

By the Committees on Community Affairs; and 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
4 "certified dispatch training center" and "certified
5 dispatch training program"; requiring any person
6 serving as a 911 emergency dispatcher to be certified
7 by the Department of Health on or after a specified
8 date; providing conditions under which a public safety
9 agency may employ a 911 emergency dispatcher trainee
10 for a limited period; requiring applicants to apply
11 for certification or recertification on a specified
12 form; providing for satisfaction of the training
13 program requirement by completion of a certified
14 dispatch training program or the training program of a
15 certified dispatch training center; eliminating a
16 requirement for certification; providing for
17 quadrennial renewal of certification; providing for
18 expiration of initial certification procedure for
19 specified dispatchers under department rule; requiring
20 certified dispatch training centers and certified
21 dispatch training programs to apply to the department
22 for approval as a condition of eligibility to provide
23 911 emergency dispatcher training to applicants;
24 requiring certified dispatch training centers and
25 certified dispatch training programs to certify to the
26 department applicants' compliance for certification;
27 requiring the department to establish a procedure for
28 the quadrennial review and approval of certified
29 dispatch training centers and certified dispatch

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30 training programs by rule; requiring the assessment of
31 fees for specified review and approval of 911
32 emergency dispatch training programs offered by
33 certified dispatch training centers and certified
34 dispatch training programs; providing an exemption
35 from fees; providing application procedures;
36 authorizing the department to require online
37 application for and renewal of certification by rule;
38 authorizing assessment of an additional application
39 fee under certain circumstances; authorizing
40 electronic certification of specified persons;
41 amending s. 401.411, F.S.; clarifying certain grounds
42 for disciplinary actions or the imposition of
43 penalties by the department; providing an effective
44 date.

45

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

47

48 Section 1. Section 401.465, Florida Statutes, is amended,
49 to read:

50 401.465 911 emergency dispatcher certification.-

51 (1) DEFINITIONS.-As used in this section, the term:

52 (a) "911 emergency dispatcher" means a person employed by a
53 state agency or local government as a public safety dispatcher
54 or 911 operator whose duties and responsibilities include
55 answering 911 calls; dispatching law enforcement officers, fire
56 rescue services, emergency medical services, and other public
57 safety services to the scene of an emergency; providing real-
58 time information from federal, state, and local crime databases;

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59 or supervising or serving as the command officer to a person or
60 persons having such duties and responsibilities. However, the
61 term does not include administrative support personnel,
62 including, but not limited to, those whose primary duties and
63 responsibilities are in accounting, purchasing, legal, and
64 personnel.

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

66 (c) "Certified dispatch training center" means any public
67 safety agency as defined in s. 365.171(3)(d) employing 911
68 emergency dispatchers whose training program is equivalent to
69 the most recently approved emergency dispatch course in public
70 safety telecommunications of the Department of Education and
71 consists of not less than 232 hours.

72 (d) "Certified dispatch training program" means a 911
73 emergency dispatch training program offered by an educational
74 institution approved by the Department of Education to offer
75 such program that is equivalent to the most recently approved
76 emergency dispatch course in public safety telecommunications of
77 the Department of Education and consists of not less than 232
78 hours.

79 (2) PERSONNEL; STANDARDS AND CERTIFICATION.—

80 (a) Effective October 1, 2012, any person serving as a 911
81 emergency dispatcher must be certified by the department.
82 Notwithstanding this requirement, a public safety agency as
83 defined s. 365.171(3)(d) may employ a 911 emergency dispatcher
84 trainee for a period not to exceed 6 months, provided that the
85 trainee is under the direct supervision, as determined by rule
86 of the department, of a certified 911 emergency dispatcher with
87 a minimum of 2 years' experience.

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88 (b)~~(a)~~ An applicant ~~Any person who desires~~ to be certified
89 or recertified as a 911 emergency dispatcher must ~~may~~ apply to
90 the department under oath on forms provided by the department.
91 The department shall establish by rule educational and training
92 criteria for the certification and recertification of 911
93 emergency dispatchers.

94 (c)~~(b)~~ The department shall determine whether the applicant
95 meets the requirements specified in this section and in rules of
96 the department and shall issue a certificate to any person who
97 meets such requirements. Such requirements must include, but
98 need not be limited to, the following:

99 1. Completion of an appropriate 911 emergency dispatcher
100 training program that is equivalent to the most recently
101 approved emergency dispatcher course of the Department of
102 Education and consists of not less than 232 ~~208~~ hours. The
103 requirement of this subparagraph may be satisfied by the
104 completion of a certified dispatch training program, or the
105 certified dispatch training program of a certified dispatch
106 training center, if the program or center has applied to and
107 received approval from the department pursuant to paragraph
108 (3) (a) or paragraph (4) (a);

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

112 ~~2.3.~~ Certification under oath that the applicant is not
113 addicted to alcohol or any controlled substance;

114 ~~3.4.~~ Certification under oath that the applicant is free
115 from any physical or mental defect or disease that might impair
116 the applicant's ability to perform his or her duties;

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117 ~~4.5.~~ Submission of the application fee prescribed in
118 subsection (5) ~~(3)~~; and

119 ~~5.6.~~ Submission of a completed application to the
120 department which indicates compliance with subparagraphs 1., 2.,
121 and 3. ~~and 4.~~

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

125 ~~(e)~~ (d) Each 911 emergency dispatcher certificate expires
126 automatically if not renewed at the end of the 4-year ~~2-year~~
127 period and may be renewed if the holder meets the qualifications
128 for renewal as established by the department. A certificate that
129 is not renewed at the end of the 4-year ~~2-year~~ period
130 automatically reverts to an inactive status for a period that
131 may not exceed 180 days. Such certificate may be reactivated and
132 renewed within the 180-day period if the certificateholder meets
133 all other qualifications for renewal and pays a \$50 late fee.
134 Reactivation shall be in a manner and on forms prescribed by
135 department rule.

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

139 ~~(g)~~ (f) A certificateholder may request that his or her 911
140 emergency dispatcher certificate be placed on inactive status by
141 applying to the department before his or her current
142 certification expires and paying a fee set by the department
143 which may not exceed \$100.

144 1. A certificateholder whose certificate has been on
145 inactive status for 1 year or less may renew his or her

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146 certificate pursuant to the rules adopted by the department and
147 upon payment of a renewal fee set by the department which may
148 not exceed \$100.

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

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

154 (h) ~~(g)~~ The department shall establish by rule a procedure
155 for the initial certification of 911 emergency dispatchers as
156 defined in this section who have documentation of at least 5
157 years of supervised full-time employment as a 911 emergency
158 dispatcher since January 1, 2002. This paragraph shall expire on
159 October 1, 2012.

160 (3) CERTIFIED DISPATCH TRAINING CENTERS.—

161 (a) A certified dispatch training center must apply to the
162 department on forms provided by the department to obtain
163 approval prior to being eligible to provide 911 emergency
164 dispatcher training to applicants under this section.

165 (b) Certified dispatch training centers shall notify the
166 department of each individual who has successfully completed a
167 911 emergency dispatch course in public safety
168 telecommunications within 2 weeks after the individual's course
169 completion date and shall certify to the department the
170 individual's compliance for certification as described in this
171 section.

172 (c) The department shall establish by rule a procedure for
173 the quadrennial review and approval of certified dispatch
174 training centers to verify compliance with training standards

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175 required by this section.

176 (4) CERTIFIED DISPATCH TRAINING PROGRAMS.—

177 (a) A certified dispatch training program must apply to the
178 department on forms provided by the department to obtain
179 approval prior to being eligible to provide 911 emergency
180 dispatcher training to applicants under this section.

181 (b) Certified dispatch training programs shall notify the
182 department of each individual who has successfully completed a
183 911 emergency dispatch course in public safety
184 telecommunications within 2 weeks after the individual's course
185 completion date and shall certify to the department the
186 individual's compliance for certification as described in this
187 section.

188 (c) The department shall establish by rule a procedure for
189 the quadrennial review and approval of the certified dispatch
190 training programs to verify compliance with training standards
191 required by this section.

192 (5) ~~(3)~~ FEES.—

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

195 (b) The application fee for the 911 emergency dispatcher
196 quadrennial ~~biennial~~ renewal certificate is \$100.

197 (c) Fees collected under this section shall be deposited
198 into the Emergency Medical Services Trust Fund and used solely
199 for salaries and expenses of the department incurred in
200 administering this section.

201 (d) If a certificate issued under this section is lost or
202 destroyed, the person to whom the certificate was issued may,
203 upon payment of a fee set by the department which may not exceed

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204 \$25, obtain a duplicate or substitute certificate.

205 (e) Upon surrender of the original 911 emergency dispatcher
206 certificate and receipt of a replacement fee set by the
207 department which may not exceed \$25, the department shall issue
208 a replacement certificate to make a change in name.

209 (f) The department shall charge a fee not to exceed \$100
210 for the initial review and approval of 911 emergency dispatch
211 training programs offered by certified dispatch training centers
212 and certified dispatch training programs to determine compliance
213 with paragraph (3) (a) or paragraph (4) (a).

214 (g) The department shall charge a fee not to exceed \$75 for
215 quadrennial review and approval of training programs authorized
216 by this section.

217 (h) Employees of certified dispatch training centers are
218 exempt from all fees under this subsection.

219 (6) APPLICATION PROCEDURES.—

220 (a) The department may by rule require any category of
221 application or certification to be applied for or renewed online
222 using an online application and certification renewal system. In
223 the case of online renewal, the department shall provide a
224 secure means by which the applicant may print a receipt for the
225 properly prepared application. Alternatively, when the online
226 application and certification renewal system is in operation,
227 the licensing authority may require payment of an additional
228 fee, not to exceed \$25, to be paid by applicants who elect to
229 use paper applications or certificate renewal forms in lieu of
230 the online system.

231 (b) Certified dispatch training centers may electronically
232 certify to the department employees who have completed training

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233 in compliance with this section.

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

236 401.411 Disciplinary action; penalties.—

237 (1) The department may deny, suspend, or revoke a license,
238 certificate, or permit or may reprimand or fine any licensee,
239 certificateholder, or other person operating under this part for
240 any of the following grounds:

241 (g) Unprofessional conduct, including, but not limited to,
242 any departure from or failure to conform to the minimal
243 prevailing standards of acceptable practice under this part ~~as~~
244 ~~an emergency medical technician or paramedic~~, including
245 undertaking activities when ~~that the emergency medical~~
246 ~~technician or paramedic is~~ not qualified by training or
247 experience to perform.

248 (k) Practicing as an emergency medical technician,
249 paramedic, ~~or other~~ health care professional, or other
250 professional operating under this part without reasonable skill
251 and safety to the public ~~patients~~ by reason of illness,
252 drunkenness, or the use of drugs, narcotics, or chemicals or any
253 other substance or as a result of any mental or physical
254 condition.

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