
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1707 (Davies) - Electricians: certification application, examination, and renewal

Version: August 3, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 10, 2026

Policy Vote: L., P.E. & R. 5 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Robert Ingenito

Bill Summary: AB 1707 would (1) allow individuals who fail the electrician certification examination to immediately apply to retake the examination, as specified, and (2) transfer, contingent upon a legislative appropriation, responsibility for administering the electrician certification program from the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE), within the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR), to the Contractors State License Board (CSLB), as specified.

Fiscal Impact:

- This bill would result in one-time and ongoing costs, likely exceeding \$3 million annually, to CSLB to assume responsibility for the Electrician Certification Program, including staffing, examination administration, legal support, and information technology activities. Specifically, estimated costs include \$1.2 million annually for staffing, \$1.2 million annually for contracted examination and operational support, \$300,000 annually for legal services, and one-time information technology transition costs of approximately \$900,000, followed by ongoing IT support costs of approximately \$450,000 annually (Electrician Certification Fund and Contractors License Fund).
- Costs to the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) would be minor and absorbable.

Background: Current law establishes the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE) within DIR, under the direction of the Labor Commissioner, and charges the division with enforcing California's labor laws, including administering the State's electrician certification program. California regulates electrical work through two state agencies. CSLB licenses C-10 electrical contractors, which are required for businesses that bid on electrical projects valued at \$500 or more. Separately, DLSE certifies individuals who perform electrical work for C-10 contractors.

DLSE administers separate certifications for general electricians, residential electricians, fire/life safety technicians, nonresidential lighting technicians, and voice data video technicians. The division also maintains an Electrical Certification Curriculum Committee, comprised of representatives from the California Department of Education, the California Community Colleges, and the DLSE, to establish educational curriculum standards for approved training programs.

To obtain certification, applicants must meet minimum work experience requirements, ranging from 4,800 to 8,000 hours depending on the certification category, submit an

application with the required fee, provide documentation of qualifying work experience and training, including a Social Security Administration employment history report, and pass a state certification examination. Once an application is approved, applicants may schedule an examination at one of 22 testing locations throughout the state. Applicants receive their examination results immediately upon completion of the test, and those who achieve a passing score of at least 70 percent receive a certification card from the DLSE. Applicants who do not pass must wait 60 days before retaking the examination and pay the applicable retest fee.

Electrician certifications must be renewed every three years. To renew, certified electricians must submit a renewal application and fee, complete 32 hours of approved continuing education, and provide evidence of at least 2,000 hours of industry work experience during the preceding three-year certification period.

Since 2009, the CSLB and the DLSE have jointly enforced California's electrician certification requirements. Individuals found performing work that requires certification without holding a valid certification are prohibited from obtaining certification for seven years.

Proposed Law: This bill would do the following:

- Authorize an individual who fails the certification examination to immediately submit an application to retake the examination, as specified.
- Transfer authority over the certification of electricians from DLSE to CSLB, contingent upon an appropriation by the Legislature, as specified.

Related Legislation:

- SB 1362 (Margett, Chapter 716, Statutes of 2008) authorized specified disciplinary action for failure to comply with existing law related to the certification of electricians.
- SB 1038 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 46, Statutes of 2012) among other things, recast the electrician certification responsibilities of the Division of Apprenticeship Standards under DLSE.

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