

2026 -- H 7637

LC004290

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Introduced By: Representatives Alzate, Chippendale, Hull, Giraldo, Stewart, Casimiro, Fogarty, Felix, and Batista

Date Introduced: February 11, 2026

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 42-7.3 of the General Laws entitled "Department of Public Safety"

2 is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **42-7.3-11. Employment eligibility in law enforcement and fire services.**

4 (a) As used in this chapter:

5 (1) "Law enforcement officer" shall have the meaning provided in § 42-28.6-1; and

6 (2) "Firefighter" shall have the meaning provided in § 45-19.1-2.

7 (b) Notwithstanding any general law, special law, municipal charter, ordinance, or
8 regulation to the contrary, no person otherwise qualified shall be denied an opportunity to apply
9 for appointment or employment as a law enforcement officer or firefighter or admission to a
10 training academy solely on the basis of the person's country of citizenship; provided that, the person
11 is qualified pursuant to the provisions of subsection (c) of this section.

12 (c) For purposes of this section, any person who is a lawful permanent resident of the
13 United States under federal law shall be deemed eligible to apply for appointment or employment
14 as a law enforcement officer or firefighter as defined in subsection (a) of this section; provided that,
15 the individual is legally authorized to work in the United States and satisfies all other qualifications
16 required by law; provided however, following completion of the academy training the individual
17 shall not be sworn in as a law enforcement officer or firefighter until the individual has acquired
18 United States citizenship.

1 [\(d\) Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect requirements relating to background](#)
2 [investigations, training, or certification standards applicable to law enforcement officers or](#)
3 [firefighters under state law.](#)

4 SECTION 2. Sections 42-28-10 and 42-28-28 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-28
5 entitled "State Police" are hereby amended to read as follows:

6 **42-28-10. Appointment and removal of members.**

7 The superintendent shall appoint the other members of the division authorized by this
8 chapter for terms of three (3) years each, and may remove any member after a hearing, in
9 accordance with the rules and regulations of the division, and no member so removed shall be
10 eligible to reappointment. No person shall be eligible for appointment for the first time by the
11 superintendent unless he or she shall [comply with the provisions of § 42-7.3-11 and](#) be a citizen of
12 the United States between the ages of eighteen (18) and thirty-five (35) years and shall have passed
13 a physical and mental examination in accordance with the rules of the division.

14 **42-28-28. Persons admissible to school.**

15 No person shall be admitted as a candidate to the municipal police training school unless
16 he or she is [in compliance with the provisions of § 42-7.3-11 and is](#) ~~a citizen of the United States~~
17 ~~and~~ a resident of the state of Rhode Island and shall have reached the age of eighteen (18) years;
18 nor shall any person be admitted who shall not have first been certified by a physician as being
19 physically and mentally sound on an examination made within one month prior to the acceptance
20 of his or her candidacy.

21 SECTION 3. Chapter 45-2 of the General Laws entitled "General Powers" is hereby
22 amended by adding thereto the following section:

23 **45-2-15.3. Employment eligibility in law enforcement and fire services.**

24 [\(a\) As used in this chapter:](#)

25 [\(1\) "Law enforcement officer" shall have the meaning provided in § 42-28.6-1; and](#)

26 [\(2\) "Firefighter" shall have the meaning provided in § 45-19.1-2.](#)

27 [\(b\) Notwithstanding any general law, special law, municipal charter, ordinance, rule, or](#)
28 [regulation to the contrary, no person otherwise qualified shall be denied an opportunity to apply](#)
29 [for appointment or employment as a law enforcement officer or firefighter or admission to a](#)
30 [training academy solely on the basis of the person's country of citizenship; provided that, the person](#)
31 [is qualified pursuant to the provisions of subsection \(c\) of this section.](#)

32 [\(c\) For purposes of this section, any person who is a lawful permanent resident of the](#)
33 [United States under federal law shall be deemed eligible to apply for appointment or employment](#)
34 [as a law enforcement officer or firefighter as defined in subsection \(a\) of this section; provided that,](#)

1 the individual is legally authorized to work in the United States and satisfies all other qualifications
2 required by law; provided however, following completion of the academy training the individual
3 shall not be sworn in as a law enforcement officer or firefighter until the individual has acquired
4 United States citizenship.

5 (d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect requirements relating to background
6 investigations, training, or certification standards applicable to law enforcement officers or
7 firefighters under state law.

8 SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC
SAFETY

- 1 This act would prohibit the denial of an opportunity to apply for employment as a law
- 2 enforcement officer or firefighter solely on the basis of a person's country of citizenship.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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