

By the Committee on Health Regulation; and Senator Detert

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to 911 emergency dispatcher  
3           certification; amending s. 401.465, F.S.; defining the  
4           terms "certified dispatch training center" and  
5           "certified dispatch training program"; authorizing a  
6           public safety agency to employ a 911 emergency  
7           dispatcher trainee for a limited period under certain  
8           conditions; requiring any person serving as a 911  
9           emergency dispatcher to be certified by the Department  
10          of Health; revising application requirements for  
11          certification; providing an expiration date for  
12          initial certification of certain 911 emergency  
13          dispatchers; providing certification standards for  
14          certified dispatch training centers and certified  
15          dispatch training programs; requiring the department  
16          to charge fees for the review and approval of training  
17          programs; providing general application procedures for  
18          online licensure applications; amending s. 401.411,  
19          F.S.; revising the grounds in which the department may  
20          deny, suspend, or revoke the certification of a 911  
21          emergency dispatcher; providing an effective date.

22  
23 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

24  
25           Section 1. Section 401.465, Florida Statutes, is amended to  
26           read:

27           401.465 911 emergency dispatcher certification.—

28           (1) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

29           (a) "911 emergency dispatcher" means a person employed by a

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30 state agency or local government as a public safety dispatcher  
31 or 911 operator whose duties and responsibilities include  
32 answering 911 calls; dispatching law enforcement officers, fire  
33 rescue services, emergency medical services, and other public  
34 safety services to the scene of an emergency; providing real-  
35 time information from federal, state, and local crime databases;  
36 or supervising or serving as the command officer to a person or  
37 persons having such duties and responsibilities. However, the  
38 term does not include administrative support personnel,  
39 including, but not limited to, those whose primary duties and  
40 responsibilities are in accounting, purchasing, legal, and  
41 personnel.

42 (b) "Department" means the Department of Health.

43 (c) "Certified dispatch training center" means any public  
44 safety agency, as defined in s. 365.171(3) (d), employing 911  
45 emergency dispatchers whose training program is equivalent to  
46 the most recently approved emergency dispatch course in public  
47 safety telecommunications of the Department of Education and  
48 consists of not less than 208 hours.

49 (d) "Certified dispatch training program" means a 911  
50 emergency dispatch training program that is:

51 1. Equivalent to the most recently approved emergency  
52 dispatch course in public safety telecommunications of the  
53 Department of Education and consists of not less than 208 hours;  
54 and

55 2. Offered by an educational institution approved by the  
56 Department of Education to offer such program.

57 (2) PERSONNEL; STANDARDS AND CERTIFICATION.—

58 (a) Effective October 1, 2012, any person serving as a 911

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59 emergency dispatcher must be certified by the department.  
60 Notwithstanding this requirement, a public safety agency, as  
61 defined s. 365.171(3)(d), may employ a 911 emergency dispatcher  
62 trainee for a period not to exceed 6 months, if the trainee is  
63 under the direct supervision, as determined by rule of the  
64 department, of a certified 911 emergency dispatcher with a  
65 minimum of 2 years' experience.

66 (b)-(a) An applicant ~~Any person who desires~~ to be certified  
67 or recertified as a 911 emergency dispatcher must ~~may~~ apply to  
68 the department under oath on forms provided by the department.  
69 The department shall establish by rule educational and training  
70 criteria for the certification and recertification of 911  
71 emergency dispatchers.

72 (c)-(b) The department shall determine whether the applicant  
73 meets the requirements specified in this section and in rules of  
74 the department and shall issue a certificate to any person who  
75 meets such requirements. Such requirements must include, but  
76 need not be limited to, the following:

77 1. Completion of an appropriate 911 emergency dispatcher  
78 training program that is equivalent to the most recently  
79 approved emergency dispatcher course of the Department of  
80 Education and consists of not less than 208 hours. Each  
81 certified dispatch training center and certified dispatch  
82 training program must apply to the department on forms provided  
83 by the department, to receive approval before being used in  
84 satisfaction of this requirement;

85 ~~2. Completion and documentation of at least 2 years of~~  
86 ~~supervised full-time employment as a 911 emergency dispatcher~~  
87 ~~since January 1, 2002;~~

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88       ~~2.3.~~ Certification under oath that the applicant is not  
89 addicted to alcohol or any controlled substance;

90       ~~3.4.~~ Certification under oath that the applicant is free  
91 from any physical or mental defect or disease that might impair  
92 the applicant's ability to perform his or her duties;

93       ~~4.5.~~ Submission of the application fee prescribed in  
94 subsection (3); and

95       ~~5.6.~~ Submission of a completed application to the  
96 department which indicates compliance with subparagraphs 1., 2.,  
97 and 3., ~~and 4.~~

98       ~~(d)~~ ~~(e)~~ The department shall establish by rule a procedure  
99 for the quadrennial ~~biennial~~ renewal certification of 911  
100 emergency dispatchers.

101       ~~(e)~~ ~~(d)~~ Each 911 emergency dispatcher certificate expires  
102 automatically if not renewed at the end of the 4-year ~~2-year~~  
103 period and may be renewed if the holder meets the qualifications  
104 for renewal as established by the department. A certificate that  
105 is not renewed at the end of the 4-year ~~2-year~~ period  
106 automatically reverts to an inactive status for a period that  
107 may not exceed 180 days. Such certificate may be reactivated and  
108 renewed within the 180-day period if the certificateholder meets  
109 all other qualifications for renewal and pays a \$50 late fee.  
110 Reactivation shall be in a manner and on forms prescribed by  
111 department rule.

112       ~~(f)~~ ~~(e)~~ The department may suspend or revoke a certificate  
113 at any time if it determines that the certificateholder does not  
114 meet the applicable qualifications.

115       ~~(g)~~ ~~(f)~~ A certificateholder may request that his or her 911  
116 emergency dispatcher certificate be placed on inactive status by

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117 applying to the department before his or her current  
118 certification expires and paying a fee set by the department  
119 which may not exceed \$100.

120 1. A certificateholder whose certificate has been on  
121 inactive status for 1 year or less may renew his or her  
122 certificate pursuant to the rules adopted by the department and  
123 upon payment of a renewal fee set by the department which may  
124 not exceed \$100.

125 2. A certificateholder whose certificate has been on  
126 inactive status for more than 1 year may renew his or her  
127 certificate pursuant to rules adopted by the department.

128 3. A certificate that has been inactive for more than 6  
129 years automatically expires and may not be renewed.

130 (h)~~(g)~~ The department shall establish by rule a procedure  
131 for the initial certification of 911 emergency dispatchers as  
132 defined in this section who have documentation of at least 5  
133 years of supervised full-time employment as a 911 emergency  
134 dispatcher since January 1, 2002. This paragraph expires October  
135 1, 2012.

136 (3) CERTIFIED DISPATCH TRAINING CENTER; STANDARDS AND  
137 CERTIFICATION.—

138 (a) Each certified dispatch training center shall report  
139 all individuals that have successfully completed a 911 emergency  
140 dispatch course in public safety telecommunication to the  
141 department within 2 weeks after the completion date and shall  
142 certify to the department compliance for certification as  
143 described in this section.

144 (b) The department shall establish by rule a procedure for  
145 the quadrennial review and approval of certified dispatch

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146 training centers to verify compliance with training standards  
147 required by this section.

148 (4) CERTIFIED DISPATCH TRAINING PROGRAM; STANDARDS AND  
149 CERTIFICATION.—

150 (a) Each certified dispatch training program shall report  
151 all individuals who have successfully completed a 911 emergency  
152 dispatch course in public safety telecommunication to the  
153 department within 2 weeks after the completion date and shall  
154 certify to the department compliance for certification as  
155 described in this section.

156 (b) The department shall establish by rule a procedure for  
157 the quadrennial review and approval of the certified dispatch  
158 training programs to verify compliance with training standards  
159 required by this section.

160 (5) ~~(3)~~ FEES.—

161 (a) The fee for application for the 911 emergency  
162 dispatcher original certificate is \$75.

163 (b) The application fee for the 911 emergency dispatcher  
164 biennial renewal certificate is \$100.

165 (c) Fees collected under this section shall be deposited  
166 into the Emergency Medical Services Trust Fund and used solely  
167 for salaries and expenses of the department incurred in  
168 administering this section.

169 (d) If a certificate issued under this section is lost or  
170 destroyed, the person to whom the certificate was issued may,  
171 upon payment of a fee set by the department which may not exceed  
172 \$25, obtain a duplicate or substitute certificate.

173 (e) Upon surrender of the original 911 emergency dispatcher  
174 certificate and receipt of a replacement fee set by the

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175 department which may not exceed \$25, the department shall issue  
176 a replacement certificate to make a change in name.

177 (f) The department shall charge a fee not to exceed \$100  
178 for the initial review and approval of 911 emergency dispatch  
179 training programs offered by certified dispatch training centers  
180 and certified dispatch training programs to determine compliance  
181 with subsection (2). A fee not to exceed \$75 shall be charged  
182 for quadrennial review and approval of training programs  
183 authorized by this section.

184 (g) Employees of certified dispatch training centers are  
185 exempt from all fees.

186 (6) GENERAL APPLICATION PROCEDURES.—

187 (a) The department may by rule require any category of  
188 application or certification to be applied for or renewed online  
189 using an online application. In the case of online renewal, the  
190 department shall provide a fail-safe manner in which the  
191 applicant may print a receipt for the properly prepared  
192 application. Alternatively, when the online application or  
193 renewal system is in operation, the licensing authority may  
194 require payment of an additional fee, not exceeding \$25, to be  
195 paid by applicants who elect to use paper applications or  
196 renewal forms in lieu of the online system.

197 (b) Certified dispatch training centers may electronically  
198 certify to the department employees who have completed training  
199 in compliance with this section.

200 Section 2. Paragraphs (g) and (k) of subsection (1) of  
201 section 401.411, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

202 401.411 Disciplinary action; penalties.—

203 (1) The department may deny, suspend, or revoke a license,

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204 certificate, or permit or may reprimand or fine any licensee,  
205 certificateholder, or other person operating under this part for  
206 any of the following grounds:

207 (g) Unprofessional conduct, including, but not limited to,  
208 any departure from or failure to conform to the minimal  
209 prevailing standards of acceptable practice under this part ~~as~~  
210 ~~an emergency medical technician or paramedic~~, including  
211 undertaking activities when that the emergency medical  
212 ~~technician or paramedic is~~ not qualified by training or  
213 experience to perform.

214 (k) Practicing as an emergency medical technician,  
215 paramedic, ~~or other~~ health care professional, or other  
216 professional operating under this part without reasonable skill  
217 and safety to the public ~~patients~~ by reason of illness,  
218 drunkenness, or the use of drugs, narcotics, or chemicals or any  
219 other substance or as a result of any mental or physical  
220 condition.

221 Section 3. This act shall take effect October 1, 2009.