

1 HOUSE BILL NO. 62  
2 INTRODUCED BY B. MERCER,  
3 BY REQUEST OF THE STATE AUDITOR  
4

5 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING LAWS RELATED TO BAIL BONDS;  
6 CREATING A SURETY BAIL BOND INSURANCE LICENSE; PROVIDING FOR APPLICATION AND  
7 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR A SURETY BAIL BOND INSURANCE LICENSE; PROVIDING ARREST  
8 AUTHORITY TO A SURETY BAIL BOND INSURANCE PROVIDER; AMENDING SECTIONS 33-17-212, 33-  
9 26-108, 46-9-401, AND 46-9-510, MCA; AND PROVIDING EFFECTIVE DATES."

10  
11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:  
12

13 NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Special qualifications for surety bail bond insurance license.** (1)

14 Before approving an application for a surety bail bond insurance license, the commissioner shall verify that the  
15 individual:

- 16 (a) is a natural person at least 21 years of age;
- 17 (b) is a citizen of the United States or is lawfully entitled to remain and work in the United States;
- 18 (c) has obtained a high school diploma, a general equivalency diploma or equivalent document, or  
19 an equivalent education as determined by the commissioner;

20 (d) has complied with the requirements of 33-17-211; and

21 ~~(e) has submitted to the commissioner the results of an examination conducted by a psychiatrist or~~  
22 ~~a psychologist licensed to practice in this state that indicate that the individual does not suffer from a~~  
23 ~~psychological condition that would adversely affect the ability of the individual to carry out the individual's duties~~  
24 ~~as a surety bail bond agent;~~

25 (f) ~~has submitted to the commissioner the results of a test to detect the presence of a controlled~~  
26 ~~substance in the system of the individual that was administered no earlier than 30 days before the date of the~~  
27 ~~application for the license and is negative for the indication of the presence of any controlled substance for~~  
28 ~~which the individual does not possess a current and lawful prescription issued in the name of the individual; and~~

1 ~~(g)~~(e) has successfully completed the training required in [section 2].

2 (2) An individual may not receive, renew, or hold a surety bail bond license if the individual:

3 (a) has been convicted of a felony in this state or of any offense committed in another state that  
4 would be a felony if committed in this state; or

5 (b) has been convicted of an offense involving moral turpitude or the unlawful use, sale, or  
6 possession of a controlled substance.

7

8 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Surety bail bond insurance license -- basic course of training --**

9 **temporary license.** (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, an applicant for a surety bail bond  
10 insurance license shall satisfactorily complete a basic course of training for bail enforcement agents that is  
11 approved by the commissioner.

12 (2) The basic course of training must consist of at least 40 hours of training that includes  
13 instruction in:

14 (a) the following areas of the law:

15 (i) constitutional law;

16 (ii) procedures for arresting a defendant and surrendering a defendant into custody;

17 (iii) civil liability;

18 (iv) the civil rights of a person who is detained in custody;

19 (v) the use of force; and

20 (vi) the history and principles of bail;

21 (b) procedures for field operations, including without limitation:

22 (i) handling a person with mental illness or a person who is under the influence of alcohol or a  
23 controlled substance; and

24 (ii) the care and custody of a prisoner;

25 (c) the skills required of bail enforcement agents, including without limitation:

26 (i) writing reports and completing forms;

27 (ii) methods of arrest;

28 (iii) nonlethal weapons;

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- 1 (iv) the safe retention of weapons;
- 2 (v) qualifications for the use of firearms; and
- 3 (vi) defensive tactics; and
- 4 (d) the following subjects:
  - 5 (i) first aid used in emergencies; and
  - 6 (ii) cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

7 (3) In lieu of completing the basic course of training required by subsection (1), an applicant may  
8 submit proof to the commissioner that the applicant has completed a course of training required by a municipal,  
9 state, or federal law enforcement agency or a branch of the armed forces to carry out the duties of a peace  
10 officer.

11 (4) An applicant for a surety bail bond insurance license shall complete the training required by this  
12 section within 9 12 months after the date the applicant is employed by a licensed surety bail bond agent. The  
13 commissioner may issue a temporary license to an applicant who has not completed the training if the applicant  
14 is otherwise qualified to be issued a license as a surety bail bond agent. The temporary license:

- 15 (a) authorizes the applicant to act as a surety bail bond agent while employed by a licensed surety  
16 bail bond agent;
- 17 (b) is valid for up to 9 12 months; and
- 18 (c) may not be renewed.

19  
20 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Arrest by surety bail bond insurance producer.** (1) A surety bail bond  
21 insurance producer who ~~no longer feels secure in accepting liability for~~ has probable cause to believe that a  
22 principal insured by the surety insurer to which the producer is appointed will fail to appear in court, in violation  
23 of 46-9-503(2), may use reasonable force to arrest and detain the principal only as described in 46-9-510 and  
24 this section. The producer shall:

- 25 (a) except under exigent circumstances, prior to and no more than 6 hours before attempting to  
26 apprehend the principal, notify the local police department or sheriff's ~~department office~~ of the intent to  
27 apprehend the principal in that jurisdiction by telephoning nonemergency dispatch and provide:
  - 28 (i) the name and producer license number of the individual who will be effecting the arrest; and

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- 1 (ii) the name and approximate location of the principal; and  
2 (b) immediately after the arrest of the principal, notify the local police department or sheriff's  
3 department office by telephoning nonemergency dispatch and provide:  
4 (i) the name and producer license number of the individual who effected the arrest;  
5 (ii) the name of the principal arrested and the description of the location of the arrest; and  
6 (iii) if no notification was given under subsection (1)(a), a detailed explanation of the reasons a  
7 notification could not be given under subsection (1)(a).

8 (2) As used in this section, the following definitions apply:

- 9 (a) "Principal" means a defendant or a witness who has been admitted to bail and who is obligated  
10 to appear in court as required on penalty of forfeiting bail under a commercial bail bond.  
11 (b) "Surety bail bond insurance producer" or "producer" means an insurance producer who is  
12 licensed to sell, solicit, or negotiate commercial bail bonds pursuant to Title 33, chapters 17 and 26.

13

14 **Section 4.** Section 33-17-212, MCA, is amended to read:

15 **"33-17-212. Examination required -- exceptions -- fees.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (6),  
16 an individual applying for a license is required to pass a written examination. The examination must test the  
17 knowledge of the individual concerning each kind of insurance listed in subsection (5) for which application is  
18 made, the duties and responsibilities of an insurance producer, and the insurance laws and rules of this state.  
19 The examination must be developed and conducted under rules adopted by the commissioner.

20 (2) (a) The commissioner may conduct the examination or make arrangements, including  
21 contracting with an outside testing service, for administering the examination. The commissioner may arrange  
22 for the testing service to recover the cost of the examination from the applicant.

23 (b) The commissioner may not charge a fee for an applicant taking an examination pertaining to  
24 prepaid legal insurance. However, the commissioner may contract with an outside testing service for  
25 administering the examination, and the commissioner may arrange for the testing service to recover the cost of  
26 the examination from the applicant.

27 (3) An individual who fails to appear for the examination as scheduled or fails to pass the  
28 examination may reapply for an examination and shall remit all forms before being rescheduled for another

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1 (e) by posting an offender's driver's license in lieu of bail if the summons describes a violation of  
2 any offense as provided in 61-5-214 and if the offender is the holder of an unexpired driver's license.

3 (2) The amount of the bond must ensure the appearance of the defendant at all times required  
4 through all stages of the proceeding including trial de novo, if any, and unless the bond is denied by the court  
5 pursuant to 46-9-107, must remain in effect until final sentence is pronounced in open court.

6 ~~(3) This chapter does not prohibit a surety from surrendering the defendant pursuant to 46-9-510 in a  
7 case in which the surety feels insecure in accepting liability for the defendant.~~

8 ~~(4)~~(3) Whenever a driver's license is accepted in lieu of bail, the judge shall return the driver's license  
9 to the defendant:

10 (a) after the required bail has been posted or there has been a final determination of the charge;

11 and

12 (b) if the defendant pleaded guilty or was convicted, after a \$25 administrative fee has been paid  
13 to the court."

14

15 **Section 7.** Section 46-9-510, MCA, is amended to read:

16 **"46-9-510. Surrender of defendant.** ~~(1) At any time before the forfeiture of bail or within 90 days after~~  
17 ~~forfeiture~~ On issuance of a warrant pursuant to 46-9-503(1) or within 90 days of service of a notice or order of  
18 forfeiture on the surety pursuant to 46-9-503(2) At any time before the forfeiture of bail or within 90 days after  
19 forfeiture:

20 (a) the defendant may surrender to the court or any peace officer of this state; or

21 (b) ~~the surety company~~ a surety bail bond insurance producer licensed to sell, solicit, or negotiate  
22 commercial bail bonds pursuant to Title 33, chapter 17, may arrest the defendant pursuant to [section 3] and  
23 surrender the defendant to the court, any peace officer, or any detention center facility of this state. Any arrest  
24 or surrender pursuant to this subsection (1) must be reported to the commissioner of insurance on a form and  
25 in a manner to be determined by the commissioner.

26 (2) The peace officer or detention center facility shall detain the defendant in custody as upon  
27 commitment and shall file a certificate, acknowledging the surrender, in the court having jurisdiction of the  
28 defendant. The court shall then order the bail exonerated."