

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 1537 (Bryan, et al.)
As Amended May 18, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Prohibits a peace officer from engaging in any form of secondary employment that involves engaging in arresting, detaining, transporting, or deporting individuals pursuant to federal immigration laws.

Major Provisions

- 1) Prohibits a peace officer from engaging in secondary employment, including contract-based or as an individual contractor, that involves engaging in arresting, detaining, transporting, or deporting individuals pursuant to federal immigration laws.
- 2) Provides that this prohibition applies notwithstanding existing provisions of law that permit officers to engage in part-time and off-duty employment, as specified.
- 3) Provides that for purposes of when a record relating to an incident involving dishonesty by an officer, as specified, is subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act (CPRA), a violation of the above prohibition is an act of dishonesty and constitutes grounds for peace officer decertification, as specified.
- 4) Requires an officer to report to their employing law enforcement agency any offer of secondary employment that involves assisting with or engaging in immigration enforcement and their response to the offer.
- 5) Requires the names of secondary employers and the number of peace officers employed by each secondary employer to be maintained by the law enforcement agency, and provides that this information shall constitute public records for purposes of the CPRA.
- 6) Defines the following terms:
 - a) "Law enforcement agency" (LEA) means any local or state entity that employs a peace officer.
 - b) "Offer" means any communication from a potential employer to an individual inviting the individual to fill a position.
 - c) "Response" means any communication from a peace officer replying to an offer.
 - d) "Peace officer" means specified persons recognized as peace officers under existing law, including but not limited to, a sheriff, police officer, marshal, port officer, district attorney inspector or investigator, a specified deputy sheriff responsible for maintaining the operations of county custodial facilities, a specified member of the California Highway Patrol, UC Police Department, CSU Police Department, or Office of Correctional Safety of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and a specified parole, probation, and correctional officer.
- 7) Includes a severability clause.

8) Makes specified findings and declarations.

COMMENTS

According to the Author

"Nearly a decade ago, California took a stand and explicitly prohibited collaboration between our State and federal immigration enforcement. But our law currently has a harmful loophole that allows police officers to moonlight with ICE. AB 1537 is straightforward. If your day job is to serve our communities, you should not be off the clock terrorizing those very same communities as an ICE agent."

Arguments in Support

According to the *Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC)*, AB 1537 "would prohibit local and state law enforcement officers from engaging in any form of secondary employment or volunteering for Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), the Department of Homeland Security, their contractors, or any entity that assists with or engages in federal immigration enforcement...

"Immigrants are a critical part of our communities. California is home to over 10 million people who are immigrants, nearly a quarter of all immigrants who call the U.S. home. In California, the Legislature has enacted a number of laws to limit local and state resources from being used to tear apart immigrant families and funnel people to ICE for detention and deportation. Unfortunately, despite the sanctuary protections in California, nothing in state law currently prevents local and state law enforcement officers from taking side jobs as ICE or deportation agents.

"Congress has appropriated \$75 billion of our tax dollars to ICE over four years for mass deportations, and the federal administration desperately wants more ICE agents abducting our neighbors from the streets and harming members of the public across California. ICE is spending millions on ads in an attempt to recruit local police, including advertising campaigns in California markets.

"AB 1537 offers a clear and practical solution: preventing local and state law enforcement officers from clocking into a second job with ICE— an agency that is terrorizing communities across the country, tearing families apart, and operating with no accountability. Every day, ICE's abuses of power are spiraling further out of control. Local and state systems should not be turned into pipelines for deportation. AB 1537 reinforces those commitments by ensuring transparency, and accountability."

Arguments in Opposition

According to the *Los Angeles Police Protective League*, "Assembly Bill 1537 (D-Bryan) raises very complex concerns.

"Service in the U.S. Coast Guard is now considered dishonesty and a de-certifiable offense

"The Coast Guard is a division of the Department of Homeland Security. Some of our members serve in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, and we believe that their service to this country is courageous and admirable. However, Assembly Bill 1537 (D-Bryan) labels their service as

"dishonesty," and it requires the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) to de-certify them as peace officers in the State of California.

"Providing World-Class Law Enforcement Training is now considered dishonesty, and a de-certifiable offense

"The Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers are housed within the Department of Homeland Security. This means some of our most highly trained officers, who are world-renowned for their experience and skills and teach courses as contractor/guest instructors at FLETC or other federal law enforcement agencies, are engaged in dishonesty and are subject to de-certification by POST. It is hard for us to believe that teaching others to survive Active Shooter Scenarios, or Crime Scene Investigation, Digital Forensic Examination, or Law Enforcement Leadership Essentials would be considered a dishonest profession under the law...

"Working for or assisting FEMA or TSA

"The security industry has long been a gateway to a career in law enforcement, and the TSA has been a hub from which our officers recruit the next generation of law enforcement. While this bill does not prohibit recruitment from TSA, it has an explicit process for sending employees to "external training" using the SF-182, which is typically how agencies enroll staff in vendor-provided (often contractor-run) courses. Skilled LAPD officers are often asked to serve as guest instructors for compensation. But even if the instruction is volunteered, our members still run the risk of running afoul of AB1537. Officers who desire to volunteer with the Community Emergency Response Team, which LAPD officers have done, because this program is housed under FEMA, and because FEMA is housed under the Department of Homeland Security, run the risk of de-certification.

"Constitutional Considerations

"This bill requires de-certification based on employment, volunteerism, and general association. This bill lacks a rational nexus to officer fitness. Why is service in the Coast Guard, or any employment with any federal agency, irrespective of job title or performance, considered dishonesty and de-certifiable?

"Why is concurrent employment with Homeland Security de-certifiable, but concurrent involvement with the Department of Justice (FBI, U.S. Marshals, or DOJ) in immigration related matters is considered sufficiently honest, instead of dishonest?

"AB 1537 substitutes moral condemnation of a federal agency for an evidence-based assessment of officer fitness. It declares lawful federal employment "dishonest" without regard to conduct, intent, or performance; treats similarly situated federal law-enforcement associations differently without rational justification; and imposes career-ending consequences through irrebuttable presumptions that deny due process.

"Practical Compliance Questions

"The bill requires law enforcement officers to "report to their employing law enforcement agency any offer of, request for, or attempt at secondary employment." Key questions regarding this bill include the following:

- 1) What qualifies as an "offer"?
- 2) Must it be written?
- 3) Must compensation be discussed?
- 4) Does a recruiter's LinkedIn message count?
- 5) Does an overheard comment count?
- 6) What is an "attempt"?
- 7) Who decides credibility?

"Request for Amendments

"We support accountability, and we support California's transparency laws. But this provision turns secondary employment records into a public safety risk. Second jobs often require listing a home address, contact details, schedules, and other identifiers, especially if the secondary employment is as a sole proprietor. Making that material broadly disclosable under CPRA creates a doxxing risk against our members and their families, while doing little to target misconduct. These types of progressive policies should be precise: disclose conflicts and wrongdoing, not personal identifiers. We're asking for guardrails that protect worker safety and privacy while preserving real accountability.

"Our request for amendments is as follows:

- 1) Require redaction of personal identifiers, including but not limited to: home address, personal phone/email, DOB, SSN, and family member info.
- 2) Make only conflict-of-interest determinations and approval/denial decisions public.
- 3) Keep underlying forms submitted by our members confidential unless there's a sustained finding of misconduct."

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) Ongoing costs (General Fund) of an unknown but potentially significant amount annually across certain state law enforcement agencies, as defined, to centralize, monitor, and verify peace officer secondary employment; to respond to California Public Records Act (CPRA) requests for secondary employment records newly designated as public; and to investigate and enforce potential violations. Agencies have reported the following:
 - a) The California Highway Patrol maintains secondary employment records in paper form at 103 area offices, nine field division offices, headquarters commands, and the academy. Compliance with the bill's CPRA disclosure requirement would require manual review of over 7,000 personnel files, with associated administrative staff time and resources.

- b) The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation has described potential costs as unknown but potentially significant, reflecting the need for new statewide processes, dedicated staff for verification and monitoring, and manual review of both departmental and contracted employee records.
- c) POST reports no additional fiscal impact to its decertification workload under current assumptions.

Aggregate state costs scale with the number of state agencies employing peace officers, as defined by this bill.

- 2) Likely reimbursable costs (local funds, General Fund) of an unknown but potentially significant amount to local law enforcement agencies to implement parallel verification, monitoring, and CPRA compliance requirements. General Fund costs will depend on whether the duties imposed by this bill constitute a reimbursable state mandate, as determined by the Commission on State Mandates.

The Legislative Analyst's Office recently warned of General Fund structural deficits of around \$35 billion per year beginning in the 2027-28 fiscal year.

VOTES

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 5-3-1

YES: Schultz, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Wilson

NO: Alanis, Lackey, Ramos

ABS, ABST OR NV: Nguyen

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 10-4-1

YES: Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

NO: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Pacheco

UPDATED

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CONSULTANT: Ilan Zur / PUB. S. / (916) 319-3744

FN: 0002989