

2026 -- S 2738

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N A C T

RELATING TO BUSINESSES AND PROFESSIONS -- PLUMBERS, IRRIGATORS, AND
WATER SYSTEM INSTALLERS

Introduced By: Senators Burke, Bissaillon, Thompson, and Famiglietti

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: Senate Labor & Gaming

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 5-20-17 and 5-20-25.2 of the General Laws in Chapter 5-20 entitled
2 "Plumbers, Irrigators, and Water System Installers" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **5-20-17. Qualifications of journeyperson — Application fee.**

4 No application for a journeyperson's license shall be filed at the department of labor and
5 training nor shall any applicant be permitted to take the examination for a license as a journeyperson
6 plumber, unless:

7 (1) The application is accompanied by a nonrefundable application fee of seventy-five
8 dollars (\$75.00); and

9 (2) The applicant shall have possessed, for at least four (4) years prior to the filing of the
10 application, a certificate of registration in full force and effect from the department of labor and
11 training specifying that person as a registered apprentice plumber pursuant to § 28-45-13 and the
12 application of that applicant is accompanied with an affidavit or affidavits of the applicant's
13 employer or former employers or other reasonably satisfactory evidence showing that the applicant
14 has been actually engaged in plumbing work as an apprentice plumber in the state of Rhode Island
15 for eight thousand (8,000) hours of on-the-job training during a five-year (5) period, which shall
16 include the successful completion of five hundred seventy-six (576) hours of related instruction at
17 a training program recognized by the department of labor and training; provided, however, the
18 apprentice may receive credit for one hundred forty-four (144) hours of classroom training applied

1 against the five hundred seventy-six (576) hours required pursuant to this section, gained in a
2 vocational school authorized by the council on elementary and secondary education; and approved
3 by the Rhode Island department of labor and training state apprenticeship council; provided,
4 however, the apprentice may receive credit for a maximum of two hundred eighty-eight (288) hours
5 of classroom training, applied against the five hundred seventy-six (576) hours required pursuant
6 to this section, upon the successful completion of a course of study in a fully accredited trade school
7 that has been approved by the Rhode Island office of the postsecondary commissioner and by the
8 Rhode Island department of labor and training apprenticeship council.

9 (3) ~~The application is accompanied with an affidavit or other reasonably satisfactory~~
10 ~~evidence showing that the applicant has been a registered student in a recognized college,~~
11 ~~university, or trade school and has pursued a course of plumbing or sanitary engineering for at least~~
12 ~~two (2) academic years; or~~

13 (4) The applicant is the recipient of an associate degree in either plumbing or sanitary
14 engineering, and has been registered by the department of labor and training as an apprentice
15 plumber for at least ~~two (2)~~ four (4) years and at all times while being employed as a registered
16 apprentice plumber by a duly licensed master plumber in this state for a period of ~~two (2)~~ four (4)
17 years and completed eight thousand (8,000) hours of on-the-job training; or

18 (5) The application is accompanied by an affidavit or other reasonably satisfactory
19 evidence showing that the applicant possesses a certificate of license, issued under the laws of
20 another state, provided that the requirements are the same as the state specifying that person as a
21 journeyman plumber.

22 (6) The records of the hours of on-the-job training and the hours of related instruction
23 completed as part of the registered apprenticeship program pursuant to § 28-45-9 should be
24 maintained in a mutually responsible manner, through a joint effort on the part of the master
25 plumber and the apprentice and provided as part of the application.

26 (7) The completed application is to be filed with the department at least fifteen (15) days
27 prior to the examination date.

28 **5-20-25.2. Credit for plumbing license exam.**

29 (a) For licensing purposes, decisions by an apprenticeship sponsor to grant credit for prior
30 learning or experience pursuant § 28-45-9(2)(xii) or § 28-45-9.2 shall also require the written
31 approval of the state board of plumbing examiners of the Rhode Island department of labor and
32 training. Apprentices may receive credit for one hundred forty-four (144) hours of classroom
33 training gained in a career and technical education program authorized by the board of education,
34 or a maximum of two hundred eighty-eight (288) hours of classroom training gained over two (2)

1 academic years (one hundred forty-four (144) hours per academic year), upon the successful
2 completion of a course of study in a fully accredited trade school that has been approved by the
3 Rhode Island office of postsecondary commissioner and by the Rhode Island department of labor
4 and training apprenticeship council.

5 (b) For licensing purposes, on-the-job learning hours required as part of a registered
6 apprenticeship program by license type are as follows:

7 (1) At minimum, a plumbing apprenticeship program shall include eight thousand (8,000)
8 hours of on-the-job learning, ~~or an associate degree in plumbing and four thousand (4,000) hours~~
9 ~~of on-the-job learning.~~

10 (2) At minimum, an irrigator apprenticeship program shall include two thousand (2,000)
11 hours of on-the-job learning.

12 (3) At minimum, a water filtration/treatment system apprenticeship program shall include
13 two thousand (2,000) hours of on-the-job learning.

14 (4) All registered apprenticeship programs shall include one hundred forty-four (144) hours
15 of related instruction, including, but not limited to, classroom training, provided concurrently with
16 each two thousand (2,000) hours period of on-the-job learning.

17 SECTION 2. Section 28-27-11 of the General Laws in Chapter 28-27 entitled "Mechanical
18 Trades" is hereby amended to read as follows:

19 **28-27-11. Journeyperson license — Test fees — License fees and qualifications —**
20 **Filing deadline for journeyperson.**

21 (a) No application for a journeyperson's test shall be filed by the department nor shall any
22 applicant be permitted to take the examination for a license as a journeyperson unless:

23 (1) The test application is accompanied by a test fee as outlined in § 28-27-17;

24 (2) Upon passing of a journeyperson test, payment of a license fee as outlined in § 28-27-
25 17 is required and the journeyperson license will be issued as provided in § 28-27-15; and

26 (3) The applicant has possessed prior to the filing of the application a certificate of
27 registration in full force and effect from the department of labor and training specifying the person
28 as a registered apprentice pursuant to § 28-45-13, and the application of an applicant:

29 (i) Is accompanied by an affidavit or affidavits of their employer or former employers or
30 other reasonably satisfactory evidence showing that the applicant has been actually engaged in
31 pipefitting or refrigeration/air conditioning, sheet metal or fire protection sprinkler systems work
32 as an apprentice registered in accordance with the hourly requirements pursuant to §§ 28-27-4.1
33 and 28-27-4.2;

34 (ii) Is accompanied by an affidavit or other reasonably satisfactory evidence showing that

1 the applicant has been registered as a student in a recognized college, university, or trade school
2 and has pursued a course of pipefitting or refrigeration/air conditioning, sheet metal or fire
3 protection sprinkler systems for at least two (2) academic years or is the recipient of an associate
4 degree in pipefitting or refrigeration/air conditioning or fire protection sprinkler systems, and has
5 thereafter been registered by the department of labor and training as an apprentice for at least ~~three~~
6 ~~(3)~~ five (5) years and employed as a registered apprentice by a duly licensed pipefitter or
7 refrigeration/air conditioning or fire protection sprinkler systems master or sheet metal contractors
8 in this state for a period of three (3) years; or

9 (iii) Is accompanied by an affidavit or other reasonably satisfactory evidence showing that
10 the applicant possesses a certificate of license issued under the laws of another state specifying that
11 person as a journeyman.

12 (4) [Deleted by P.L. 2024, ch. 330, § 7 and P.L. 2024, ch. 331, § 7.]

13 (b) The test application is to be filed with the department at least fifteen (15) days prior to
14 the examination date.

15 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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RELATING TO BUSINESSES AND PROFESSIONS -- PLUMBERS, IRRIGATORS, AND
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1 This act would grant an apprentice a two hundred eighty-eight (288) hour credit upon
2 completion of course of study from a fully accredited trade school towards the required five
3 hundred seventy-six (576) hours needed for a journeyperson's license and increase from two (2) to
4 four (4) years of employment under the supervision of a duly licensed master plumber and
5 completed eight thousand (8,000) hours of on-the-job training. The act would also require an
6 apprentice for several mechanical trades to work under a duly licensed pipefitter for five (5) years
7 upon registration with the department of labor and training (DLT).

8 This act would take effect upon passage.

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