(2)(4)(5)~~ The peace officer or detention center facility shall detain the defendant in custody as
6 upon commitment and shall file a certificate, acknowledging the surrender, in the court having jurisdiction of the
7 defendant. The court shall then order the bail exonerated."

8
9 **NEW SECTION. Section 9. Codification instruction.** (1) [Sections 1 and 2] are intended to be
10 codified as an integral part of Title 33, chapter 17, and the provisions of Title 33, chapter 17, apply to [sections
11 1 and 2].

12 (2) [Section 3] is intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 46, chapter 6, and the
13 provisions of Title 46, chapter 6, apply to [section 3].

14
15 **NEW SECTION. Section 10. Severability.** If a part of [this act] is invalid, all valid parts that are
16 severable from the invalid part remain in effect. If a part of [this act] is invalid in one or more of its applications,
17 the part remains in effect in all valid applications that are severable from the invalid applications.

18
19 **COORDINATION SECTION. Section 11. Coordination instruction.** If both House Bill No. 62 and
20 [this act] are passed and approved and if both contain a section that amend 46-9-510, then [section 7 of House
21 Bill No. 62], amending 46-9-510, is void.

22
23 **COORDINATION SECTION. Section 12. Coordination instruction.** If both Senate Bill No. 172 and
24 [this act] are passed and approved, then Senate Bill No. 172 is void.

25
26 **NEW SECTION. Section 13. Effective dates.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), [this act] is
27 effective on passage and approval.

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1 (2) [Sections 2-~~through 4~~ and 4] are effective January 1, 2024.

2 - END -

AMENDED