

Date of Hearing: June 24, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

Liz Ortega, Chair

SB 1203 (Smallwood-Cuevas) – As Amended May 19, 2026

SENATE VOTE: 25-8

This analysis addresses the labor provisions of the bill

SUBJECT: Security services

SUMMARY: Requires annual training in deescalation and basic employee rights for proprietary private security officers and private security guards. Prohibits a private patrol operator (licensee) from providing the deescalation training, instead requiring an organization that employs evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies to provide it. Convenes, on or before July 1, 2027, the Industrial Welfare Commission (IWC) to set a minimum wage for the property services industry. Specifically, **this bill:**

Deescalation training requirements

- 1) Requires, beginning July 1, 2028, each registered employee, in addition to any annual training required by regulation, to annually complete a minimum of eight hours of training dedicated to practicing deescalation skills through in-person role-plays and interactive training methods administered by an organization approved pursuant to 8) below.
- 2) Requires the eight hours of deescalation training to be conducted by an instructor who is a human being, physically present, and live with students in a classroom 100 percent of the course and available at all times to answer students' questions. No part of this training shall be completed while a guard is on duty at their post. The time spent to attend the training shall be compensated by the licensee if the guard is employed by, or has a pending offer of employment from, the licensee. The cost of the training shall be provided by the employer.
- 3) Requires the deescalation training to be administered by an organization, or a person certified by an organization, that employs evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies in their training.
- 4) States that an organization that employs evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies shall be an organization that provides specialized deescalation training that is based on principles and methods informed by peer-reviewed or clinical research on trauma and includes role-playing and interactive methods.
- 5) Requires the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services (bureau) to develop emergency regulations establishing the criteria the bureau shall use to evaluate whether any organization is a qualifying organization. Organizations qualified to provide this training shall be identified by July 1, 2028.

- 6) States that a licensee, a subsidiary of a licensee, or is a subsidiary of an organization that shares the same parent organization as a licensee is ineligible to provide the training described above.
- 7) Requires the organization, or person certified by an organization, that employs evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies to issue a certificate of completion to the trainee and their employer, if any, upon satisfactory completion of this training.
- 8) Requires an organization wishing approval of the bureau to offer the deescalation training to complete an application for certification as a deescalation training organization. This application shall be accompanied by a two-hundred-fifty-dollar (\$250) application fee, be in a form prescribed by the chief of the bureau, and shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following information:
 - a) The name, business address, and telephone number of the organization.
 - b) A detailed description of the places, days, and times the course will be offered.
 - c) An estimate of the minimum and maximum class size.
 - d) Location and description of the facilities.
 - e) The name or names of the instructors who will teach the course, each instructor's months or years of experience providing deescalation training, and each instructor's months or years of experience providing in-person deescalation training.
 - f) A certification that the applying organization will conduct the training as required by this section, any applicable regulations, and the standard course and curriculum developed, as specified.
- 9) Requires, upon approval by the bureau, the chief to issue to the facility a "deescalation organization certificate." The certificate shall be posted in a conspicuous place at the facility.
- 10) Authorizes the chief to refuse to issue or to cancel a previously issued deescalation organization certificate or to assess fines, as specified, for the failure of the organization to conduct the trainings as required by this section, any applicable regulations, and the standard course and curriculum developed, as specified.
- 11) Requires the bureau to develop and establish by emergency regulation a standard course and curriculum for the deescalation training. The emergency regulations shall be adopted in accordance with the rulemaking provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act.

Know your rights notice training

- 1) Requires, effective July 1, 2028, two of the first 18 hours of the annual 42 hours of training to be dedicated to training employees on the notice of employee rights given to current employees regarding topics such as workers' compensation, the right to organize, and immigration-related rights.

- 2) Provides that, upon request, a labor organization that represents security guards of a licensee and is approved by the bureau to be a trainer shall be entitled to provide the two-hour training on the notice of employee rights. Absent such request, this two-hour training may be provided by other entities, as specified.
- 3) Requires the bureau to approve a labor organization to be a provider of the two-hour training within 30 days of a labor organization's written request to the bureau to be approved as a trainer if the request identifies the names of the trainers to provide the training and certifies that the trainers are qualified to train on the notice of employee rights.

The IWC sets a minimum wage

- 1) Requires, on or before July 1, 2027, the IWC to convene to perform its duties and functions regarding ascertaining what wages to be paid solely for the property services industry. The commission shall convene regional hearings located in at least each of the following regions: Sacramento, San Francisco Bay area, Silicon Valley, Los Angeles, and San Diego.
- 2) Provides that the term "property services industry" means the industry that consists of employers who hire personnel registered as proprietary private security officers pursuant to Chapter 11.4 (commencing with Section 7574) of, and security officers pursuant to Chapter 11.5 (commencing with Section 7580) of, Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code. (*See existing law 1)- 3*)).
- 3) Requires the IWC to issue a wage order specific to employees employed in the property services industry by June 30, 2028. After the issuance of the wage order, the IWC shall meet every two years, to evaluate the adequacy of the minimum wage and to make any other determinations about hours and conditions of employment. In performing its duties, the IWC shall not reduce the minimum wage or decrease worker protections with respect to hours and conditions of employment.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Defines "proprietary private security officer" to mean an unarmed individual who is employed exclusively by any one employer whose primary duty is to provide security services for their employer, whose services are not contracted to any other entity or person, and who is not exempt, as specified, and who meets both of the following criteria:
 - a) Is required to wear a distinctive uniform clearly identifying the individual as a security officer.
 - b) Is likely to interact with the public while performing their duties. B&P Code §7574.1(g).
- 2) Defines a "private patrol operator" as a person who agrees to furnish, or furnishes, a watchman, guard, patrolperson, or other person to protect persons or property or to prevent the theft, unlawful taking, loss, embezzlement, misappropriation, or concealment of any goods, wares, merchandise, money, bonds, stocks, notes, documents, papers, or property of

any kind; or performs the service of a watchman, guard, patrolperson, or other person, for any of these purposes. B&P Code § 7582.1(a).

- 3) Defines a security guard or security officer as an employee of a private patrol operator or an employee of a lawful business or public agency who performs the functions described above on or about the premises owned or controlled by the customer of the private patrol operator or by the guard's employer or in the company of persons being protected. B&P Code § 7582.1(e).
- 4) Requires the training course in the exercise of the power to arrest and the appropriate use of force to be administered, tested, and certified by any licensee or by any organization or school approved by Department of Consumer Affairs. The course of training is required to be approximately eight hours in length and cover 24 individual topics, including:
 - a) Responsibilities and ethics in citizen arrest.
 - b) Relationship between a security guard and a peace officer in making an arrest.
 - c) Limitations on security guard power to arrest.
 - d) Restrictions on searches and seizures.
 - e) Criminal and civil liabilities, including both of the following:
 - i) Personal liability.
 - ii) Employer liability.
 - f) Trespass law.
 - g) Ethics and communications.
 - h) Emergency situation response, including response to medical emergencies.
 - i) Security officer safety.
 - j) The appropriate use of force, to include, among other topics:
 - i) Legal standards for use of force.
 - ii) Duty to intercede.
 - iii) Deescalation and interpersonal communication training, including tactical methods that use time, distance, cover, and concealment, to avoid escalating situations that lead to violence.
 - iv) Implicit and explicit bias and cultural competency.
 - v) Skills, including deescalation techniques, to effectively, safely, and respectfully interact with people with disabilities or behavioral health issues.

- vi) Mental health and policing, including bias and stigma. B&P Code § 7583.7(a).
- 5) Requires an employer, on or before February 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, to provide a stand-alone written notice to each current employee in a manner the employer normally uses to communicate employment-related information. The written notice shall also be provided to each new employee upon hire. The notice shall contain a description of workers' rights in the following areas:
- a) The right to workers' compensation benefits, including disability pay and medical care for work-related injuries or illness, as well as the contact information for the Division of Workers' Compensation.
 - b) The right to notice of inspection by immigration agencies, as specified.
 - c) Protection against unfair immigration-related practices against a person exercising protected rights.
 - d) The right to organize a union or engage in concerted activity in the workplace.
 - e) Constitutional rights when interacting with law enforcement at the workplace, including an employee's right under the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures and rights under the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution to due process and against self-incrimination. Labor Code §1553(b).
- 6) Requires the notice described in 5) to also contain both of the following:
- a) A description of new legal developments pertaining to laws enforced by the Labor and Workforce Development Agency that the Labor Commissioner (LC) deems material and necessary.
 - b) A list, developed by the LC, of the enforcement agencies that may enforce the underlying rights in the notice. Labor Code §1553(b).
- 7) Provides that it is the continuing duty of the IWC to ascertain the wages paid to all employees in this state, to ascertain the hours and conditions of labor and employment in the various occupations, trades, and industries in which employees are employed in this state, and to investigate the health, safety, and welfare of those employees. Labor Code §1173.
- 8) Requires the IWC to conduct a full review of the adequacy of the minimum wage at least once every two years. The IWC may, upon its own motion or upon petition, amend or rescind any order or portion of any order or adopt an order covering any occupation, trade, or industry not covered by an existing order pursuant to this chapter. Labor Code §1173.
- 9) Requires the IWC, before adopting any new rules, regulations, or policies, to consult with the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board to determine those areas and subject matters where the respective jurisdictions of the IWC and the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board overlap. In the case of such overlapping jurisdiction, the

Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board shall have exclusive jurisdiction, as specified. Labor Code §1173.

FISCAL EFFECT: According to the Senate Appropriations Committee,

- The Bureau reports significant costs, ranging in the millions of dollars, for the expansion of its responsibilities to develop standards for power to arrest and use of force curricula, and to ensure licensee compliance with CBAs (Private Security Services Fund). The Bureau's estimate accounts for additional personnel to handle various functions, such as reviewing applications, developing a standard guidebook, and approving schools and unlicensed persons seeking to provide training. The Bureau will also need staff resources to research and approve labor organizations as training providers within 30 days of an organization's request to provide employee rights training.
- Unknown, potentially significant fiscal impact, likely ranging from the high hundreds of thousands to low millions of dollars for the Industrial Welfare Commission (Commission) to convene and issue a wage order for the property services industry. Staff notes that the Commission has remained non-operational since 2004. Although the Budget Act of 2023 initially allocated \$3 million to restart the Commission, this funding was subsequently repealed. To the extent the Commission requires resources comparable to those proposed in 2023, General Fund costs may range into the millions of dollars.

COMMENTS: Note: This bill is triple-referred to the Assembly Business and Professions Committee, this committee, and the Assembly Public Safety Committee.

The private security workforce

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are around 186,000 security guards in California. In terms of demographics, eighty percent of the workforce is male and the majority are either Latino or Black workers.¹ Approximately 22 percent of the workforce is foreign-born.²

An April 2026 report by the UC Berkeley Labor Center found that despite a growing private security services industry, the workers remain poorly compensated and nearly half have no access to health insurance through their employer or the employer of a household member. Furthermore, their working conditions are characterized by a higher-than-average number of workplace assaults and fatal injuries.³

In terms of their compensation, security guards in California earn a median annual income of \$38,371 and a median wage of \$20.09.⁴ The median wage for workers in California is much

¹Hernández, Kassandra and Lopezlira, Enrique, "Demographic and Job Characteristics of the Security Guard Workforce in California," UC Berkeley Labor Center, April 2026, utilizing American Community Survey data.

² *Ibid.*

³ Wiatrowski, William, 2012. "On Guard Against Workplace Hazards," Monthly Labor Review 0(0):3-11.

⁴ Hernández, Kassandra and Lopezlira, Enrique, "Demographic and Job Characteristics of the Security Guard Workforce in California," UC Berkeley Labor Center, April 2026, utilizing American Community Survey data.

higher at \$28.16. The median wage for security guards is so low in fact that approximately 44% would qualify as “low-wage” workers in California.⁵

Researchers have also focused their attention on training in the private security industry, finding it generally insufficient and inconsistent. Workers are being asked to take on more dangerous situations in public settings without the necessary training to do so. For example, research post-pandemic reveals that many security guards are feeling ill prepared for the “increasing complex and volatile situations they encounter on the job.”⁶ This measure would seek to address the evolving safety risks in the industry by requiring robust deescalation training.

New York City is set to raise pay and benefits for security guards

NYC Local Law 61, signed into law in January of this year, will take effect in July with a phased-in implementation schedule. Similar to this measure, it addresses compensation for private security guards. Under Local Law 61, private security guards must be paid a minimum wage tied to the prevailing wage currently paid to security guards on New York City government contracts. Private security guard employers will also be required to provide, at a minimum, comparable “supplemental benefits” to security guards. Supplemental benefits include medical care, pensions, or retirement plans. Further, the local law has a “notice of rights” provision that requires private security guard employers to provide both new and incumbent workers with a notice of their rights under the law.

A note about the IWC

The IWC was established in 1913 to regulate wages, hours and working conditions in California. The commission has issued 17 wage orders over the years covering various industries in order to establish minimum wage and other protections for employees. These wage orders are enforced by the LC. Today, the IWC does not operate and has no funding. This measure purports to reinstitute the commission and have it resume its statutory duty of ascertaining the wages to be paid to employees in the state. It is unclear how this bill will resurrect and fund the IWC to fulfill its mission once again.

Committee Comments

The author has informed committee staff that, subsequent to this committee, they plan on removing the exemption for a church, mosque, shrine, synagogue, temple, or other place of worship from providing the deescalation training. See proposed B&P Code §7574.18(i).

Arguments in Support

SEIU California, sponsor of the bill, states “Security officers deserve the tools to protect themselves and the communities they serve. SB 1203 takes an important step forward by strengthening training standards, requiring meaningful, in-person de-escalation training, ensuring workers are paid for required training, and improving oversight of wages and working

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Security Industry Association, *Security After COVID*, Washington, DC, 2023.

conditions. These reforms recognize the evolving role of security officers and begin to align expectations with reality.

For SEIU-USWW members, this bill is about more than training requirements. It is about dignity, safety, and professionalism. No worker should be placed in harm's way without the preparation needed to respond effectively. And no community should have to rely on undertrained personnel to handle serious public safety situations. California law currently requires that security officers be trained on de-escalation. Yet, existing training requirements on de-escalation fail to ensure that officers have practiced and refined de-escalation skills before being placed in dangerous situations.

SB 1203 acknowledges that security officers are a critical part of California's safety infrastructure and ensures they are better equipped to meet that responsibility."

Arguments in Opposition

Allied Universal is opposed to the bill and states, "Without any clearly established need, SB 1203 drastically alters how security training is conducted and who is permitted to conduct it. The bill mandates that an 8-hour evidence-based, trauma-informed deescalation training be taught by third-party certified organizations rather than licensed security companies, unless a valid collective bargaining agreement is in place. Additionally, the bill entitles labor organizations, upon request, to teach a two-hour training module on workers' rights. Requiring third-party organizations that lack specific expertise in providing comprehensive security officer training is costly and unnecessary. This requirement will create a massive recruitment and hiring bottleneck. By complicating the hiring process and restricting on-the-job training capabilities, the bill will drive prospective guards to seek work elsewhere, directly exacerbating the current shortage of security officers.

In addition to the costly training mandates, the bill reconstitutes the Industrial Welfare Commission (IWC) to review and increase wages specifically in the property services industry, mandating a specific wage order by June 30, 2028. Establishing a separate minimum wage for security service workers makes no sense to us; we compete for employees with lots of different industries in California. Why is our industry being set apart? This could drive very significant cost increases. A \$1.00 per hour wage increase across 360,000 licensed officers working 2,080 hours a year would add an estimated \$750 million in costs to private security employers, and that cost would eventually be passed on to businesses and local governments in California. Faced with these sharply escalating expenses, clients will likely turn to automated non-human resources—such as cameras, fencing, and artificial intelligence—to replace human security officers, effectively making SB 1203 a job killer."

Related and Prior Legislation

SB 1148 (Niello) of 2026 would authorize a security guard registrant to complete the not less than 32 hours of required training before the date the registration is issued. This bill is pending in the Assembly Business and Professions Committee.

SB 294 (Reyes) Chapter 667, Statutes of 2025 established the Workplace Know Your Rights Act. The bill would require an employer, on or before February 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, to provide a stand-alone written notice to each current employee of specified workers' rights, as

well as constitutional rights of an employee when interacting with law enforcement at the workplace, as specified.

AB 1228 (Holden) Chapter 262, Statutes of 2024 required, among other things, the establishment of the Fast Food Council to establish an hourly minimum wage for fast food restaurant employees.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Service Employees International Union of California (Sponsor)
California Federation of Labor Unions, AFL-CIO

Opposition

Allied Universal
Americal Patrol, INC
Armed Guard Private Security, Inc.
Blue Knight Security and Patrol, Inc.
California Chamber of Commerce
Centurion Security Services, Inc.
Cooke and Associates, Inc.
County of Kern
Customized Guard Services and Systems
Diligence Security Group
Law Security and Investigations, INC
Lead Star Security, INC
Mint Security, INC
Mountain Valley Protective Services
Proguard Security Services
Scorpion Security Services
Southwest Patrol, INC
SVT Gruppe INC
Woodside and Portola Private Patrol

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