

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 1838
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Health Services
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Engrossed

DIGEST

Environmental sanitation refers to that aspect of public health that includes knowledge of air quality, food quality and protection, hazardous and toxic substances, consumer product safety, institutional health and safety, community noise control, radiation protection, recreational facilities, solid and liquid waste management, vector control, drinking water quality, milk sanitation, and rabies control. Sanitarians must continue to learn and apply state-of-the-art techniques to protect the health and safety of Texas citizens. Currently, Texas is not in alignment with the national standards for assessing the credentials of registered professional sanitarians. This bill would elevate the education level required to be a registered professional sanitarian, and provides for continuing educational units, a longer training period, and requires the State Board of Health to set the registration fees.

PURPOSE

As proposed, H.B. 1838 elevates the education level required to be a registered professional sanitarian, and provides for continuing educational units, a longer training period, and requires for the State Board of Health to set the registration fees.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 5, Article 4477-3, V.T.C.S., by amending Subsections (a) and (b) and adding Subsection (e), as follows:

(a) Requires the Board of Health (board), upon application on the form prescribed by it, and upon payment of a registration fee set by the board, rather than a fee of \$10, to issue a certificate of registration as a professional sanitarian to any person with qualifications stipulated under this Act and who submits evidence by passing a board-prescribed written examination that sets forth proof that the applicant is qualified under this Act. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(b) Requires a person applying for registration to have had no less than two years, rather than one year, of full time experience in the sanitation field and to have completed training in basic sciences and/or public health to the extent deemed necessary to the board. Requires the educational requirements set forth by the board to include the requirement that an applicant have graduated from an accredited college or university with at least a bachelor's degree that includes at least 30 semester hours in basic or applied science. Requires all persons employed in the field of sanitation who meet all registration qualifications except those of experience, upon approval by the board and after payment of a certain registration fee in addition to passing a written examination prescribed by the board, to be granted a certificate of Sanitarian in Training. Provides that this certificate remains in effect unless revoked by the board for a period not to exceed two years, rather than one year, after date of issue. Deletes the provision that the requirements not be at variance with the definition for "sanitation" set forth by the Position Classification Act of 1961. Makes conforming and nonsubstantive changes.

(e) Requires an applicant for a certificate of registration as a professional sanitarian to pay an examination fee prescribed by the board to take a license examination administered under this Act.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 6, Article 4477-3, V.T.C.S., to require every professional sanitarian

registered under the provisions of this Act who desires to actively continue in the sanitation field to pay the board a renewal fee, rather than annually pay a fee, that is prescribed, rather than fixed, by the board and provide proof of completion of continuing education contact hours established by the board. Deletes text that the fee or license renewal shall not be fixed in excess of \$10. Makes conforming or nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 8(a), Article 4477-3, V.T.C.S., to require the board to prescribe fees under this Act and to administer the continuing education requirements of this Act, in addition to other duties. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 12, Article 4477-3, V.T.C.S., as follows:

Sec. 12. New heading: REGISTRATION REQUIRED; OFFENSES. (a) Prohibits a person engaging or offering to engage in work in the field of sanitation in this state to represent himself to be a sanitarian, or use any title containing the word "sanitarian" unless registered in good standing with the board, either as a registered professional sanitarian or a sanitarian in training. Deletes text prohibiting persons from engaging in or offering to engage in work in the sanitation field holding themselves out as such a sanitarian after a period of six months from the effective date of this Act unless they are registered. Makes conforming and nonsubstantive changes.

(b) Provides that a person commits an offense if the person violates any provisions of this section. Makes conforming and nonsubstantive changes.

(c) Provides that an offense under Subsection (b) of this section is a Class C misdemeanor. Deletes the requirement that a person guilty of a misdemeanor under this section be fined not less than \$10 nor more than \$200.

SECTION 5. (a) Effective date: September 1, 1999.

(b) Provides that the change in law to the educational requirements for registration as a professional sanitarian takes effect September 1, 2001.

SECTION 6. Emergency clause.