

# FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BILL ANALYSIS

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**BILL #:** [HB 953](#)

**TITLE:** Commercial Driving Schools

**SPONSOR(S):** Blanco

**COMPANION BILL:** [SB 584](#) (Avila)

**LINKED BILLS:** None

**RELATED BILLS:** None

## Committee References

[Government Operations](#)

18 Y, 0 N



[Transportation & Economic  
Development Budget](#)

12 Y, 0 N



[State Affairs](#)

25 Y, 0 N

## SUMMARY

### **Effect of the Bill:**

The bill authorizes the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to enter into interagency agreements with tax collectors to allow tax collectors to enforce statutory provisions related to commercial driving schools.

### **Fiscal or Economic Impact:**

The bill will likely have an indeterminate fiscal impact on state and local governments. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles may experience reduced enforcement costs when authority is granted to county tax collectors through interagency agreements. County tax collectors that choose to enter such agreements may incur indeterminate, negative costs associated with enforcing commercial driving school regulations.

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## ANALYSIS

### **EFFECT OF THE BILL:**

The bill authorizes the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) to enter into interagency agreements with [county tax collectors](#) to allow tax collectors to enforce statutory provisions related to [commercial driving schools](#). The interagency agreements may include, but are not limited to, grants of authority to the county tax collectors, or their agents, 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 that 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. (Section [1](#))

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2026. (Section [2](#))

**STORAGE NAME:** h0953e.SAC

**DATE:** 2/26/2026

**FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:**

**STATE GOVERNMENT:**

DHSMV may experience a reduction in costs associated with enforcing commercial driving school regulations. However, the extent of any savings may depend on the number of interagency agreements the department enters into and the number of commercial driving schools impacted by such agreements.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT:**

County tax collectors that enter into interagency agreements with DHSMV may incur indeterminate costs associated with enforcing regulations related to commercial driving schools. These costs could vary based on the scope of responsibilities and the number of commercial driving schools operating within the county.

**RELEVANT INFORMATION**

**SUBJECT OVERVIEW:**

**[Commercial Driving Schools](#)**

Commercial driving schools provide education related to driving skills, traffic laws, road safety, and substance abuse. They also teach behind-the-wheel skills for driving non-commercial vehicles to prepare drivers to take the Class E<sup>1</sup> skills test.<sup>2</sup>

Except for truck driving schools,<sup>3</sup> the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) oversees and licenses all commercial driving schools.<sup>4</sup> A person or entity may not operate a commercial driving school without first obtaining a license from DHSMV.<sup>5</sup> To obtain a license, the applicant submits an application to DHSMV and if DHSMV approves the application, the applicant must pay the license fee. Once the license fee is paid, DHSMV then 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.<sup>6</sup>

**Commercial Driving School Instructors, Agents, and Vehicles**

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 DHSMV.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, a person may not serve as an agent for a commercial driving school without first obtaining an agent identification card from DHSMV. An agent identification card is only valid in connection with the commercial driving school or schools listed on the card.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 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. Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, [Driver License & ID Cards, General Information](#) (last visited February 1, 2026). *See also*, [s. 322.54\(2\)\(d\), F.S.](#)

<sup>2</sup> Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, [Commercial Driving Schools Overview](#) (last visited February 1, 2026).

<sup>3</sup> Truck driving schools are licensed by the Commission for Independent Education. *See*, ch. 1005, F.S.

<sup>4</sup> [S. 488.01, F.S.](#)

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* *See also*, [s. 488.02, F.S.](#), providing DHSMV with rulemaking authority regarding commercial driving schools.

<sup>6</sup> [S. 488.03, F.S.](#)

<sup>7</sup> [S. 488.04\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* An applicant for an instructor's certificate must take special eye tests, written tests, and road tests and provide DHSMV proof of his or her qualifications and ability as a driving instructor.

<sup>9</sup> [S. 488.045, F.S.](#)

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 DHSMV. Such vehicles must also meet DHSMV’s safety requirements.<sup>10</sup>

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

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 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.
- Committed any fraud or willful misrepresentation in applying for or obtaining a license.
- Solicited business on any premises, including parking areas, used by DHSMV or a tax collector for the purpose of licensing drivers.<sup>11</sup>

**Commercial Driving School Fees and Distribution**

All fees DHSMV receives related to commercial driving schools are deposited in the General Revenue Fund.<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup>

**Penalties**

A commercial driving school that violates the law concerning its operation or any of its implementing rules or regulations<sup>14</sup> is guilty of a first-degree misdemeanor, punishable by a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year,<sup>15</sup> a fine of up to \$1,000,<sup>16</sup> or both.

**Application for a Class E Driver License**

Current law requires DHSMV to examine every applicant for a driver license. For a Class E driver license (the standard type of license for all non-commercial drivers), the examination must include:

- A test of the applicant's eyesight.
- A test of the applicant's hearing.
- 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 his or her knowledge of the effects of alcohol and controlled substances upon persons and the dangers of driving a motor vehicle while under the influence.
- An actual demonstration of ability to exercise ordinary and reasonable control in the operation of a motor vehicle.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>10</sup> [S. 488.05, F.S.](#) Vehicle requirements for commercial driving schools are codified in [Rule 15A-11.010\(1\), F.A.C.](#)

<sup>11</sup> [S. 488.06, F.S.](#)

<sup>12</sup> [S. 488.08, F.S.](#)

<sup>13</sup> These fees are codified in various provision of ch. 488, F.S.

<sup>14</sup> [Ch. 15A-11, F.A.C.](#)

<sup>15</sup> [S. 775.082\(4\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>16</sup> [S. 775.083\(1\)\(d\), F.S.](#)

**Duties of County Tax Collectors**

Among other duties, county tax collectors serve as DHSMV’s agents for purposes of motor vehicle and vessel registrations, title applications, and the issuance of driver licenses. County tax collectors are funded from fees or commissions<sup>18</sup> from services rendered.<sup>19</sup> For example, the county tax collector charges a \$6.25 service fee for providing driver license and identification card services.<sup>20</sup>

**BILL HISTORY**

<b>COMMITTEE REFERENCE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF</b>	<b>ANALYSIS PREPARED BY</b>
<a href="#">Government Operations Subcommittee</a>	18 Y, 0 N	2/11/2026	Toliver	Lines
<a href="#">Transportation &amp; Economic Development Budget Subcommittee</a>	12 Y, 0 N	2/16/2026	Davis	Andeara
<a href="#">State Affairs Committee</a>	25 Y, 0 N	2/26/2026	Williamson	Lines

<sup>17</sup> [S. 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, L.O.F.](#)

<sup>18</sup> [S. 192.091\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>19</sup> Alachua County Tax Collector, [Tax Collector Duties and Responsibilities](#) (Last visited February 1, 2026). [S. 322.135, F.S.](#), provides that tax collectors are DHSMV’s agents for the purpose of issuing driver license.

<sup>20</sup> [S. 322.135\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)