

Date of Hearing: August 30, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS

Marc Berman, Chair

AB 1707 (Davies) – As Amended August 21, 2026

NOTE: This bill is being heard pursuant to Assembly Rule 77.2 for concurrence in Senate amendments only.

SUBJECT: Electricians: certification application, examination, and renewal.

SUMMARY: Transfers authority over the certification of electricians from the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE) to the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) beginning July 1, 2028, contingent upon appropriation by the Legislature.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the DLSE within the Department of Industrial Relations under the direction of the Labor Commissioner. (Labor Code (LC) §79-107)
- 2) Requires DLSE to do the following:
 - a) Maintain minimum standards for the competency and training of electricians through a system of testing and certification.
 - b) Maintain an advisory committee and panels as necessary to administer the electrician certification program.
 - c) Establish and collect fees.
 - d) Carry out the responsibilities of the Division of Apprenticeship Standards, as specified.
 - e) Issue certification cards to electricians who have been certified pursuant to this section. Fees collected are continuously appropriated in an amount sufficient to pay the costs of issuing certification cards, and that amount may be expended for that purpose by the DLSE.
 - f) Maintain an electrical certification curriculum committee comprised of representatives of the State Department of Education, the California Community Colleges, and the DLSE.(LC § 108(a))
- 3) Requires the electrical certification curriculum committee to do the following:
 - a) Establish written educational curriculum standards for enrollees in training programs.
 - b) Designate that curriculum as an approved curriculum of classroom instruction if an educational provider's curriculum meets the written educational curriculum standards.
 - c) At the committee's discretion, review the approved curriculum of classroom instruction of any designated educational provider. The committee may withdraw its approval of the

curriculum if the educational provider no longer meets the established written educational curriculum standards.

- d) Require each designated educational provider to submit an annual notice to the committee stating whether the educational provider is continuing to offer the approved curriculum of classroom instruction and whether any material changes have been made to the curriculum since its approval.

(LC § 108(a)(6))

- 4) Defines “electricians” to mean all persons who engage in the connection of electrical devices for electrical contractors licensed by CSLB. This does not include electrical connections under 100 volt-amperes. (LC § 108(c))
- 5) Requires persons who perform work as electricians to become certified and prohibits uncertified persons from performing electrical work for which certification is required. (LC § 108(b)(1))
- 6) Specifies that certification is required only for those persons who perform work as electricians for contractors licensed as C-10 electrical contractors by the CSLB. (LC § 108.2(b)(1))
- 7) Requires individuals desiring to be certified to submit an application for certification and examination that includes an employment history report from the Social Security Administration. The individual may redact their Social Security number from the employment history report before submitting it. (LC § 108.2(b)(4))
- 8) Requires DLSE to maintain separate certifications for general electrician, fire/life safety technician, residential electrician, voice data video technician, and nonresidential lighting technician. (LC § 108.2(c))
- 9) Specifies that certification is not required for registered apprentices performing electrical work as part of an approved apprenticeship program. An apprentice who is within one year of completion of their term of apprenticeship must be permitted to take the certification examination and, upon passing the examination, be certified immediately upon completion of the term of apprenticeship. (LC § 108.2(d))
- 10) Requires the Labor Commissioner to maintain a process for referring cases to the CSLB when it has been determined that a violation has likely occurred. (LC § 108.2(i))
- 11) Requires the CSLB to open an investigation upon receipt of a referral by the Labor Commissioner alleging a violation. Any disciplinary action against the licensee shall be initiated within 60 days of the receipt of the referral. The CSLB may initiate disciplinary action against any licensee based on its own investigation, the filing of any complaint, or any finding resulting from a referral from the Labor Commissioner alleging a violation. (LC § 108.2(j))
- 12) Requires the DLSE to do all of the following:

- a) Make information about electrician certification available in non-English languages spoken by a substantial number of construction workers.
- b) Provide for the administration of certification tests in Spanish and, to the extent practicable, other non-English languages spoken by a substantial number of applicants, except insofar as the ability to understand warning signs, instructions, and certain other information in English is necessary for safety reasons.
- c) Ensure, in conjunction with the California Apprenticeship Council, that all electrician apprenticeship programs that impose minimum formal education requirements as a condition of entry provide for reasonable alternative means of satisfying those requirements.
- d) Ensure, in conjunction with the California Apprenticeship Council, that all electrician apprenticeship programs have adopted reasonable procedures for granting credit toward a term of apprenticeship for other vocational training and on-the-job training experience.

(LC § 108.3)

13) Authorizes an uncertified person to perform electrical work for which certification is required in order to acquire the necessary on-the-job experience for certification, if all of the following requirements are met:

- a) The person is registered with the Labor Commissioner. The DLSE must maintain a list of current registrants and make it available to the public upon request.
- b) The person either has completed or is enrolled in an approved curriculum of classroom instruction, as defined.
- c) The employer attests that the person shall be under the direct supervision of a certified electrician who is responsible for supervising no more than one uncertified person. An employer who is found by the DLSE to have failed to provide adequate supervision may be barred from employing uncertified individuals in the future.

(LC § 108.4(a))

14) Authorizes the curriculum committee to grant approval to an educational provider that presently offers only a partial curriculum if the educational provider intends in the future to offer, or to cooperate with other educational providers to offer, a complete curriculum for the type of certification involved. The curriculum committee may require an educational provider receiving approval for a partial curriculum to periodically renew its approval with the curriculum committee until a complete curriculum is offered and approved. (LC § 108.4(c))

15) An educational provider that receives approval for a partial curriculum must disclose in all communications to students and to the public that the educational provider has only received approval for a partial curriculum and cannot make any representations that the provider offers a complete approved curriculum of classroom instruction. (LC § 108.4(d))

- 16) Requires registration to be renewed annually and the registrant to provide to the DLSE certification of the classwork completed and on-the-job experience acquired since the prior registration. (LC § 108.4(f))
- 17) Requires an educational provider of an approved curriculum of classroom instruction to, upon the DLSE's request, provide the DLSE with information regarding the enrollment status and instruction completed by a person registered. By registering with the DLSE, a person consents to the release of this information. (LC § 108.4(g))
- 18) Requires the DLSE to establish registration fees, not to exceed \$25 for the initial registration. There shall be no fee for annual renewal of registration. Fees collected are continuously appropriated in an amount sufficient to administer the registration and certification program, and that amount may be expended by the DLSE for this purpose. (LC § 108.4(h))
- 19) Authorizes an uncertified person who has completed an approved curriculum of classroom instruction and is currently registered with the DLSE to take the certification examination. The person shall be certified upon passing the examination and satisfactorily completing the requisite number of on-the-job hours required for certification. (LC § 108.4(k))
- 20) Establishes the Electrician Certification Fund as a special account in the State Treasury. Proceeds of the fund may be expended by the DLSE, upon appropriation by the Legislature, for the costs of the DLSE Enforcement program to validate and certify electricians. (LC § 108.5)
- 21) Establishes the CSLB to license and regulate contractors and home improvement salespersons. (Business and Professions Code (BPC) §§ 7000 *et seq.*)
- 22) Establishes an enforcement division within the CSLB to rigorously enforce the Contractors State License Law (License Law). (BPC § 7011.4(a))
- 23) Establishes four branches of contracting business in the following classifications: general engineering contracting (A), general building contracting (B1), residential remodeling contracting (B2), specialty contracting (C). (BPC § 7055)
- 24) Defines a C Specialty Contractor as those whose operations involve performance of construction work requiring special skill and whose principal contracting business involves the use of specialized building trades or crafts. (BPC § 7058(a))
- 25) Requires the CSLB to charge C-10 contractors \$20 at the time of license renewal to fund the CSLB's enforcement of provisions of the LC related to electrician certification. (BPC § 7137(6)(A))

THIS BILL:

- 1) Transfers the entire electrician certification regulatory program from the DLSE to the CSLB, subject to appropriation by the Legislature, on the later of July 1, 2028, or the first anniversary of the date on which the appropriation is made.
- 2) Limits the DLSE's jurisdiction over the electrician certification program to those applications received on or before July 1, 2028, and authorizes the Labor Commissioner to perform any

necessary action on applications received, as specified.

- 3) Sunsets the electrician certification program under the DLSE on January 1, 2029.
- 4) States that any electrician certification or trainee registration that is valid on the operative date of the transfer of oversight of the electrician certification program remains valid until its expiration according to its existing term and conditions.
- 5) Deletes the \$25 fee cap for initial registration, repeals a prohibition on assessing an annual renewal fee for registration, and requires the CSLB to establish initial registration and certification fees, and renewal fees.
- 6) Authorizes the CSLB to accept another form of verifiable employment history in lieu of an employment history report from the Social Security Administration.
- 7) Requires the CSLB to issue regulations that determine an adequate level of supervision of apprentices.
- 8) Authorizes an individual who fails the electrician certification examination to submit an application for retest and the required test fee immediately and retake the examination no sooner than 21 days upon approval after receipt of the application and fee. After one year following the date of notification of eligibility, an unsuccessful applicant must submit a new application and pay the required fee.
- 9) Makes other technical and conforming changes.

FISCAL EFFECT: According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- 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.

COMMENTS:

Purpose. This bill is sponsored by the *California State Association of Electrical Workers*. According to the author:

Assembly Bill 1707 is urgently needed because the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement faces severe administrative backlogs, leaving qualified electricians waiting weeks or months to process both applications and license renewals. Transferring oversight to the Contractors State License Board aligns individual trade credentials with the agency that already regulates electrical contractors and enforces jobsite compliance.

Background.

Electrician Certification. Electricians employed by CSLB-licensed C-10 electrical contractors must be certified by the DLSE, except as follows. Certification is not required for electrical connections under 100 volt-amperes. Certification is also not required for people performing work for contractors licensed as class C-7 low voltage systems or class C-45 electric sign contractors. Uncertified individuals may not perform electrical work for which certification is required. Moreover, C-10 electrical contractors may employ only electricians certified by DLSE. Violations of this law are subject to disciplinary action by the CSLB. There are five classifications with corresponding exams: General Electrician; Residential Electrician; Fire/Life Safety Technician; Voice, Data, Video Technician; and Non-residential Lighting Technician. As of April 12, 2023, there were more than 33,000 certified electricians.¹

Applicants for electrician certification must submit an application that includes Social Security earnings information and proof of having completed the experience requirements. To qualify for examination and certification, an applicant must have successfully completed an approved apprenticeship program or 4,000 to 8,000 hours of on-the-job experience. Additionally, applicants must pass an examination. The examination costs \$175 (\$100 exam fee and \$75 administration fee). After an applicant receives approval from DLSE to schedule the exam, the applicant must schedule the exam through the testing vendor, Pearson Vue. An individual who fails the exam must wait 60 days from the date of the exam before applying for retesting. This bill would allow an individual who fails the exam to reapply immediately and retake the exam 21 days after approval following receipt of the application and fee.

Certified electricians must renew their certification card every three years by applying and paying a \$100 fee. Applicants must demonstrate completion of at least 2,000 hours of work in the industry and 32 hours of continuing education from an approved education provider in the prior three years. Individuals who do not qualify for examination and certification because they lack work experience or related instruction may register as an electrician trainee. Trainees must attend a state-approved school and work under the supervision of a certified electrician. To become an electrician trainee, one must apply, pay a \$25 fee, and submit proof of enrollment in an approved school. Trainees must renew their Electrician Trainee card annually; there is no fee. The DLSE reports that applications are processed within 30 days of receipt, on average. Fees are deposited into the Electrician Certification Fund, which currently has a balance of \$20 million.

The DLSE is also responsible for establishing the minimum competency and training of electricians and must maintain an advisory committee and panels including an electrical certification curriculum committee that determines the curriculum standards for enrollees in training programs. In addition, the curriculum committee reviews education program providers to ensure they continue to meet the standards established by the curriculum committee.

Contractors State License Board. The CSLB implements and enforces the License Law, which governs the licensure, practice, and discipline of contractors in California. A license is required for construction projects valued at \$1,000 or more, including labor and materials. The CSLB issues licenses to business entities and sole proprietors. Each license requires a qualifying individual (a “qualifier”) who satisfies the experience and examination requirements for

¹ Electrician Certification Program. *Electrician certification program statistics*.
https://www.dir.ca.gov/DLSE/ECU/ECU_Stats.html

licensure and directly supervises and controls construction work performed under the license. The CSLB issues four types of licenses: “A” General Engineering Contractor; “B” General Building Contractor; “B-2” Residential Remodeling Contractor; and “C” Specialty Contractor. The “C” category includes more than 40 specialty classifications, including the C-10 electrical contractor. The CSLB oversees approximately 245,000 actively licensed contractors.² The CSLB also registers home improvement salespersons. The CSLB’s licensing requirements do not include a mandatory education component, so there is no school approval process, and CSLB does not have a continuing education or continuing competency requirement. As a self-funded program, the CSLB relies solely on licensing, renewal, enforcement, and other administrative fees and does not receive general fund support. Licensing fees are specified in statute and updated as needed to ensure the CSLB can perform its regulatory functions.

As of August 1, 2026, there are approximately 29,000 active C-10 electrical contractors. The CSLB is charged with ensuring that electricians employed by C-10 electrical contractors are certified. C-10 licensees pay a supplemental \$20 fee when they renew their license to support CSLB’s enforcement of electrician certification requirements. This bill would transfer administration of the entire electrician certification program to CSLB, beginning July 1, 2028, or on the anniversary of an appropriation by the Legislature, whichever is later. Any electrician certification or trainee registration valid on the operative date of the transfer would remain valid until its expiration under its existing terms and conditions. The DLSE would continue to have authority over applications received on or before July 1, 2028. The CSLB would have the authority to expend proceeds from the Electrician Certification Fund beginning July 1, 2027, as necessary to prepare for the transfer.

This bill would require the CSLB to establish initial registration and certification fees, and renewal fees, as necessary to implement the electrician certification program. Additionally, this bill would allow the CSLB to accept another form of verifiable employment history in lieu of an employment history report from the Social Security Administration and require the CSLB to issue regulations determining an adequate level of supervision for apprentices.

Prior Related Legislation. SB 610 (Glazer), Chapter 378, Statutes of 2019, as it relates to this bill, required the CSLB to charge a fee of no more than \$20 to enforce electrician certification requirements.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:

As the sponsor of this bill, the *California State Association of Electrical Workers* writes:

AB 1707 improves the administration of California's electrician certification program by transferring oversight from the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE) to the Contractors State License Board (CSLB), placing certification for electricians under the same agency that already licenses and regulates electrical contractors. This alignment improves efficiency and coordination while maintaining the existing certification standards and qualifications that ensure electrical work is performed by trained and qualified professionals.

² Contractors State License Board. *Homepage*. <https://www.cslb.ca.gov/>

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION:

There is no opposition on file.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES:

Examination Fees. While this bill would authorize the CSLB to set initial certification and registration and renewal fees, it does not extend the same permission to examination fees. The current examination cost is \$100. It is unclear if that amount will cover the cost of the examination in the future. The CSLB contracts with PSI testing centers to administer exams for contractors, whereas the DLSE contracts with Pearson Vue. It is unclear whether the DLSE contract with Pearson Vue will be transferred to the CSLB or whether the CSLB will execute its own contract with either PSI or Pearson Vue. The cost of the exam should be equal to what it costs to administer the exam. Moreover, examination fees should be paid directly to the vendor, rather than require CSLB to transfer payment to the vendor on the applicant's behalf.

Workload. According to DLSE staff, there are 5 dedicated staff at the DLSE who administer the electrician certification program. It is currently unknown whether CSLB has capacity or will be given additional staff to administer the program after transfer. The CSLB's administration of the electrician certification program should not impede the CSLB's current licensing and enforcement duties nor increase fees for licensed contractors or registered home improvement salespersons.

Curriculum Committee. The DLSE is required to maintain a curriculum committee comprised of representatives of the State Department of Education, the California Community Colleges, and DLSE to establish written educational curriculum standards, approve curriculum, and review the approved curriculum of any designated educational provider. The CSLB does not currently review or approve curriculum or education providers. This role may be more appropriately assigned to another entity with this experience, such as the Division of Apprenticeship Standards.

REGISTERED SUPPORT:

California State Association of Electrical Workers (Sponsor)

REGISTERED OPPOSITION:

There is no opposition on file.

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