

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development

BILL: SB 584

INTRODUCER: Senator Avila

SUBJECT: Commercial Driving Schools

DATE: January 20, 2026

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Johnson</u>	<u>Vickers</u>	<u>TR</u>	<u>Favorable</u>
2.	<u>Wells</u>	<u>Nortelus</u>	<u>ATD</u>	<u>Pre-meeting</u>
3.	_____	_____	<u>FP</u>	_____

I. Summary:

SB 584 authorizes the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) and county tax collectors to enter into interagency agreements authorizing county tax collectors to enforce statutory provisions related to commercial driving schools. The interagency agreement may include, but is not limited to, grants of authority to the county tax collector, or his or her agent, to do any of the following:

- Prohibit licensees operating commercial driving schools, and their agents, from entering upon the tax collector’s premises except under specified circumstances.
- Prohibit conduct by licensees operating commercial driving schools, and their agents, which operates or would operate as a fraud or deceit.
- Prohibit any transaction, practice, or course of business related to a commercial driving school which undermines the driver license issuance process.
- Require persons licensed to operate commercial driving schools, and their agents, to present certain documents upon the demand of a law enforcement officer, a DHSMV employee, or an employee of the tax collector.
- Enter the premises of a commercial driving school to ensure compliance with laws regulating commercial driving schools.

The DHSMV may experience a reduction in costs associated with entering into these interagency agreements. County tax collectors entering into such agreements may incur indeterminate costs associated with enforcing commercial driving school regulations. See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement for details.

This bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

Commercial Driving Schools

Commercial driving schools provide education about driving skills, traffic laws, road safety, and substance abuse. Commercial driving schools also teach behind-the-wheel skills for driving non-commercial vehicles to prepare drivers to take the Class E skills test.^{1,2}

Except for truck driving schools,³ the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) oversees and licenses all commercial driving schools. A person or other entity may not operate a commercial driving school without first obtaining a license from DHSMV.⁴

An application for a license to become a commercial driving school is submitted to the DHSMV. If the DHSMV approves the application, and the license fee is paid, the DHSMV issues the appropriate license. A license for a commercial driving school is valid for one year from the date of issuance and is not transferable.⁵

Commercial Driving School Instructors and Agents

A person may not be compensated for giving instructions on operating motor vehicles or act as a driving school instructor without first obtaining an instructor's certificate from the DHSMV.⁶ An instructor's certificate is only valid in connection with the driving school or schools listed on the certificate or in connection with a driver education course offered by a district school board.⁷

Agents of Commercial Driving Schools – Identification Cards

A person may not serve as an agent for a commercial driving school without first obtaining an agent identification card from the DHSMV. An agent identification card is only valid in connection with the commercial driving school or schools listed on the card.⁸

Certification of Motor Vehicles Used by Commercial Driving Schools

A motor vehicle owned or controlled by a commercial driving school may not be used to give driving instructions until the licensee has obtained a school vehicle identification certificate from the DHSMV. Such vehicles must also meet the DHSMV's safety requirements.⁹

¹ Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV), *Commercial Driving School Overview*, <https://www.flhsmv.gov/driver-licenses-id-cards/education-courses/commercial-driving-schools/> (last visited January 5, 2026).

² A Class E driver license authorizes a person to drive non-commercial vehicles with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating of less than 26,001 pounds. DHSMV, *Driver License & ID Cards, General Information*, <https://www.flhsmv.gov/driver-licenses-id-cards/general-information/> (last visited January 5, 2026).

³ Truck driving schools are licensed by the Commission for Independent Education pursuant to ch. 1005, F.S.

⁴ Section 488.01, F.S. Section 488.02, F.S., provides DHSMV's rulemaking authority regarding commercial driving schools.

⁵ Section 488.03, F.S.

⁶ Section 488.04(1), F.S.

⁷ *Id.* An applicant for an instructor's certificate must take special eye tests, written tests, and road tests and provides DHSMV proof of his or her qualifications and ability as a driving instructor.

⁸ Section 488.045, F.S.

⁹ Section 488.05, F.S. Vehicle requirements for commercial driving schools are codified in Rule 15A-11.010(1), F.A.C.

Revocation or Suspension of License or Certificate Related to Commercial Driving Schools

The DHSMV may suspend or revoke any license or certificate related to commercial driving schools, if the holder of the license or certificate or an instructor, agent, or employee of the commercial driving school has:

- Violated statutory provisions relating to commercial driving schools;
- Been convicted of, pled no contest to, or had adjudication withheld for any felony offense or misdemeanor offense, as shown by a fingerprint-based criminal background check;¹⁰
- Committed any fraud or willful misrepresentation in applying for or obtaining a license; or
- Solicited business on any premises, including parking areas, used by the DHSMV or a tax collector for the purpose of licensing drivers.¹¹

Commercial Driving School Fees and Distribution

All fees the DHSMV receives related to commercial driving schools are deposited in the General Revenue Fund.¹² The statutory fees are as follows:

- Commercial Driving School Fees:
 - License application fee: \$50.
 - Initial license fee: \$200.
 - Annual license renewal fee: \$100.
- Instructor or Agent Fees:
 - Instructor or agent application fee: \$25.
 - Annual instructor or agent renewal fee: \$10.
 - Duplicate instructor certificate fee: \$2.
- Vehicle-Related Fees:
 - Vehicle identification certificate application fee: \$15.
 - Annual vehicle renewal fee: \$10.¹³

Penalties

A violation related to commercial driving or any of its implementing rules or regulations¹⁴ is a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable by a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year¹⁵ or a fine of up to \$1,000.^{16,17}

Application for a Class E Driver License

Florida law requires the DHSMV to examine every applicant for a driver's license. For a Class E driver license, the examination must include:

- A test of the applicant's eyesight;
- A test of the applicant's hearing;

¹⁰ The cost of the criminal background check borne by the applicant, instructor, agent, or employee.

¹¹ Section 488.06, F.S.

¹² Section 488.08, F.S.

¹³ These fees are codified in various provision of ch. 488, F.S.

¹⁴ DHSMV's rules for driver training schools are codified in ch. 15A-11, F.A.C.

¹⁵ Section 775.082(4)(a), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 775.083(1)(d), F.S.

¹⁷ Section 488.07, F.S.

- A test of the applicant's ability to read and understand highway signs regulating, warning, and directing traffic; his or her knowledge of the traffic laws of this state; and
- An actual demonstration of ability to exercise ordinary and reasonable control in the operation of a motor vehicle.¹⁸

Duties of County Tax Collectors

Among their statutorily prescribed duties, county tax collectors serve as the DHSMV's agents for purposes of motor vehicle and vessel registrations and title applications and for this issuance of driver licenses. County tax collectors are funded from fees or commissions from services rendered.¹⁹ For example, the county tax collector charges a \$6.25 service fee for providing driver license and identification card services.²⁰

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 creates s. 488.09, F.S., authorizing the DHSMV to enter into interagency agreements with county tax collectors regarding the enforcement of statutory provisions related to commercial driving school. Such agreements will allow county tax collectors to enforce statutes related to commercial driving schools.

The interagency agreement may include, but is not limited to, grants of authority to the county tax collector, or his or her agent, to do any of the following:

- Prohibit licensees operating commercial driving schools, and their agents, from entering upon the tax collector's premises, including its parking areas, unless such licensees and agents are seeking tax collector services in their personal capacities.
- Prohibit any course of conduct by licensees operating commercial driving schools, and their agents, which operates or would operate as a fraud or deceit upon a person, the DHSMV, or the tax collector.
- Prohibit any transaction, practice, or course of business related to a commercial driving school which undermines the integrity of the driver license issuance process.
- Require persons licensed to operate commercial driving schools, and their agents, to present their licenses, agent identification cards, and certificates upon the demand of a law enforcement officer, a the DHSMV employee, or an employee of the tax collector.
- Enter the premises of a commercial driving school to ensure compliance with state and local laws regulating commercial driving schools.

Section 2 provides that this bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

¹⁸ Section 322.12(3), F.S. Beginning July 1, 2026, an applicant who is found to have cheated during, or to have otherwise circumvented, any portion of the examination must retake the examination. See s. 7 of 2025-125, Laws of Fla.

¹⁹ Alachua County Tax Collector, *Tax Collector Duties and Responsibilities*, <https://www.alachuacollector.com/tax-collector-duties-and-responsibilities/#:~:text=The%20Tax%20Collector%20is%20responsible,and%20tangible%20personal%20property%20taxe>s. (Last visited January 5, 2026). Section 322.135, F.S., provides that tax collectors are DHSMV's agents for the purpose of issuing driver license.

²⁰ Section 322.135(1)(a), F.S.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None identified.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The DSHMV may experience a reduction in costs associated with enforcing commercial driving school regulation; however, this reduction may be dependent upon how many interagency agreements it enters into, and the number of commercial driving schools impacted by such agreements.

County tax collectors that enter into interagency agreements with the DHSMV may incur indeterminate cost associated with enforcing regulations related to commercial driving schools.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 488.09 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
