

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

FOR

SENATE BILL NO. 308

AN ACT

To repeal section 324.012, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to professional licensing determinations for individuals with criminal records.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 324.012, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 324.012, to read as follows:

324.012. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Fresh Start Act of 2020".

2. As used in this section, the following terms mean:

(1) "Criminal conviction", any conviction, finding of guilt, plea of guilty, or plea of nolo contendere;

(2) "Licensing", any required training, education, or fee to work in a specific occupation, profession, or activity in the state;

(3) "Licensing authority", an agency, examining board, credentialing board, or other office of the state with the authority to impose occupational fees or licensing requirements on any profession. For purposes of the provisions of this section other than subsection 7 of this section, the term "licensing authority" shall not include the state board of education's licensure of teachers pursuant to chapter 168, the Missouri state board of accountant's licensure of accountants pursuant to chapter 326, the board of podiatric medicine's licensure of podiatrists pursuant to chapter 330, the Missouri dental board's licensure of dentists pursuant to chapter 332, the state board of registration for the healing art's licensure

of physicians and surgeons pursuant to chapter 334, the Missouri state board of nursing's licensure of nurses pursuant to chapter 335, the board of pharmacy's licensure of pharmacists pursuant to chapter 338, the Missouri real estate commission's licensure of real estate brokers, real estate salespersons, or real estate broker-salespersons pursuant to sections 339.010 to 339.205, the Missouri veterinary medical board's licensure of veterinarian's pursuant to chapter 340, the Missouri director of finance appointed pursuant to chapter 361, or the peace officer standards and training commission's licensure of peace officers or other law enforcement personnel pursuant to chapter 590;

(4) "Political subdivision", a city, town, village, municipality, or county.

3. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, beginning January 1, 2021, no person shall be disqualified by a state licensing authority from pursuing, practicing, or engaging in any occupation for which a license is required solely or in part because of a prior conviction of a crime in this state or another state, unless the criminal conviction directly relates to the duties and responsibilities for the licensed occupation as set forth in this section or is violent or sexual in nature.

4. Beginning August 28, 2020, applicants for examination of licensure who have pleaded guilty to, entered a plea of nolo contendere to, or been found guilty of any of the following offenses or offenses of a similar nature established under the laws of this state, any other state, United States, or any other country, notwithstanding whether sentence is imposed, shall be considered by state licensing authorities to have committed a criminal offense that

directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of a licensed profession:

(1) Any murder in the first degree, or dangerous felony as defined under section 556.061 excluding an intoxication-related traffic offense or intoxication-related boating offense if the person is found to be a habitual offender or habitual boating offender as such terms are defined in section 577.001;

(2) Any of the following sexual offenses: rape in the first degree, forcible rape, rape, statutory rape in the first degree, statutory rape in the second degree, rape in the second degree, sexual assault, sodomy in the first degree, forcible sodomy, statutory sodomy in the first degree, statutory sodomy in the second degree, child molestation in the first degree, child molestation in the second degree, sodomy in the second degree, deviate sexual assault, sexual misconduct involving a child, sexual misconduct in the first degree under section 566.090 as it existed prior to August 28, 2013, sexual abuse under section 566.100 as it existed prior to August 28, 2013, sexual abuse in the first or second degree, enticement of a child, or attempting to entice a child;

(3) Any of the following offenses against the family and related offenses: incest, abandonment of a child in the first degree, abandonment of a child in the second degree, endangering the welfare of a child in the first degree, abuse of a child, using a child in a sexual performance, promoting sexual performance by a child, or trafficking in children; and

(4) Any of the following offenses involving child pornography and related offenses: promoting obscenity in the first degree, promoting obscenity in the second degree when the penalty is enhanced to a class E felony, promoting

child pornography in the first degree, promoting child pornography in the second degree, possession of child pornography in the first degree, possession of child pornography in the second degree, furnishing child pornography to a minor, furnishing pornographic materials to minors, or coercing acceptance of obscene material;

(5) The offense of delivery of a controlled substance, as provided in section 579.020, may be a disqualifying criminal offense for the following occupations: real estate appraisers and appraisal management companies, licensed pursuant to sections 339.500 to 339.549; and nursing home administrators, licensed pursuant to chapter 344; and

(6) Any offense an essential element of which is fraud may be a disqualifying criminal offense for the following occupations: private investigators, licensed pursuant to sections 324.1100 to 324.1148; accountants, licensed pursuant to chapter 326; architects, licensed pursuant to sections 327.091 to 327.172; engineers, licensed pursuant to sections 327.181 to 327.271; land surveyors, licensed pursuant to sections 327.272 to 327.371; landscape architects, licensed pursuant to sections 327.600 to 327.635; chiropractors, licensed pursuant to chapter 331; embalmers and funeral directors, licensed pursuant to chapter 333; real estate appraisers and appraisal management companies, licensed pursuant to sections 339.500 to 339.549; and nursing home administrators, licensed pursuant to chapter 344.

5. If an individual is charged with any of the crimes set forth in subsection 4 of this section, and is convicted, pleads guilty to, or is found guilty of a lesser-included offense and is sentenced to a period of incarceration, such conviction shall only be considered by state licensing authorities as a criminal offense that directly relates to

the duties and responsibilities of a licensed profession for four years, beginning on the date such individual is released from incarceration.

6. (1) [Licensing authorities shall only list criminal convictions that are directly related to the duties and responsibilities for the licensed occupation.

(2)] The licensing authority shall determine whether an applicant with a criminal conviction [listed under subdivision (1) of this subsection] will be denied a license based on the following factors:

(a) The nature and seriousness of the crime for which the individual was convicted;

(b) The passage of time since the commission of the crime, including consideration of the factors listed under subdivision [(3)] (2) of this subsection;

(c) The relationship of the crime to the ability, capacity, and fitness required to perform the duties and discharge the responsibilities of the occupation; and

(d) Any evidence of rehabilitation or treatment undertaken by the individual that might mitigate against a direct relation.

[(3)] (2) If an individual has a valid criminal conviction for a criminal offense that could disqualify the individual from receiving a license, the disqualification shall not apply to an individual who has been exonerated for a crime for which he or she has previously been convicted of or incarcerated.

7. An individual with a criminal record may petition a licensing authority at any time for a determination of whether the individual's criminal record will disqualify the individual from obtaining a license. This petition shall include details on the individual's criminal record. The licensing authority shall inform the individual of his or

her standing within thirty days after the licensing authority has met, but in no event more than four months after receiving the petition from the applicant. The decision shall be binding, unless the individual has subsequent criminal convictions or failed to disclose information in his or her petition. If the decision is that the individual is disqualified, the individual shall be notified in writing of the grounds and reasons for disqualification. The licensing authority may charge a fee by rule to recoup its costs as set by rulemaking authority not to exceed twenty-five dollars for each petition.

8. (1) If a licensing authority denies an individual a license solely or in part because of the individual's prior conviction of a crime, the licensing authority shall notify the individual in writing of the following:

(a) The grounds and reasons for the denial or disqualification;

(b) That the individual has the right to a hearing as provided by chapter 621 to challenge the licensing authority's decision;

(c) The earliest date the person may reapply for a license; and

(d) That evidence of rehabilitation may be considered upon reapplication.

(2) Any written determination by the licensing authority that an applicant's criminal conviction is a specifically listed disqualifying conviction and is directly related to the duties and responsibilities for the licensed occupation shall be documented with written findings for each of the grounds or reasons under paragraph (a) of subdivision (1) of this subsection by clear and convincing evidence sufficient for a reviewing court.

(3) In any administrative hearing or civil litigation authorized under this subsection, the licensing authority shall carry the burden of proof on the question of whether the applicant's criminal conviction directly relates to the occupation for which the license is sought.

9. The provisions of this section shall apply to any profession for which an occupational license is issued in this state, including any new occupational license created by a state licensing authority after August 28, 2020. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, political subdivisions shall be prohibited from creating any new occupational licenses after August 28, 2020. The provisions of this section shall not apply to business licenses, where the terms "occupational licenses" and "business licenses" are used interchangeably in a city or county charter definition.