
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND RETIREMENT
Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 1896	Hearing Date:	July 1, 2026
Author:	Mark González		
Version:	June 24, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Glenn Miles		

SUBJECT: Public employment: disqualifications

KEY ISSUE

This bill would disqualify any person previously employed by an entity that engaged in immigration enforcement and who personally assisted with immigration enforcement, from California public employment unless they performed those enforcement activities for a California state or local agency, as specified.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

- 1) Creates the state civil service that includes every officer and employee of the state except a limited number of specified, exempted officers and employees. Existing law also requires that the state make “permanent appointment and promotion in the civil service under a general system based on merit ascertained by competitive examination.” Case law and custom refer to this provision as the merit principle and it governs the administration of the state’s civil service system. (CA CONST. art. VII, §1 and §4)
- 2) Establishes the State Personnel Board (SPB) to enforce the civil service statutes and prescribe probationary periods and classifications, adopt other rules authorized by statute, and review disciplinary actions. (CA CONST. art. VII, §2 and §3)
- 3) Provides that “every person shall be disqualified from holding any office of profit in this State who shall have been convicted of having given or offered a bribe to procure personal election or appointment”. (CA CONST. art. VII, §)
- 4) Requires that laws be made to exclude persons convicted of bribery, perjury, forgery, malfeasance in office, or other high crimes from office or serving on juries. The privilege of free suffrage shall be supported by laws regulating elections and prohibiting, under adequate penalties, all undue influence thereon from power, bribery, tumult, or other improper practice. (CA CONST. art. VII, §2 and §3)
- 5) Provides that a person is disqualified from holding any office upon conviction of designated crimes as specified in the Constitution and laws of the State. (Government Code § 1021)
- 6) Disqualifies, as specified, persons from holding office as a peace officer or being employed as a peace officer of the state, county, city, city and county, or other political subdivision, whether with or without compensation, and provides that they are disqualified from any office or employment by the state, county, city, city and county, or other political

subdivision, whether with or without compensation, which confers upon the holder or employee the powers and duties of a peace officer. ((Government Code § 1029)

This bill:

- 1) This bill disqualifies any person previously employed by an entity that engaged in immigration enforcement and who personally assisted with immigration enforcement on or after January 20, 2025, to January 20, 2029, inclusive, from public employment in California unless they were engaged in immigration enforcement with a qualifying public entity.
- 2) Specifies that a person shall not be disqualified from public employment in California for having engaged in immigration enforcement at any of the following public entities:
 - a) Any city, county, city and county, special district, or other political subdivision of the state.
 - b) Any agency of a city, county, city and county, special district, or other political subdivision of the state that is authorized to enforce criminal statutes, regulations, or local ordinances; or to operate jails or to maintain custody of individuals in jails; or to operate juvenile detention facilities or to maintain custody of individuals in juvenile detention facilities; or to monitor compliance with probation or parole conditions.
 - c) A California state or local law enforcement agency, including school police or security departments.
 - d) The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.
- 3) Defines the following terms:
 - a) “California law enforcement agency” means a California state or local law enforcement agency, including school police or security departments.
 - b) “Immigration enforcement” includes any efforts to investigate or enforce any federal civil immigration law, including investigating or enforcing any federal criminal immigration law that penalizes a person’s presence in, entry to, or reentry to, or employment in, the United States.
 - c) “Local agency” means any city, county, city and county, special district, or other political subdivision of the state.
 - d) “Local law enforcement agency” means any agency of a city, county, city and county, special district, or other political subdivision of the state that is authorized to enforce criminal statutes, regulations, or local ordinances; or to operate jails or to maintain custody of individuals in jails; or to operate juvenile detention facilities or to maintain custody of individuals in juvenile detention facilities; or to monitor compliance with probation or parole conditions.
- 4) Does not prohibit or restrict any governmental entity or official from sending to, or receiving from, federal immigration authorities information regarding the citizenship or immigration status, lawful or unlawful, of an individual, or from requesting from federal immigration authorities immigration status information, lawful or unlawful, of any individual, or from maintaining or exchanging that information with any other federal, state, or local governmental entity, pursuant to federal law, as specified.

- 5) Authorizes CalHR or a designated appointing power to refuse to examine, or after examination to refuse to declare as eligible, or to withhold or withdraw from an eligible list, before the appointment, anyone who has been found to have been previously employed by an entity that engaged in immigration enforcement, as specified.
- 6) Includes a severability clause to preserve the validity of remaining provisions, if one of the bill's provision is found invalid, as specified.
- 7) Makes findings and declarations that the matter is a statewide concern and thus, necessary to apply to all cities, including charter cities.
- 8) Provides that if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made as specified.
- 9) Makes other findings and declarations regarding the current circumstances that form the intent of the Legislature to ensure that this act maintains the values of the State of California and protects its residents from immoral individuals from being stewards of public trust.

COMMENTS

1. Need for this bill?

According to the author:

“Immigration enforcement agents, by virtue of their employment, have consistently shown they are unwilling to stand up to unlawful orders, and therefore do not align with the core values of this state’s law enforcement or public employee missions.

Whistleblower documents and complaints presented to Congress also show alarming changes to ICE training including a shortened training program, the reduction of training exams and the removal of entire courses from their training program including use of force training.”

2. Proponent Arguments:

According to the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights:

“AB 1896 will disqualify anyone who has engaged in immigration enforcement activity from January 1, 2025, to January 20, 2029, from being employed as a state, county, or local public agency employee, including as a peace officer, with exceptions for allowed activities under SB 54, the California Values Act (2017).”

Anyone who engages in the terrorizing, kidnapping, shooting, or killing of innocent people has shown they are not interested in serving the public interest but are instead agents of harm, hate, and substantive violence. By disqualifying them from public employment, California will continue to ensure its people are served by those with their best interest at heart.”

According to the California Latino Legislative Caucus:

“Under the Trump Administration, immigration enforcement has repeatedly targeted vulnerable communities often using illegal tactics to increase the scale of deportation, including but not limited to, targeting individuals based on their employment, language preferences or appearance. The Trump administration has also engaged in a rapid employment and deployment of untrained federal agents. Reports show that recent recruits were trained for less than 14 weeks before being deployed into communities. Immigration enforcement agents have often engaged in increasingly violent modes of enforcement, endangering immigrants and community members alike. AB 1896 would ensure that no individual that has taken part in these violent immigration raids can later become a public employee in California.”

3. Opponent Arguments:

According to the California State Sheriffs’ Association:

“AB 1896 will restrict California law enforcement agencies from hiring otherwise qualified individuals as peace officers simply because they happened to work for a federal agency that engaged in federal immigration enforcement. This bill is not limited to persons who worked for federal agencies like Immigration and Customs Enforcement that have a primary responsibility connected to immigration enforcement. Under AB 1896, a person employed as a mail clerk by the Department of Homeland Security during the dates described in the bill would be ineligible to become a California peace officer.

The bill also neglects the fact that any person who is ultimately employed as a California peace officer is subject to extensive background checks and high statutory and departmental qualifications. Recruiting and retaining qualified peace officer candidates is already hard enough in California and AB 1896 will unnecessarily make that process more difficult.”

According to California Association of Highway Patrolmen:

“Additionally, the bill politicizes law enforcement hiring and sets a concerning precedent by disqualifying individuals based on prior lawful employment with federal agencies. It also raises concerns about workforce shortages, interagency cooperation, and the erosion of a unified law enforcement framework, as it penalizes individuals for carrying out federally authorized duties.”

- 4. Dual Referral:** The Senate Rules Committee referred this bill to the Senate Public Safety Committee and the Senate Committee on Labor, Public Employment and Retirement.

5. Related/ Prior Legislation:

SB 938 (Menjivar, 2026) would make certain United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers ineligible for specified peace officer training waivers. *This bill is currently pending consideration in the Senate Appropriations committee.*

SB 1332 (L. Gonzalez, 2026) would make a person is ineligible for appointment to, or employment in, any civil service or exempt position with the state if the person has been employed by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement during the period beginning January 20, 2025, and ending January 20, 2029. *This bill was withdrawn from its first policy hearing at the request of the author.*

AB 1627 (Avila-Farias, 2026) would specify existing laws disqualifying a person from being a peace officer if they were previously employed as a law enforcement officer and had their certification revoked, or engaged in serious misconduct that would have resulted in decertification in California, shall also include a law enforcement officer employed by the federal government who engages in immigration enforcement, as specified. *The bill is currently pending consideration on the Senate Floor.*

AB 1537 (Bryan, 2026) would prohibit specified peace officers from engaging in any form of secondary employment that involves engaging in, arresting, detaining, transporting, or deporting individuals pursuant to federal immigration laws. *This bill is currently pending consideration in the Senate Appropriations committee.*

SUPPORT

California Faculty Association
California Public Defenders Association
Central American Resource Center
City of Los Angeles
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights
Courage California
Ella Baker Center for Human Rights
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice
Justice2Jobs Coalition
LA Defensa
Los Angeles County Democratic Party
Public Counsel
SEIU California
Viet Voices

OPPOSITION

California Association of Highway Patrolmen
California Police Chiefs Association
California State Sheriffs' Association
City of Newport Beach
City of Upland
Peace Officers Research Association of California
Riverside County Sheriff's Office
SFV Alliance

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