

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to volunteer rural firefighting;
3 amending s. 633.102, F.S.; defining the term
4 "volunteer rural firefighter"; amending s. 633.406,
5 F.S.; authorizing the Division of State Fire Marshal
6 within the Department of Financial Services to award a
7 Volunteer Rural Firefighter Certificate of Completion
8 under certain circumstances; amending s. 633.408,
9 F.S.; authorizing the division to establish by rule
10 courses and course examinations to provide training
11 required to obtain the certificate; providing
12 requirements for the issuance of the certificate;
13 requiring the division to award credit for certain
14 courses as provided by rule adopted by the division;
15 amending s. 633.414, F.S.; specifying requirements for
16 the retention of the certificate; amending s. 633.416,
17 F.S.; specifying the circumstances under which a fire
18 service provider may retain the services of a
19 volunteer firefighter; requiring a fire service
20 provider to provide notice to the division regarding a
21 decision to retain or not retain a volunteer rural
22 firefighter; providing an effective date.

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

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26 Section 1. Subsection (36) is added to section 633.102,

27 Florida Statutes, to read:

28 633.102 Definitions.—As used in this chapter, the term:

29 (36) "Volunteer rural firefighter" means an individual who
 30 holds a current and valid Volunteer Rural Firefighter
 31 Certificate of Completion issued by the division under s.
 32 633.408 and provides fire extinguishment or fire prevention
 33 services through a fire service provider that:

34 (a) Is in existence on July 1, 2016, or that was in
 35 existence at any time between July 1, 2000 and July 1, 2016, and
 36 is subsequently reestablished after July 1, 2016; and

37 (b) Provides services in a municipality with a population
 38 of fewer than 12,000 or a county with a population of fewer than
 39 150,000.

40 Section 2. Paragraph (h) is added to subsection (1) of
 41 section 633.406, Florida Statutes, to read:

42 633.406 Classes of certification.—

43 (1) The division may award one or more of the following
 44 certificates:

45 (h) Volunteer Rural Firefighter Certificate of
 46 Completion.—A Volunteer Rural Firefighter Certificate of
 47 Completion may be awarded to a person who has satisfactorily
 48 completed the training requirements as prescribed by rule for a
 49 volunteer rural firefighter.

50 Section 3. Subsections (1) and (5), of section 633.408,
 51 Florida Statutes, are amended, to read:

52 633.408 Firefighter and volunteer firefighter training and

53 certification.—

54 (1) The division shall establish by rule:

55 (a) A Minimum Standards Course and course examination to
 56 provide the training required to obtain a Firefighter
 57 Certificate of Compliance.

58 (b) Courses and course examinations to provide training
 59 required to obtain a Volunteer Firefighter Certificate of
 60 Completion or a Special Certificate of Compliance.

61 (c) Courses and course examinations to provide training
 62 required to obtain a Volunteer Rural Firefighter Certificate of
 63 Completion. The required courses may not exceed 160 hours and
 64 must include emergency medical responder training. The division
 65 shall award credit toward a certificate under this paragraph, as
 66 provided by rule adopted by the division, for any approved
 67 course successfully completed on or after July 1, 1970, which
 68 was creditable at the time of completion toward a certification
 69 under this chapter.

70 (d)~~(e)~~ Courses to provide continuing training for
 71 firefighters and volunteer firefighters.

72 (5) The division shall issue a:

73 (a) Volunteer Firefighter Certificate of Completion to an
 74 any individual who satisfactorily completes the course and
 75 examination established under paragraph (1) (b).

76 (b) Volunteer Rural Firefighter Certificate of Completion
 77 to an individual who satisfactorily completes the course and
 78 examination established under paragraph (1) (c).

79 Section 4. Subsections (3), (4), and (5) of section
 80 633.414, Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (4),
 81 (5), and (6), respectively, present subsection (4) is amended,
 82 and a new subsection (3) is added to that section, to read:

83 633.414 Retention of firefighter certification.—

84 (3) In order for a volunteer rural firefighter to retain
 85 her or his Volunteer Rural Firefighter Certificate of
 86 Completion, every 4 years he or she must:

87 (a) Be active as a volunteer rural firefighter; or

88 (b) Successfully complete a refresher course consisting of
 89 a minimum of 40 hours of training to be prescribed by rule.

90 (5)-(4) For the purposes of this section, the term "active"
 91 means being employed as a firefighter or providing service as a
 92 volunteer firefighter or volunteer rural firefighter for a
 93 cumulative 6 months within a 4-year period.

94 Section 5. Subsection (2) and paragraph (a) of subsection
 95 (4) of section 633.416, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

96 633.416 Firefighter employment and volunteer firefighter
 97 service; saving clause.—

98 (2) (a) A fire service provider may not retain the services
 99 of an individual volunteering to extinguish fires for the
 100 protection of life or property or to supervise individuals who
 101 perform such services unless the individual holds a current and
 102 valid Volunteer Firefighter Certificate of Completion.

103 (b) A fire service provider located in a municipality with
 104 a population of fewer than 12,000 or in a county with a

105 population of fewer than 150,000 may not retain the services of
106 an individual volunteering to extinguish fires for the
107 protection of life or property or to supervise individuals who
108 perform such services unless the individual holds a current and
109 valid Volunteer Rural Firefighter Certificate of Completion or a
110 current and valid Volunteer Firefighter Certificate of
111 Completion. This paragraph does not apply to volunteers who
112 provide only support services.

113 (4) (a) A fire service provider must notify the division
114 electronically, as directed by rule by the division, within 10
115 days after:

- 116 1. The hiring of a firefighter.
- 117 2. The retention of a volunteer firefighter or a volunteer
118 rural firefighter.
- 119 3. The cessation of employment of a firefighter.
- 120 4. A decision not to retain a volunteer firefighter or a
121 volunteer rural firefighter.

122 Section 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.