

By Senator Bennett

21-660-04

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to electrical and alarm system
3 contracting; amending s. 489.517, F.S.;
4 requiring certificateholders and registrants to
5 have continuing education in preventing false
6 alarms; amending s. 489.518, F.S.; revising
7 qualifications for burglar alarm system agents;
8 requiring an additional criminal background
9 check; removing an exemption from training
10 requirements for persons who only perform
11 sales; authorizing employment as an alarm
12 system agent or burglar alarm system agent
13 under supervision for a specified period,
14 pending completion of training and the criminal
15 background check; providing the format, the
16 validity period, and renewal requirements for
17 burglar alarm system agent identification
18 cards; requiring an updated criminal background
19 check of each burglar alarm system agent who
20 renews certification; providing continuing
21 education requirements for burglar alarm system
22 agents; amending s. 489.5185, F.S.; revising
23 qualifications for fire alarm system agents;
24 requiring an additional criminal background
25 check; requiring an updated criminal background
26 check of each fire alarm system agent who
27 renews certification; requiring fire alarm
28 system agents to have continuing education in
29 preventing false alarms; amending s. 489.529,
30 F.S.; requiring a second alarm-verification
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1 call if the first call is unanswered; providing
2 an effective date.

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4 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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6 Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (4) of section
7 489.517, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

8 489.517 Renewal of certificate or registration;
9 continuing education.--

10 (4)

11 (b) Of the 14 classroom hours of continuing education
12 required, at least 7 hours must be on technical subjects, 1
13 hour on workers' compensation, 1 hour on workplace safety, ~~and~~
14 1 hour on business practices, and for alarm system contractors
15 and electrical contractors engaged in alarm system
16 contracting, 2 hours on false alarm prevention.

17 Section 2. Section 489.518, Florida Statutes, is
18 amended to read:

19 489.518 Alarm system agents.--

20 (1) A licensed electrical or alarm system contractor
21 may not employ a person to perform the duties of a burglar
22 alarm system agent unless the person:

23 (a) Is at least 18 years of age or has evidence of a
24 court-approved declaration of emancipation.

25 (b) Has successfully completed a minimum of 14 ~~12~~
26 hours of training, to include basic alarm system electronics
27 in addition to related training including CCTV and access
28 control training, with at least 2 hours of training in the
29 prevention of false alarms. Such training shall be from a
30 board-approved provider, and the employee or applicant for
31 employment shall provide proof of successful completion to the

1 licensed employer. The board shall by rule establish criteria
2 for the approval of training courses and providers and may by
3 rule establish criteria for accepting alternative nonclassroom
4 education on an hour-for-hour basis. The board shall approve
5 providers that conduct training in other than the English
6 language. The board shall establish a fee for the approval of
7 training providers or courses, not to exceed \$60. Qualified
8 employers may conduct training classes for their employees,
9 with board approval.

10 (c) Has not been convicted within the last 3 years of
11 a crime that directly relates to the business for which
12 employment is being sought. Although the employee is barred
13 from operating as an alarm system agent for 3 years subsequent
14 to his or her conviction, the employer shall be supplied the
15 information regarding any convictions occurring prior to that
16 time, and the employer may at his or her discretion consider
17 an earlier conviction to be a bar to employment as an alarm
18 system agent. To ensure that this requirement has been met, a
19 licensed electrical or alarm contractor must obtain from the
20 Florida Department of Law Enforcement a completed fingerprint
21 and criminal background check, including a check through the
22 National Crime Information Center, for each applicant for
23 employment as a burglar alarm system agent ~~or for each~~
24 ~~individual currently employed on the effective date of this~~
25 ~~act as a burglar alarm system agent.~~

26 (d) Has not been committed for controlled substance
27 abuse or been found guilty of a crime under chapter 893 or a
28 similar law relating to controlled substances in any other
29 state within the 3-year period immediately preceding the date
30 of application for employment, or the effective date of this
31 act for an individual employed as a burglar alarm system agent

1 on that date, unless he or she establishes that he or she is
2 not currently abusing any controlled substance and has
3 successfully completed a rehabilitation course.

4 (2)(a) Persons who perform only monitoring ~~or sales~~
5 are not required to complete the training required for burglar
6 alarm system agents.

7 (b) Persons who perform only monitoring at an
8 out-of-state location are not required to comply with
9 background check requirements.

10 (c) Persons who perform proprietary burglar alarm
11 system agent duties for only a single employer, and who do not
12 offer alarm system contracting services to the public, are not
13 required to comply with background check requirements.

14 (d) A state-certified electrical contractor, a
15 state-certified alarm system contractor, a state-registered
16 alarm system contractor, a journeyman electrician licensed by
17 any local jurisdiction, or an alarm technician licensed by a
18 local jurisdiction that requires an examination and experience
19 or training as licensure qualifications, is not required to
20 complete the training required for burglar alarm system
21 agents. A state-registered electrical contractor is not
22 required to complete the training required for burglar alarm
23 system agents, so long as he or she is only doing electrical
24 work up to the alarm panel.

25 (e) A nonsupervising employee working as a helper or
26 apprentice under the direct, on-site, continuous supervision
27 of a state-certified electrical contractor, a state-registered
28 electrical contractor, a state-certified alarm system
29 contractor, a state-registered alarm system contractor, a
30 journeyman electrician licensed by any local jurisdiction, an
31 alarm technician licensed by a local jurisdiction that

1 requires an examination and experience or training as
2 licensure qualifications, or a qualified alarm system agent is
3 not required to complete the training otherwise required and
4 is not required to be 18 years of age or older.

5 (3) An applicant for employment as an alarm system
6 agent, or an individual employed as a burglar alarm system
7 agent on the effective date of this act, may commence or
8 continue employment pending the completion of the required
9 training and the results of the background check required by
10 this section for a period not to exceed 90 ~~60~~ days after the
11 date of application for employment, or 90 ~~60~~ days after the
12 effective date of this act for individuals currently employed
13 as burglar alarm system agents. However, the person must work
14 under the direction and control of a sponsoring licensed
15 electrical or burglar alarm system contractor pending the
16 completion of the training and the criminal background check.
17 If an applicant or an individual employed on the effective
18 date of this act does not complete the training or receive a
19 satisfactory criminal background check within the 90-day
20 ~~60-day~~ period, the employment must be terminated immediately.

21 (4)(a) A licensed electrical or alarm system
22 contractor shall furnish each of its burglar alarm system
23 agents with an identification card.

24 (b) The identification card shall be designed in a
25 board-approved format.The card must ~~shall~~ include a picture
26 of the agent, must ~~and shall~~ specify at least the name of the
27 holder of the card and the name and license number of the
28 contractor, and must ~~shall~~ be signed by the contractor and by
29 the holder of the card. Each identification card is valid for
30 a period of 2 years after the date of issuance.The
31 identification card must ~~shall~~ be in the possession of each

1 burglar alarm system agent while engaged in burglar alarm
2 system agent duties.

3 (c)~~(b)~~ Each person to whom an identification card has
4 been issued shall be responsible for the safekeeping thereof
5 and shall not loan, or allow any other person to use or
6 display, the identification card.

7 (d) Each identification card must be renewed every 2
8 years and in a board-approved format to show compliance with
9 the 6 hours of continuing education necessary to maintain
10 certification as a burglar alarm system agent.

11 (e) Each licensed electrical or alarm system
12 contractor must obtain an updated criminal background check
13 from the Department of Law Enforcement for each burglar alarm
14 system agent who renews certification.

15 (5) Each burglar alarm system agent must receive 6
16 hours of continuing education on burglar alarm system
17 installation and repair and false alarm prevention every 2
18 years from a board-approved sponsor of training and through a
19 board-approved training course.

20 (6)~~(5)~~ Failure to comply with any of the provisions of
21 this section shall be a disciplinable offense against the
22 contractor pursuant to s. 489.533.

23 Section 3. Section 489.5185, Florida Statutes, is
24 amended to read:

25 489.5185 Fire alarm system agents.--

26 (1) A certified unlimited electrical contractor or
27 licensed fire alarm contractor may not employ a person to
28 perform the duties of a fire alarm system agent unless the
29 person:

30 (a) Is at least 18 years of age or has evidence of a
31 court-approved declaration of emancipation.

1 (b) Has successfully completed a minimum of 14 ~~18~~
2 hours of initial training, to include basic fire alarm system
3 technology in addition to related training in National Fire
4 Protection Association (NFPA) codes and standards and access
5 control training, with at least 2 hours of training in the
6 prevention of false alarms. Such training must be from a
7 board-approved provider, and the employee or applicant for
8 employment must provide proof of successful completion to the
9 licensed employer. The board, by rule, shall establish
10 criteria for the approval of training courses and providers.
11 The board shall approve qualified providers that conduct
12 training in other than the English language. The board shall
13 establish a fee for the approval of training providers, not to
14 exceed \$200, and a fee for the approval of courses at \$25 per
15 credit hour, not to exceed \$100 per course.

16 (c) Has not been convicted within the last 3 years of
17 a crime that directly relates to the business for which
18 employment is being sought. Although the employee is barred
19 from operating as a fire alarm system agent for 3 years
20 subsequent to his or her conviction, the employer shall be
21 supplied the information regarding any convictions occurring
22 prior to that time, and the employer may at his or her
23 discretion consider an earlier conviction to be a bar to
24 employment as a fire alarm system agent. To ensure that this
25 requirement has been met, a certified unlimited electrical
26 contractor or licensed fire alarm contractor must obtain from
27 the Department of Law Enforcement a completed fingerprint and
28 criminal background check, including a check through the
29 National Crime Information Center, for each applicant for
30 employment as a fire alarm system agent ~~or for each individual~~
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1 ~~currently employed on the effective date of this act as a fire~~
2 ~~alarm system agent.~~

3 (d) Has not been committed for controlled substance
4 abuse or been found guilty of a crime under chapter 893 or any
5 similar law relating to controlled substances in any other
6 state within the 3-year period immediately preceding the date
7 of application for employment, or immediately preceding the
8 effective date of this act for an individual employed as a
9 fire alarm system agent on that date, unless the person
10 establishes that he or she is not currently abusing any
11 controlled substance and has successfully completed a
12 rehabilitation course.

13 (2)(a) Any applicant for employment as a fire alarm
14 system agent, or any individual employed as a fire alarm
15 system agent on the effective date of this act, who has
16 completed alarm system agent or burglar alarm system agent
17 training prior to the effective date of this act in a
18 board-certified program is not required to take additional
19 training in order to comply with the initial training
20 requirements of this section.

21 (b) A state-certified electrical contractor, a
22 state-certified fire alarm system contractor, a
23 state-registered fire alarm system contractor, a journeyman
24 electrician licensed by any local jurisdiction, or an alarm
25 technician licensed by a local jurisdiction that requires an
26 examination and experience or training as licensure
27 qualifications is not required to complete the training
28 required for fire alarm system agents. A state-registered
29 electrical contractor is not required to complete the training
30 required for fire alarm system agents, so long as he or she is
31 only doing electrical work up to the alarm panel.

1 (c) A nonsupervising employee working as a helper or
2 apprentice under the direct, onsite, continuous supervision of
3 a state-certified electrical contractor, a state-registered
4 electrical contractor, a state-certified fire alarm system
5 contractor, a state-registered fire alarm system contractor, a
6 journeyman electrician licensed by any local jurisdiction, an
7 alarm technician licensed by a local jurisdiction that
8 requires an examination and experience or training as
9 licensure qualifications, or a qualified fire alarm system
10 agent is not required to complete the training otherwise
11 required and is not required to be 18 years of age or older.

12 (d) A burglar alarm system agent employed by a
13 licensed fire alarm contractor or certified unlimited
14 electrical contractor who has fulfilled all requirements of s.
15 489.518 prior to the effective date of this act is not
16 required to complete the initial training required by this
17 section for fire alarm system agents.

18 (e) Persons who perform only monitoring are not
19 required to complete the training required for fire alarm
20 system agents.

21 (3) An applicant for employment as a fire alarm system
22 agent may commence employment, or an individual employed as a
23 fire alarm system agent on the effective date of this act may
24 continue employment, pending completion of both the training
25 and the fingerprint and criminal background checks required by
26 this section, for a period not to exceed 90 days after the
27 date of application for employment or 90 days after the
28 effective date of this act for individuals employed as fire
29 alarm system agents on that date. However, the person must
30 work under the direction and control of a sponsoring certified
31 unlimited electrical contractor or licensed fire alarm

1 contractor until completion of both the training and the
2 fingerprint and criminal background checks. If an applicant or
3 an individual employed on the effective date of this act does
4 not complete the training or receive satisfactory fingerprint
5 and criminal background checks within the 90-day period, the
6 employment must be terminated immediately.

7 (4)(a) A certified unlimited electrical contractor or
8 licensed fire alarm contractor must furnish each of his or her
9 fire alarm system agents with an identification card.

10 (b) The card shall follow a board-approved format, to
11 include a picture of the agent; shall specify at least the
12 name of the holder of the card and the name and license number
13 of the certified unlimited electrical contractor or licensed
14 fire alarm contractor; and shall be signed by both the
15 contractor and the holder of the card. Each identification
16 card shall be valid for a period of 2 years after the date of
17 issuance. The identification card must be in the possession of
18 the fire alarm system agent while engaged in fire alarm system
19 agent duties.

20 (c) Each person to whom an identification card has
21 been issued is responsible for the safekeeping thereof, and
22 may not loan, or allow any other person to use or display, the
23 identification card.

24 (d) Each identification card must be renewed every 2
25 years and in a board-approved format to show compliance with
26 the 6 hours of continuing education necessary to maintain
27 certification as a fire alarm system agent.

28 (e) Each licensed electrical or alarm system
29 contractor must obtain an updated criminal background check
30 from the Department of Law Enforcement for each fire alarm
31 system agent who renews certification.

1 (5) Each fire alarm system agent must receive 6 hours
2 of continuing education on fire alarm system installation and
3 repair and false alarm prevention every 2 years from a
4 board-approved sponsor of training and through a
5 board-approved training course.

6 (6) Failure to comply with any of the provisions of
7 this section shall be grounds for disciplinary action against
8 the contractor pursuant to s. 489.533.

9 Section 4. Section 489.529, Florida Statutes, is
10 amended to read:

11 489.529 Alarm verification calls required.--All
12 residential or commercial intrusion/burglary alarms that have
13 central monitoring must have a central monitoring verification
14 call made to the premises generating the alarm signal, prior
15 to alarm monitor personnel contacting a law enforcement agency
16 for alarm dispatch. The central monitoring station must be
17 designed to make a second call to the premises generating the
18 alarm signal if the first call is not answered.However, if
19 the intrusion/burglary alarms have properly operating visual
20 or auditory sensors that enable the monitoring personnel to
21 verify the alarm signal, verification calling is not required.

22 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004.
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SENATE SUMMARY

Requires certified or registered electrical contractors and alarm system contractors or agents to undergo continuing education on false alarm prevention. Revises qualifications for burglar alarm system agents. Requires an additional criminal background check. Authorizes employment as an alarm system agent or burglar alarm system agent under supervision for a specified period, pending completion of training and the criminal background check. Provides requirements for burglar alarm system agent identification cards. Requires an updated criminal background check of each burglar alarm system agent renewing certification. Provides continuing education requirements for burglar alarm system agents. Revises qualifications for fire alarm system agents. Requires an updated criminal background check of each fire alarm system agent renewing certification. Requires fire alarm system agents to undergo continuing education on false alarm prevention. Requires a second alarm-verification call if the first call is unanswered.