

# FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## BILL ANALYSIS

*This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.*

**BILL #:** [CS/CS/HB 991](#)

**TITLE:** Community and Economic Development

**SPONSOR(S):** Giallombardo

**COMPANION BILL:** None

**LINKED BILLS:** None

**RELATED BILLS:** [CS/SB 110](#) (Simon); [CS/SB 1242](#) (McClain); [SB 1452](#) (Truenow)

### Committee References

[State Affairs](#)

17 Y, 8 N, As CS



[Commerce](#)

13 Y, 8 N, As CS

## SUMMARY

### Effect of the Bill:

The bill promotes the development of communities and economic growth in Florida by promoting the advancement and growth of rural communities and removing regulatory barriers for businesses and professionals.

### Fiscal or Economic Impact:

The Revenue Estimating Conference has not yet met to estimate the impacts of the bill on state and local government revenues.

The bill creates new programs and expands existing programs to provide additional funding opportunities to support rural community advancement and growth. Funding for these programs is subject to appropriation. Local governments in rural areas of the state will likely benefit from participating in the new and expanded programs provided for in the bill to the extent that funding is appropriated for those programs. Local governments may also benefit from the retention of funds that would otherwise be deposited in a redevelopment trust fund. Citizens in rural communities will benefit indirectly from programs designed to increase community investment.

The bill will likely reduce state and local government revenues associated with certain permitting and licensing fees, though these reductions may be offset in whole or in part due to reduced operational and administrative costs associated with these activities. The bill may have a positive impact on the private sector by lowering costs for businesses and professionals.

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## ANALYSIS

### EFFECT OF THE BILL:

The bill promotes the responsible development of communities and economic growth in Florida by removing regulatory barriers for businesses and professions and promoting the advancement of rural communities and opportunity therein. The provisions of the bill are addressed in detail below.

### Rural Communities

#### The Office of Rural Prosperity

The bill creates the Office of Rural Prosperity (Office) within the [Department of Commerce](#) (Department) for the purpose of supporting rural communities, helping them navigate available state and federal resources, and representing rural interests across state government. The Office will serve as the state point of contact for rural local governments and will administer various rural-focused grant programs currently administered by the Department, as well as new programs created in the bill. The Office will be led by a director, who will be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. (Section [297](#)).

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**DATE:** 4/22/2025

The Office will create and maintain an interactive tool, the “Rural Resource Directory,” designed for rural local governments to navigate state and federal grants and resources.

The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) will review the effectiveness of the Office by December 15, 2026, and each year thereafter until 2028. Beginning in 2029, OPPAGA shall review and evaluate the Office every three years and shall submit a report<sup>1</sup> based on its findings. (Section [297](#)).

The bill transfers the administration of the following programs from the Department to the Office:

- [Regional Rural Development Grants Program](#) (Section [300](#));
- Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund (Section [303](#));
- Rural Infrastructure Fund (Section [304](#));
- Rural Economic Development Strategy Grants (Section [307](#)).

#### Regional Rural Community Liaison Centers

The bill requires the Office, by October 1, 2025, to establish and staff seven regional rural community liaison centers across the state for the purpose of providing in-person state support to rural local governments. The Office must, by rule, divide the state into seven regions and assign a liaison center to each region. Each liaison center will be staffed with at least two full-time department personnel who will be responsive to the rural local governments within the respective region. Specifically, liaison centers are required, at a minimum, to do the following:

- Work with local governments to plan and achieve goals for local or regional growth, economic development, and rural prosperity;
- Facilitate access to state and federal resources, such as grants, loans, and other aid or resources;
- Advise on waivers for rural local governments for certain requirements for state and federal programs, such as local financial match waivers;
- Coordinate technical assistance needs with the Department and other state or federal agencies;
- Promote model ordinances, policies, and strategies related to economic development;
- Regularly engage with the Rural Economic Development Initiative; and
- Assist local governments with regulatory and reporting compliance. (Section [297](#))

#### Rural Communities Report

The bill requires OPPAGA and the Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR) to prepare a report on the impact of the Florida Statutes on rural communities. Specifically, the two entities must review definitions in the Florida Statutes of terms such as “rural community,” “rural area of opportunity,” and similar terms used to define rural areas of the state to assess whether the current definitions are appropriate, whether appropriate metrics are used to describe these communities, and if statutory changes are needed. OPPAGA and the EDR must also survey rural local governments to evaluate the statutory advantages of qualifying as a rural local government and assess perceived unmet needs in the implementation of current statutory provisions designed to support rural communities. OPPAGA and the EDR must submit a report and recommendations to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 31, 2025. These provisions expire on July 1, 2026. (Section [294](#))

#### Fiscally-Constrained Counties

The bill updates definitions related to fiscally constrained counties (FCC). For example, the bill increases the FCC threshold from a county that raises \$5 million in property tax revenue per 1 mill, to \$10 million per 1 mill. (Section [293](#))

The bill changes the formula for distributions to fiscally-constrained counties to use the following [distribution factors](#): sales tax collections, per capita personal income, and population. An FCC with declining per capita sales tax collections or per capital personal income will receive a relatively larger share of the total distribution. Finally, the bill adds spending requirements. Specifically, 50% of the distribution must be used for public safety, 30% for infrastructure, and 20% for any public purpose. Debt service is prohibited. (Section [293](#))

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<sup>1</sup> OPPAGA must submit each report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives in accordance with the schedule.

### Renaissance Grants for Counties with Declining Population

The bill establishes the Renaissance Grant Program to be administered by the Office of Rural Prosperity (Office). Under the program, the Office, subject to appropriation, will provide block grants to counties that are “growth-impaired,” meaning a county that has had a declining population over the last ten years, as certified by the EDR. By October 1, 2025, the EDR must certify to the Office which counties are growth-impaired. After the initial certification, the EDR shall annually certify whether each participating county remains growth-impaired, until the county has three consecutive years of population growth. (Section [298](#))

Participating counties must enter into an agreement with the Office to receive a block grant and have broad authority to design a specific plan to achieve population growth within the specified parameters. Participating counties must design a plan to make targeted investments in the community to achieve population growth and increase the economic vitality of the community. The plan must incorporate certain features. (Section [298](#))

Each participating county must hire a renaissance coordinator who is responsible for overseeing the use of funds, coordinating with other entities, and complying with reporting requirements. Upon request, the regional rural community liaison center staff must provide training and assistance to the renaissance coordinator. (Section [298](#))

The bill directs the Auditor General to conduct an operational audit of each participating county’s grant program every two years, beginning in 2026. Additionally, on December 31, 2026, and each year thereafter, the EDR must submit an annual report of grant recipients by county to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. (Section [298](#))

The Renaissance Grant Program expires June 30, 2040. (Section [298](#))

### Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI)

The bill requires REDI to meet at least monthly and requires each REDI representative or his or her designee to be physically present or available electronically. The bill provides a legislative finding that rural communities are the essential conduits for the economy’s distribution, manufacturing, and food supply. The bill removes a reference to “economically distressed” rural communities which broadens REDI’s reach to all rural communities. The bill requires:

- Enhanced reporting on projects being coordinated by REDI and enhanced reporting on program requirement waivers granted to rural communities, and
- REDI to provide legislative recommendations for statutory waivers or reductions for economic development programs for rural applicants. (Section [305](#))

The bill removes language regarding rural enterprise zones, catalyst projects, and catalyst sites. (Section [305](#))

### Agreements Funded with Federal or State Assistance

The bill clarifies provisions regarding the payment of invoices due and requires agencies to expedite such payment requests for local governments. (Section [292](#))

The bill requires each state agency to annually report to the Office, by August 1, a summary of the implementation of this provision for the previous fiscal year, which shall be incorporated in the office annual report (Section [292](#)).

### Small Business Development Center Network

The [Small Business Development Center Network \(Network\)](#) currently funds staff in rural areas to “ride the circuit” of their region and work with local governments and communities to provide services, including access to capital, technical assistance, and other small business services. The bill requires the Network to use funds directly appropriated for the specific purpose of expanding service in rural communities in addition to any funds allocated by the network from other sources. The bill also requires the Network to use such funds to develop, in collaboration with regional economic development organizations, an activity plan focused on network consultants and resources in rural communities. The plan must provide for either full- or part-time consultants to be available for at least 20 hours per week in rural areas or be permanently stationed in rural areas. This may include establishing a circuit in specific rural locations to ensure the consultants’ availability on a regular basis. The bill provides that the Network may dedicate funds to facilitate local or regional events that focus on small business

topics, provide consulting services, and leverage partner organizations, such as the regional economic development organizations, local workforce development boards as described in [s. 445.07, F.S.](#), and Florida College System institutions (Section [295](#)).

#### [Inventory of Communities Seeking to Recruit Businesses](#)

The bill requires each local government within a [Rural Area of Opportunity \(RAO\)](#) or its local economic development organization to submit certain required information to the Department for inclusion in the inventory of communities seeking to recruit businesses. (Section [296](#))

### **Rural Housing**

#### [Minimum Allocations for SHIP](#)

Currently, allocations are population-based, with the minimum allocation for each county within the [State Housing Initiatives Partnership \(SHIP\) Program](#) set at \$350,000. The bill increases the minimum allocation for each county to \$1 million, subject to appropriation, which will provide additional funding to rural communities (Section [319](#)).

#### [Rental Housing in Rural Communities](#)

The bill removes statutory restrictions on the use of SHIP funds. It allows counties and municipalities to use up to 25 percent of their SHIP funds to preserve existing multifamily affordable rental housing financed with USDA loans. This provision expires on June 30, 2031. (Section [320](#))

The bill appropriates \$30 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) to preserve affordable multifamily rental housing funded through [USDA loans](#). Funds must be used to issue competitive requests for application for the rehabilitation or acquisition of such properties to ensure continued affordability. By October 1, 2026, the FHFC must submit a report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on projects funded pursuant to this section. The report must include the number of units preserved and the financing portfolio for each project.

### **Rural Infrastructure**

#### [Rural Infrastructure Fund](#)

The bill:

- Specifically provides that, subject to appropriation, Rural Infrastructure Fund grant funds may be awarded to a unit of local government within a rural community or an RAO, or to a regional economic development organization, a unit of local government, or certain economic development organizations for an infrastructure project located within an unincorporated area that has a population of 15,000 or less, has been in existence for 100 years or more, is contiguous to a rural community, and has been adversely affected by a natural disaster or presents a unique economic development opportunity of regional impact.
- Clarifies that grant funds may be awarded for “site readiness” expenses, which may include clearing title, surveys, permitting, environmental studies, and regulatory compliance costs.
- Requires the Office to consult with the Department of Transportation (FDOT) instead of Visit Florida when reviewing applications for funding.
- Requires enhanced annual reporting of the program. (Section [304](#))

#### [Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund](#)

The bill requires the Office to include in its annual report detailed information about the Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund, including loans made during the previous fiscal year, active loans, repaid loans, and unobligated funds. (Section [303](#)).

#### [Coordination for Broadband Programs](#)

The bill improves coordination and technical assistance between the [Office of Broadband](#) at the Department and rural communities in need of broadband services. The bill requires the Office of Broadband:

- To consult with each regional rural community liaison center and with the Office to develop and update its strategic plan to increase broadband internet service.

- To submit a quarterly report on the implementation of broadband activities in rural communities and an annual report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. (Section [310](#))

#### Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grants

The bill creates the Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant Program, which will be administered by the Office to fund and support infrastructure projects in rural communities that utilize smart technology to increase efficiency, enhance public services, and promote sustainable development. (Section [299](#))

The bill directs the Office to contract with one or more not-for-profit entities (smart technology lead organization) that specialize in smart regional planning to provide grants to counties and municipalities within a RAO for public infrastructure smart technology projects. The bill defines “public infrastructure smart technology” as systems and applications that use connectivity, data analytics, automation to improve public infrastructure by increasing efficiency, enhancing public services, and promoting sustainable development. (Section [299](#))

#### Rural Economic Development Strategy Grants

The bill provides that grants may be provided to assist with costs associated with marketing sites to potential businesses for an economic development project. The bill requires the regional rural community liaison centers within the Office to aid those applying for grants. The bill provides that marketing grants may include funding to deploy materials through advertising campaigns and costs associated with marketing, site preparation, meetings, trade missions, and professional development. (Section [307](#))

#### Florida Arterial Road Modernization (FARM) Program

The bill creates the Florida Arterial Road Modernization (FARM) Program within FDOT to provide capacity and safety improvements to two-lane [arterial roads](#) located in rural communities. (Sections [317](#), [318](#))

Beginning in fiscal year 2025-2026, subject to appropriation, the bill directs FDOT to allocate from the State Transportation Trust Fund a minimum of \$50 million annually to fund the FARM Program. The bill directs FDOT to use certain criteria to prioritize funding projects under the program. (Section [317](#))

Beginning January 1, 2027, and every two years thereafter, FDOT must issue a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives evaluating the condition of arterial roads in rural communities and the implementation of the FARM Program. (Section [317](#))

#### Small County Road Assistance Program

The [Small County Road Assistance Program \(SCRAP\)](#) assists small county governments in resurfacing and reconstructing county roads. The bill amends powers and duties of FDOT to specifically authorize the department to provide technical assistance and support to counties that are not located in a metropolitan planning organization. (Section [312](#))

The bill requires FDOT to use the additional vehicle title fee revenues allocated by [s. 339.0801, F.S.](#), which are currently directed to the state’s general revenue fund, to the State Transportation Trust Fund to increase funding available for SCRAP. The bill provides that the current requirement for FDOT to expend \$25 million annually on the program is subject to appropriation. (Sections [313](#), [314](#), [318](#)).

#### Small County Outreach Program

The bill amends provisions relating to the [Small County Outreach Program \(SCOP\)](#) to remove obsolete statutory provisions and correct cross-references. Similarly, the bill revises the SCOP funding eligibility requirements to repeal an existing category for certain local governments located within the Everglades Agricultural Area or designated river basins. (Section [316](#)).

### **Community Redevelopment Agencies**



The bill prohibits the creation of new [community redevelopment agencies](#) (CRAs) on or after July 1, 2025. It also prohibits a CRA, or the governing body of the county or municipality that created the CRA, from expanding the boundaries of the agency's community redevelopment area on or after July 1, 2025. (Section [1](#))

The bill revises the current [schedule for termination](#) of existing CRAs to provide that CRAs in existence as of July 1, 2025, terminate on the earlier of the date provided in the CRA's charter as of July 1, 2025, or September 30, 2045 (instead of September 30, 2039), whichever date is earlier. The bill removes the ability of the governing body of a county or municipality that created the CRA to approve its continued existence by a majority vote. (Section [1](#))

The bill prohibits a CRA from initiating new projects or issuing new debt on or after October 1, 2025, unless the new project is completed by, and any new debt issued to finance a new project matures on or before, the agency's termination date. The bill defines a "new project" as any project for which a CRA has not appropriated funds in its budget for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, or for which the CRA does not retain [redevelopment trust fund](#) monies as authorized by law for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025. (Section [1](#))

The bill provides that if a CRA has outstanding [bonds](#) that will not mature until after the earlier of its dissolution date or September 30, 2045, the CRA will remain in existence until the bonds mature. A CRA operating in this manner on or after September 30, 2045, is prohibited from extending the maturity date of any outstanding bonds. The bill revises the current requirement for counties or municipalities that created a CRA that has outstanding bonds that mature after the dissolution deadline to issue a new finding of necessity to instead require those local governments to issue an amended community redevelopment plan. (Section [1](#))

The provisions of the bill, except those limiting the creation of new CRAs and expansion of a CRA's boundaries, do not apply to a CRA created by a county if the county that created the CRA is the only taxing authority that contributes to the CRA's redevelopment trust fund and the county's charter establishes a limitation on the amount of revenue the county may collect each year. A CRA that meets this definition may not issue any new bond debt on or after October 1, 2025. (Section [1](#))

## Regulation of Businesses and Professions

The bill repeals the following boards, commissions, and councils within the [Department of Business and Professional Regulation \(DBPR\)](#) and shifts the authority for such boards, commissions, and councils to DBPR:

- [Board of Pilot Commissioners \(Harbor Pilots\).](#)
- [Florida Board of Auctioneers.](#)
- [Regulatory Council of Community Association Managers.](#)
- [Board of Employee Leasing Companies.](#)
- [Florida Building Code Administrators and Inspectors Board \(Building Officials\).](#)
- [Board of Professional Engineers.](#)
- [Board of Veterinary Medicine.](#)
- [Board of Accountancy.](#)
- [Florida Real Estate Commission.](#)
- [Florida Real Estate Appraisal Board](#)
- [Barbers' Board.](#)
- [Board of Cosmetology.](#)
- [Board of Architecture and Interior Design.](#)
- [Board of Landscape Architecture.](#)
- [Construction Industry Licensing Board.](#)
- [Electrical Contractors' Licensing Board.](#)
- [Board of Professional Geologists.](#)
- [Drug Wholesale Distributor Advisory Council.](#) (Sections [2](#), [3](#), [359](#))

The bill repeals the following boards and councils within the [Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services \(DACS\)](#) and shifts the authority for such boards and councils to DACS:

- [Board of Professional Surveyors and Mappers.](#)

- [Pest Control Enforcement Advisory Council.](#)
- [Motor Vehicle Repair Advisory Council.](#)
- [Agricultural Economic Development Project Review Committee.](#)
- [Babcock Ranch Advisory Group.](#) (Sections [3](#), [268](#))

### Continuing Education

The bill repeals provisions requiring continuing education for the following professions and occupations licensed by DBPR and DACS:

- Barbers. (Section [3](#))
- Cosmetology. (Sections [3](#), [144](#), [146](#))
- Home Inspectors. (Section [3](#))
- Mold-Related Services. (Section [3](#))
- Contractors. (Sections [185](#), [187](#), [188](#))
- Electrical contractors. (Sections [216](#), [217](#), [218](#), [219](#))
- Engineers. (Section [88](#))
- Landscape architects. (Sections [171](#), [172](#))
- Accountants. (Section [3](#))
- Asbestos contractors (Sections [80](#), [81](#), [82](#))
- Architects. (Sections [157](#), [158](#))
- Community Association Managers. (Section [3](#), [50](#), [51](#))
- Building officials. (Section [74](#))
- Harbor Pilots. (Section [16](#))
- Real Estate Brokers and Sales Associates. (Sections [352](#), [355](#), [356](#))
- Veterinarians. (Section [120](#))
- Surveyors and Mappers. (Section [3](#))

### Private Investigator, Security Officers, and Recovery Agents Secondary Licenses

The bill removes licensure requirements for secondary license types for the following licenses issued by DACS, while maintaining the main license type:

- Private Investigator Interns.
- Private Investigative Agencies.
- Private Investigative Agency Branch Offices.
- Private Investigative Agency Managers.
- Private Investigative/Security Agency Managers.
- Security Agencies.
- Security Agency Branch Offices.
- Security Managers.
- Security Agency/Private Investigative Agency Branch Offices.
- Recovery Agent Interns.
- Recovery Agencies.
- Recovery Agency Branch Offices.
- Recovery Agency Managers. (Sections [247](#), [250](#), [255](#))

The bill **does not** repeal the licensure requirement for private investigators, security officers, and recovery agents.

### Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (ABT) within DBPR

The bill expands the jurisdiction of ABT's law enforcement bureau to include the investigation, enforcement, and prosecution of crimes related to a business or profession regulated by DBPR including unlicensed activity of a business or profession. (Section [2](#))

The bill allows ABT to discipline a retail tobacco products dealer or retail nicotine products dealer's permit for any violation of the laws of this state or any state or territory of the United States. (Sections [287](#) and [288](#))

The bill authorizes ABT to assist DACS in enforcing the distribution and retail sale of consumable hemp in Florida, including entering any public or private premises during regular business hours in the performance of its duties relating to the retail sale of consumable hemp. (Section [289](#))

### [Division of Hotels and Restaurants](#)

The bill allows DBPR's Division of Hotel and Restaurants to discipline a public food service establishment or public lodging establishment for violation of Florida's hemp laws. (Section [285](#))

### [Licensure of Engineers and Architects by Endorsements](#)

The bill allows DBPR to approve engineers and architects licensed outside the country for licensure by endorsement. (Sections [275](#) and [281](#))

Applicants for endorsement as an engineer must hold a valid license from a foreign jurisdiction and hold an active Council Record with the National Council of Examiners for Engineers and Surveying. Applicants seeking licensure as an architect must hold a valid license from a foreign jurisdiction, pass the licensure examination for architects, and hold a valid certificate issued by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. (Sections [275](#) and [281](#))

### [Barbers](#)

The bill provides for the licensure, operation, and inspection of mobile barbershops, as follows:

- Requires DBPR to adopt rules governing the licensure, operation, and inspection of mobile barbershops, including their facilities, personnel, and safety and sanitary requirements.
- Requires mobile barbershops to comply with all licensure and operating requirements specified in the chapter of law governing barbershops, DBPR's general statutes, or DBPR rules that apply to barbershops at fixed locations.
- Requires mobile barbershops to maintain a permanent business address, located in the inspection area of the local department office, at which records of appointments, itineraries, license numbers of employees, and vehicle identification numbers of the licenseholder's mobile barbershop must be kept and made available for verification purposes by department personnel, and where correspondence from the department can be received.
- To facilitate periodic inspections, the bill requires before the beginning of each month, each mobile barbershop license holder to file with DBPR a written monthly itinerary listing the locations where and the dates and hours when the mobile barbershop will be operating.
- Requires the license holder to comply with all local laws and ordinances regulating business establishments, with all applicable requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act relating to accommodations for persons with disabilities, and with all applicable requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
- Pursuant to DBPR rules, authorizes the practice of barbering to be performed in a location other than a licensed barbershop when performed in connection with a special event and by a person who holds the proper license.
  - Barbers are already allowed to shampoo, cut, or arrange hair in locations outside of barbershops. (Section [279](#))

### [Certified Public Accountants](#)

The bill revises the requirements for the licensure of Certified Public Accountants (CPAs), as follows:

- Revises the requirements for licensure of CPAs, including licensure by endorsement and of international applicants, by providing four separate pathways to qualify for a license based on education and work experience criteria. Effective January 1, 2026, a person may qualify for a CPA license if he or she:
  - Completes at least 150 semester hours of college education, including a baccalaureate or higher degree conferred by an accredited college or university, with a concentration in accounting and business as prescribed by the department, and have one year of work experience;
  - Holds a master's degree in accounting or finance conferred by an accredited college or university with a concentration in accounting and business as prescribed by the department, and have one year of work experience;



- Holds a baccalaureate degree in accounting or finance conferred by an accredited college or university with a concentration in accounting and business as prescribed by the department, and have two years of work experience; or
- Holds a baccalaureate degree in any major course of study conferred by an accredited college or university, have completed coursework required for a concentration in accounting and business as prescribed by the department, and have two years of work experience. (Sections [276](#) and [277](#))

The bill requires the department to prescribe the coursework required for a concentration in accounting and business. Under the bill, an applicant may satisfy the coursework requirement if the applicant receives a baccalaureate or higher degree in accounting or finance conferred by an accredited college or university in a state or territory of the United States. If the applicant has received a baccalaureate or higher degree with a major course of study other than accounting or finance, the applicant must complete the coursework required for a concentration in accounting and business as prescribed by the department. (Section [276](#))

The bill revises the licensure by endorsement requirements for applicants who are licensed in any state or territory of the United States. Under the bill, a person holding a license in another state or a territory of the United States may qualify for licensure by endorsement if they have maintained good moral character and, at the time of licensure by the other state or territory, were required to show evidence of having obtained at least a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university and having passed the Uniform CPA Examination. (Section [276](#))

The bill revises the requirements for the licensure of international applicants. The bill requires international applicants for licensure as a certified public accountant in this state to meet the requirements for education, work experience, and good moral character under [s. 473.308, F.S.](#) (Section [277](#))

Effective January 1, 2026, the bill permits, a person who holds an active CPA license in good standing in another state or territory to provide accountancy services without obtaining a state license if at the time of licensure by the other state or territory, the individual was required to show evidence of having obtained at least a baccalaureate degree and having passed the Uniform CPA Examination. (Section [278](#))

#### [Florida Drug and Cosmetic Act](#)

The bill removes the requirement that every prescription drug wholesale distributor must have at least one designated representative, who must be certified by the department. (Section [282](#))

The bill provides that a permitted entity applying for a new permit from the Division of Drugs, Devices, and Cosmetics because of a sale or transfer of ownership in the permitted entity must apply within 30 days of the sale or transfer instead of before the sale or transfer. (Section [282](#))

#### [DBPR Information on Professions](#)

The bill requires DBPR to e-mail and post information on their website at the end of each legislative session explaining new laws related to each profession. (Section [2](#))

#### [Auctioneer Fees](#)

Effective July 1, 2026, requires all fees established by DBPR related to auctioneers to be reduced by 50 percent. (Section [273](#))

#### [Veterinary Telehealth Prescriptions](#)

The bill extends the duration of treatment for flea and tick control that a licensed veterinarian may prescribe via telehealth from one month to one year. (Section [117](#))

## **[Building Permits](#)**

### **Home Repairs During States of Emergency**

The bill prohibits local governments from requiring a permit for repairs and renovations completed within one year after the issuance of a state of emergency for a natural disaster for single family homes as long as the damage being repaired does not have a total cost that exceeds more than 50 percent of the value of the home, does not include more than 50 percent of such home, and does not change the footprint of the home. (Section [351](#))

### **Landscaping Violations During States of Emergency**

The bill prohibits local governments from denying a certificate of occupancy based on noncompliance with a Florida-friendly landscaping ordinance for residential or commercial properties issued a permit within one year of a state of emergency for a natural disaster for the county in which the property is located. (Section [351](#))

### **Building Permits for Playgrounds, Fences, or Landscape Irrigation**

The bill prohibits local enforcement agencies from requiring a building permit for the construction of playground equipment, a fence, or a landscape irrigation system on single-family residential property. (Section [351](#))

### **Building Permits for Work Valued Under \$7,500**

The bill prohibits local governments from requiring an owner or the owner's contractor to obtain a building permit for work, which is valued at less than \$7,500, on a parcel containing a single-family dwelling. This does not apply to larger or major projects where the work is divided up into amounts less than \$7,500. (Section [351](#))

Local governments may still require a building permit for any electrical, plumbing, or structural work, not including the repair or replacement of exterior doors or windows, performed on the parcel regardless of the value of the work. (Section [351](#))

### **Uniform Permit Applications**

The bill requires DBPR to recommend a uniform permit application form for most routine types of building permits and inspections for common building permits and to recommend a uniform process for video inspections. (Section [4](#))

### **Landscape Architects Services**

The bill requires state agencies and local governments to accept the seal of a landscape architect for any professional services within a landscape architect's scope of work, including, but not limited to, grading and drainage. (Section [357](#))

### **Elevator Accessibility**

The bill revises elevator accessibility requirements to align with the Florida Building Code. (Section [269](#))

## **Licensure Fingerprint Requirements**

The bill eliminates the current fingerprint requirement for active duty military personnel, as well as their spouses, who seek licensure in those professions that do not otherwise require fingerprinting for initial licensure. (Section [271](#))

The bill authorizes the [FDLE](#) to accept and process fingerprints and exchange criminal history records for individuals involved in the insurance industry. The bill requires background checks for a wide range of persons associated with insurers or insurance-related entities, including officers, employees, contractors, or persons who control insurance operations. Fingerprints must be submitted to the OIR or an authorized vendor and will be processed by both the FDLE and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The results of the background checks will be used by the OIR to determine whether individuals meet eligibility requirements for licensure, certification, or authority to operate under the Florida Insurance Code. The bill also provides procedures for submission, retention, and cost responsibilities associated with fingerprint processing and background checks. (Section [358](#))

## **RULEMAKING:**

The bill requires the Office of Rural Prosperity within the Department of Commerce to promulgate by rule the division of Florida into seven different regions and assign a regional rural community liaison center to each region.

***Lawmaking is a legislative power; however, the Legislature may delegate a portion of such power to executive branch agencies to create rules that have the force of law. To exercise this delegated power, an agency must have a grant of rulemaking authority and a law to implement.***

## **FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:**

### **STATE GOVERNMENT:**

The Revenue Estimating Conference has not yet met to estimate the impacts of the bill on state revenues.

#### Rural Communities, Housing, and Infrastructure

The bill creates new programs and expands existing programs to provide additional funding opportunities that support rural community advancement and growth. Funding for these programs is subject to appropriation.

#### Regulation of Businesses and Professions

The bill may have a positive fiscal impact for DBPR and DACS due to the following:

- Reduced operational and administrative costs associated with maintaining the repealed boards, commissions, and councils.
- Decreased continuing education (CE) oversight expenses needed to administer, monitor, or enforce CE requirements.

While the state may lose some fee revenue (e.g., CE-related or certain secondary license fees), this is likely offset by lower enforcement and processing expenses.

DACS estimates an annual revenue decrease of \$1,152,033 associated with the repeal of new and renewal intern licenses, agency licenses (including branch agencies) and agency manager licenses. This estimated reduction is based on actual FY 2023-24 revenue collections and final license counts. This revenue decrease does not contemplate decreases at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for applicant background screenings.<sup>2</sup>

DBPR may incur short-term costs related to reorganizing oversight functions, updating rules, systems, and internal processes that may be absorbed by current resources.

The bill requires DBPR and DACS to conduct studies on uniform permitting processes and licensure pathways based on experience. The cost of these studies may likely be absorbed in existing budgets.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT:**

The Revenue Estimating Conference has not yet met to estimate the impacts of this bill on local government revenues.

#### Rural Communities, Housing, and Infrastructure

Local governments in rural areas of the state will benefit from participating in the new and expanded programs provided for in the bill to the extent that funding is appropriated for those programs.

#### Community Redevelopment Agencies

The CRA provisions of the bill will have a positive fiscal impact on counties, municipalities, and special districts that currently contribute to the redevelopment trust fund of a CRA by allowing those local governments to retain funds that would otherwise be deposited in the redevelopment trust fund.

#### Regulation of Businesses and Professions

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<sup>2</sup> Email from Thomas Poucher, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Info Request (April 11, 2025).

Some portions of the bill may have a negative fiscal impact on local governments due to reduced permit fee revenue from small building permits prohibited in the bill. However, these changes may reduce local enforcement burdens and administrative costs, especially after natural disasters.

#### PRIVATE SECTOR:

##### Rural Communities, Housing, and Infrastructure

The bill creates new programs and expands existing programs to provide additional funding opportunities that support rural community advancement and growth. Subject to appropriation of funds for these new and expanded programs, these programs may directly or indirectly fund private sector activity, primarily in the transportation, education, and healthcare fields. Citizens in rural communities will benefit indirectly from programs designed to increase community investment as guided by local governments.

##### Regulation of Businesses and Professions

The bill may have a positive impact on the private sector by lowering costs for professionals. Eliminating required continuing education saves professionals time and money. Private investigators and security firms may experience lower overhead costs through the elimination of secondary licenses. Easier licensure may increase competition in some professions, which could affect wages or business volume for existing licensees.

## RELEVANT INFORMATION

#### SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

##### The Department of Commerce

The Department of Commerce (Department) is Florida's lead agency for working with the Legislature, state agencies, business leaders, and economic development professionals to formulate and implement coherent and consistent policies and strategies designed to promote economic opportunities for all Floridians.<sup>3</sup> The Department is also the state's chief agency for business recruitment and expansion.<sup>4</sup> The department must also promote viable, sustainable communities by providing technical assistance and guidance on growth and development issues, grants, and other assistance to local communities.<sup>5</sup>

The head of the Department is the Secretary of Commerce, who is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.<sup>6</sup> The secretary may create offices within the Office of the Secretary and within the divisions to promote efficient and effective operation of the Department.<sup>7</sup> The Department must also ensure that the state's goals and policies relating to economic development, workforce development, community planning and development, and affordable housing are fully integrated with appropriate implementation strategies.<sup>8</sup>

There are seven divisions and offices within the Department:

- Economic Development
- Community Development
- Workforce Services
- Finance and Administration
- Information Technology
- Office of the Secretary
- Office of Economic Accountability and Transparency<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> S. [20.60\(4\), F.S.](#)

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> S. 20.60(4)(c), F.S.

<sup>6</sup> S. [20.60\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>7</sup> S. [20.60\(3\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>8</sup> S. [20.60\(3\), F.S.](#)

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

The Department is charged with managing the activities of public-private partnerships and state agencies in order to avoid duplication and promote coordinated and consistent implementation of programs, including rural community development.<sup>10</sup> This includes stimulation of economic development and job creation in rural areas, including strategies for rural marketing and the development of infrastructure in rural areas.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, the Department runs a number of financial and grant programs aimed at helping small rural communities in Florida.

### **Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI)**

The Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) was established by the Legislature to encourage and facilitate the location and expansion of major economic development projects of significant scale in rural communities.<sup>12</sup> REDI operates as a statewide initiative led by the Department to serve Florida's rural communities by providing a more focused and coordinated effort among state and regional agencies to improve the fiscal, economic, and community viability of these areas.<sup>13</sup>

Specified agencies and organizations<sup>14</sup> are required to designate a high-level staff person to serve as their REDI representative. Each REDI representative is responsible for ensuring that their agency or organization is informed about REDI and helps to identify opportunities to accommodate or include rural local governments in their agency programs.

REDI is required to review and evaluate the impact of statutes and rules on rural communities and work to minimize any adverse impact and undertake outreach and capacity-building efforts.<sup>15</sup> A rural community is defined as:

- A county with a population of 75,000 or fewer;
- A county with a population of 125,000 or fewer, if the county is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or fewer;
- Any municipality in a county that meets the above criteria; or
- An unincorporated federal enterprise community or an incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or fewer, with an employment base focused on traditional agriculture or resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as rural, and which has at least three or more economic distress factors.<sup>16</sup>

Each REDI member agency is required to review financial match requirements for projects in rural areas, develop a proposal to waive or reduce match requirements, and submit such proposals to REDI.<sup>17</sup> REDI must call a meeting within 30 days of receipt of such proposals for comment and recommendation.<sup>18</sup> Waivers and reductions must be requested by the county or community, and to the fullest extent possible member organizations must expedite rule and amendment adoption to incorporate the reduction in match by rural areas in financial distress.<sup>19</sup> REDI must prepare an annual report as a supplement to the Department's annual report which includes in an evaluation on the status of changes to rules, number of awards made with waivers, and recommendations for future changes.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> S. [20.60\(4\)\(e\), F.S.](#)

<sup>11</sup> S. 20.60(5)(a)4.c., F.S.

<sup>12</sup> S. [288.0656\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>13</sup> S. [288.0656\(3\), F.S.](#)

<sup>14</sup> The Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Department of State, Department of Health, Department of Children and Families, Department of Corrections, Department of Education, Department of Juvenile Justice, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, each water management district, CareerSource Florida, Inc., VISIT Florida, the Florida Regional Planning Council Association, Agency for Health Care Administration, and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. See [s. 288.0656\(6\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>15</sup> S. [288.0656\(4\), F.S.](#)

<sup>16</sup> S. [288.0656\(2\)\(e\), F.S.](#)

<sup>17</sup> S. [288.06561, F.S.](#)

<sup>18</sup> S. [288.06561\(3\), F.S.](#)

<sup>19</sup> S. 288.06561(4) and (7), F.S.

<sup>20</sup> S. [288.06561\(8\), F.S.](#)



Based on recommendations of the REDI, the Governor may designate up to three rural areas of opportunity (RAOs) by executive order,<sup>21</sup> which establishes certain local governments as a priority for the Department. The orders also permit all state agencies and departments to use all available tools and resources to the extent permissible by law to promote the creation and development of projects designated by the RAO that has been recommended by the department.<sup>22</sup>

### **Rural Area of Opportunity**

An RAO is a rural community,<sup>23</sup> or region comprised of rural communities that has been adversely affected by an extraordinary economic event, severe or chronic distress, or a natural disaster.<sup>24</sup> An area may also be designated as an RAO if it presents a unique economic development opportunity of regional impact.<sup>25</sup> The designation of an RAO must be agreed upon by the Department, as well as the county and municipal governments to be included in the RAO.<sup>26</sup>

This designation establishes these areas as priority assignments for REDI and allows the Governor, acting through REDI, to waive criteria, requirements, or similar provisions of any economic development initiative. Such incentives include, but are not limited to, the Quick Response Training Program<sup>27</sup>, the Quick Response Training Program for participants in the welfare transition program<sup>28</sup>, transportation projects,<sup>29</sup> the brownfield redevelopment bonus refund<sup>30</sup>, and the rural job tax credit program.<sup>31</sup>

Currently, there are three designated RAO areas:

- **Northwest RAO:** Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Wakulla, and Washington counties, and portions of Walton County (the City of Freeport and lands north of the Choctawhatchee Bay and intercoastal waterway).
- **South Central RAO:** DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee counties, and the cities of Pahokee, Belle Glade, and South Bay in Palm Beach County and the city of Immokalee in Collier County.
- **North Central RAO:** Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union counties.<sup>32</sup>

### **Fiscally Constrained Counties**

Fiscally constrained counties are counties entirely within a RAO or where a 1-mill levy would raise no more than \$5 million in annual tax revenue.<sup>33</sup> There are 29 counties that currently meet these conditions; Baker, Bradford, Calhoun, Columbia, Desoto, Dixie, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Glades, Gulf, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Okeechobee, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Wakulla, and Washington.<sup>34</sup> Highlands' and Putnam's 1-mill levy currently surpass the \$5 million threshold.

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<sup>21</sup> S. [288.0656\(7\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>22</sup> Executive Orders 20-170, 21-149, and 23-132 available at [https://www.flgov.com/eog/sites/default/files/executive-orders/2024/EO\\_20-170.pdf](https://www.flgov.com/eog/sites/default/files/executive-orders/2024/EO_20-170.pdf), [https://www.flgov.com/eog/sites/default/files/executive-orders/2024/EO\\_21-149.pdf](https://www.flgov.com/eog/sites/default/files/executive-orders/2024/EO_21-149.pdf), and <https://www.flgov.com/eog/sites/default/files/executive-orders/2024/EO-23-132.pdf> (last visited Mar. 21, 2025)

<sup>23</sup> S. [288.0656\(2\)\(e\), F.S.](#)

<sup>24</sup> S. [288.0656\(2\)\(d\), F.S.](#)

<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> S. [288.0656\(7\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>27</sup> S. [288.047, F.S.](#)

<sup>28</sup> S. [288.047\(8\), F.S.](#)

<sup>29</sup> S. [339.2821, F.S.](#)

<sup>30</sup> S. [288.107, F.S.](#)

<sup>31</sup> Ss. [212.098, F.S.](#) and [220.1895, F.S.](#)

<sup>32</sup> Department of Commerce, *Rural Areas of Opportunity*, available at <https://floridajobs.org/community-planning-and-development/rural-community-programs/rural-areas-of-opportunity> (last visited Mar.19, 2025). The economic development organizations for these RAOs are named Opportunity Florida, Florida's Heartland Regional Economic Development Initiative, and the North Florida Economic Development Partnership, respectively.

<sup>33</sup> S. [218.67\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>34</sup> Florida Department of Revenue, *Fiscally Constrained Counties*, available at [https://www.floridarevenue.com/property/Documents/fcc\\_map.pdf](https://www.floridarevenue.com/property/Documents/fcc_map.pdf) (last visited Mar. 21, 2025).

### [Distribution Factors](#)

Each fiscally constrained county receives a portion of the total direct-to-home satellite service distribution. At the beginning of each fiscal year, the Department of Revenue (DOR) determines the amount to be distributed to each fiscally constrained county using the prior fiscal year's certified school taxable value, county millage rate, and latest April 1 county population, excluding prisoners.<sup>35</sup> The following factors were created by DOR to determine each county's relative share of the total distribution available for the coming fiscal year:<sup>36</sup>

The relative revenue-raising-capacity factor is based on a county's certified school taxable value and population and referred to in law as the ability of a county to generate property tax revenues from 1 mill on a per capita basis. 37 Counties that generate less per capita revenue receive a higher factor.<sup>38</sup>

The local-effort factor is based on a county's millage rate and referred to in law as a measure of the relative level of local effort of a county as indicated by the millage rate levied for the prior fiscal year.<sup>39</sup> This factor guarantees that each county receives a portion of the total distribution. It uses the most recently adopted countywide operating millage rate for each eligible county and multiplies that millage rate by 0.1. For example, a county with a countywide operating millage rate of 6.73 would receive a factor value of 0.673.

### [Florida Office of Broadband](#)

The Office of Broadband (office) is an office created within the Division of Community Development<sup>40</sup> in the Department for the purpose of providing broadband internet service to residents of Florida including: libraries, schools, colleges and universities, health care providers, and community organizations.<sup>41</sup> Under the office, the department may apply for and accept federal funds, enter into contracts, and establish any committee or workgroups to administer the program.<sup>42</sup>

### [Regional Rural Development Grants Program](#)

The Regional Rural Development Grants Program was established to provide funding, through matching grants, to build the professional capacity of regionally based economic development organizations located in rural communities. The concept of building the professional capacity of an economic development organization includes hiring professional staff to develop, deliver, and provide economic development professional services. Professional services include technical assistance, education and leadership development, marketing, and project recruitment.<sup>43</sup>

Applications submitted to the Department for funding through this program must provide the following:<sup>44</sup>

- Official commitments of support from each of the units of local government represented by the regional organization;
- The regional organization is in existence and actively involved in economic development activities serving the region; and
- The manner in which the organization coordinates its efforts with those other local and state organizations.

A contract or agreement that involves the expenditure of grant funds must include:<sup>45</sup>

- The purpose of the contract or agreement.
- Specific performance standards and responsibilities for each entity under the contract or agreement.

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<sup>35</sup> S. [186.901, F.S.](#)

<sup>36</sup> S. 218.67(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>37</sup> *Id.*

<sup>38</sup> For example, a county that raises \$25 or less per capita receives a factor value of 1; whereas a county that raises more than \$50 per capita receives a factor value of 0. In Fiscal Year 2024-2025, only three fiscally constrained counties were eligible for this factor. *See* Email correspondence with staff at the Department of Revenue, Feb. 6, 2025 (on file with the Senate Committee on Finance and Tax).

<sup>39</sup> S. [218.67\(3\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>40</sup> S. [288.9961\(4\), F.S.](#)

<sup>41</sup> S. [288.9961\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>42</sup> S. [288.9961\(5\), F.S.](#)

<sup>43</sup> S. [288.018\(1\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>44</sup> S. [288.018\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>45</sup> S. [288.018\(3\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

- A detailed project or contract budget, if applicable.
- The value of any services provided.
- The projected travel expenses for employees and board members, if applicable.

An organization may receive up to \$50,000 a year or \$250,000 for any three regional economic development organizations that serve an entire RAO.<sup>46</sup> The Department is authorized to spend up to \$750,000 each fiscal year from funds appropriated to the Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund to carry out this program.<sup>47</sup>

### **Rural Infrastructure Fund**

The Rural Infrastructure Fund is a grant program created to facilitate the planning, preparing, and financing of infrastructure projects in rural communities.<sup>48</sup> The program provides access to federal and state infrastructure funding programs, including, but not limited to, those offered by the United States Departments of Agriculture and Commerce and including those offered by Rural Economic Development Initiative agencies.<sup>49</sup> The program funds total infrastructure project grants, infrastructure feasibility grants, and preclearance review grants.

The Department may award grants for up to 75 percent of the total infrastructure cost, or up to 100 percent of the total infrastructure project cost for a project that is located in a rural community that is also located in a fiscally constrained county<sup>50</sup> or a RAO.<sup>51</sup> Additionally, projects may include improving any inadequate infrastructure that has resulted in regulatory action that prohibits economic or community growth or reducing the costs to community users of proposed infrastructure improvements that exceed such costs in comparable communities.

Eligible uses of funds include improvements to public infrastructure for industrial or commercial sites and upgrades to or development of public tourism infrastructure.<sup>52</sup> Infrastructure can include public or public-private partnership facilities, such as stormwater systems, telecommunication, roads or other remedies to transportation impediments, nature-based tourism facilities and physical requirements necessary to facilitate tourism, trade, and economic development activities.<sup>53</sup> The Department may award grants of up to \$300,000 for infrastructure feasibility studies, design and engineering activities, or other infrastructure planning and preparation activities.<sup>54</sup> The total project participation grant may be used in conjunction with the infrastructure feasibility grant.

To enable local governments to access the resources the Department may award grants for surveys, feasibility studies, and other activities related to the identification and preclearance review of suitable land.<sup>55</sup> Authorized grants under program may not exceed \$75,000 each, except in the case of a project in a rural area of opportunity, in which case the grant may not exceed \$300,000.<sup>56</sup>

### **Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund**

The Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund Program is administered by the Department to facilitate the use of existing federal, state, and local financial resources by providing local governments with financial assistance to further promote the economic viability of rural communities.<sup>57</sup>

The program provides for long-term loans, loan guarantees, and loan loss reserves to units of local governments, or economic development organizations in counties with populations of 75,000 or fewer, or within any county with a

<sup>46</sup> S. [288.018\(1\)\(c\), F.S.](#)

<sup>47</sup> S. [288.018\(4\), F.S.](#)

<sup>48</sup> See s. [288.0655, F.S.](#)

<sup>49</sup> S. [288.0655\(2\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>50</sup> A fiscally constrained country is any county that is entirely within a rural area of opportunity as designated by the Governor pursuant to [s. 288.0656, F.S.](#), or each county for which the value of a mill will raise no more than \$5 million in revenue, based on the taxable value certified pursuant to s. 1011.62(4)(a)1.a., F.S., from the previous July 1. S. [218.67\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>51</sup> S. [288.0655\(2\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>52</sup> *Id.*

<sup>53</sup> Broadband internet service must be provided in partnership with one or more dealers of communications services. S. [288.0655\(2\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>54</sup> S. [288.0655\(2\)\(c\), F.S.](#)

<sup>55</sup> S. [288.0655\(2\)\(e\), F.S.](#)

<sup>56</sup> *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> S. 288.065, (1) F.S.

population of 125,000 or fewer which is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or fewer.<sup>58</sup> Loans must be made pursuant to agreements specifying the terms and conditions agreed to between the applicant and the department, and loans are the legal obligations of the applicant.<sup>59</sup> All repayments of principal and interest must be returned to the loan fund and made available for loans to other applicants.

However, in a RAO, repayments of principal and interest may be retained by the applicant if repayments are dedicated and matched to fund regionally based economic development organizations representing the rural area of opportunity.<sup>60</sup>

### **Rural Economic Development Strategy Grants**

The Department accepts and administers money which is appropriated to the department for providing grants to assist rural communities in developing and implementing strategic economic development plans.<sup>61</sup> The rural community must be counties with populations of 75,000 or fewer, or within any county with a population of 125,000 or fewer which is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or fewer, or a municipality therein.<sup>62</sup> The Department must establish criteria for reviewing grant applications under this section. These criteria include, but are not limited to, the degree of participation and commitment by the local community and the application's consistency with local comprehensive planning.<sup>63</sup>

### **Inventory of Communities Seeking to Recruit Businesses**

By September 30 of each year, a county or municipality that has a population of at least 25,000 or its local economic development organization must submit to the Department a brief overview of the strengths, services, and economic development incentives that its community offers.<sup>64</sup> The local government or its local economic development organization also must identify any industries that it is encouraging to locate or relocate to its area.<sup>65</sup> Such local governments and organizations seeking to recruit businesses may submit information and may participate in any activity or initiative resulting from the collection, analysis, and reporting of the information to the Department.<sup>66</sup>

### **Agreements Funded with Federal or State Assistance**

Current law requires an agency agreement that provides state financial assistance to a recipient or subrecipient,<sup>67</sup> or that provides federal financial assistance to a subrecipient, to include the following:

- A provision specifying scope of work that clearly establishes the tasks the recipient or subrecipient is required to perform;
- A provision dividing the agreement into quantifiable units of deliverables that must be received and accepted in writing by the agency before payment. Each deliverable must be directly related to the scope of work and must specify the required minimum level of service to be performed and the criteria for evaluating the successful completion of each deliverable;
- A provision specifying the financial consequences that apply if the recipient or subrecipient fails to perform the minimum level of service required in the agreement. The provision can be excluded in specified situations;
- A provision specifying that a recipient or subrecipient of federal or state financial assistance may expend funds only for allowable costs resulting from obligations incurred during the specified agreement period;
- A provision specifying that any balance of unobligated funds which has been advanced or paid must be refunded to the state agency;

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<sup>58</sup> S. 288.065, (2)(a) F.S.

<sup>59</sup> S. 288.065 (2)(b), F.S.

<sup>60</sup> S. 288.065 (2)(c), F.S.

<sup>61</sup> S. 288.0657 (2), F.S.

<sup>62</sup> S. 288.0657 (1), F.S.

<sup>63</sup> S. [288.0657\(4\), F.S.](#)

<sup>64</sup> S. [288.007, F.S.](#)

<sup>65</sup> *Id.*

<sup>66</sup> *Id.*

<sup>67</sup> S. [215.97, F.S.](#), defines a "subrecipient" as a nonstate entity that receives state financial assistance through another nonstate entity.

- A provision specifying that any funds paid in excess of the amount to which the recipient or subrecipient is entitled must be refunded to the state agency; and
- Any additional information required pursuant to the Florida Single Audit Act.<sup>68</sup>

Current law prohibits an agency agreement that provides state or federal financial assistance to local government entities within a RAO from requiring the local government entity to expend funds in order to be reimbursed. For these local government entities, an agency is authorized to advance funding based on an analysis of estimated costs, to pay service providers and vendors directly, or to undertake other options to meet the requirements of the agreement, allowing local governments in rural areas to be paid without spending their own capital first.<sup>69</sup>

### **The Small Business Development Center Network**

Established in 2008, the Florida Small Business Development Center Network (SBDC) is the principal business assistance organization for small businesses in the state. The purpose of the SBDC is to serve emerging and established for-profit, privately held businesses that maintain a place of business in the state.<sup>70</sup> The SBDC is a consortium of regional small business development centers throughout the state that offer current and prospective small businesses consulting services, training opportunities, and access to other resources and information.<sup>71</sup> Regional centers are based at several of Florida's colleges and universities.<sup>72</sup> The SBDC is run by a statewide director in consultation with a 19 member statewide advisory board.<sup>73</sup>

The network is funded in part by the U.S. Small Business Administration, Department of Defense, State of Florida through appropriations, and other private and public partners, with the University of West Florida serving as the SBDC's designated lead host institution.<sup>74</sup> Half of any state funds received directly by a host institution which are specifically designated for the network are distributed for the following purposes:

- Ensuring that support services are available statewide, especially in underserved and rural areas of the state, to assist eligible businesses;
- Enhancing participation in the network among state universities and colleges; and
- Facilitating the adoption of innovative small business assistance best practices by the regional small business development centers.

### **State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program**

The SHIP Program was created to provide funds to local governments as an incentive to create partnerships that produce and preserve affordable homeownership and multifamily housing. The SHIP program provides funds to all 67 counties and 52 Community Development Block Grant<sup>75</sup> entitlement cities on a population-based formula to finance and preserve affordable housing based on locally adopted housing plans.<sup>76</sup> The program was designed to serve very-low, low-, and moderate-income families and is administered by Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC). SHIP funds may be used to pay for emergency repairs, rehabilitation, down payment and closing cost assistance, impact fees, construction and gap financing, mortgage buydowns, acquisition of property for affordable housing, matching dollars for federal housing grants and programs, and homeownership counseling.<sup>77</sup>

Funds are expended per each local government's adopted Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP), which details the housing strategies it will use.<sup>78</sup> Local governments submit their LHAPs to the FHFC for review to ensure that they

<sup>68</sup> S. 215.971(1)(a)-(g), F.S.

<sup>69</sup> S. 215.971, F.S. (h) F.S.

<sup>70</sup> Ch. 2008-149, L.O.F., codified as [s. 288.001, F.S.](#)

<sup>71</sup> America's SBDC Florida, *Consulting Services*, available at <https://floridasbdc.org/> (last visited Mar. 21, 2025)

<sup>72</sup> America's SBDC Florida, *Our Network*, available at <https://floridasbdc.org/> (last visited Mar. 21, 2025).

<sup>73</sup> S. 288.001 (3)-(4), F.S.

<sup>74</sup> America's SBDC Florida, *About Funding*, available at <https://floridasbdc.org/about/> (last visited Mar. 21, 2025).

<sup>75</sup> The CDBG program is a federal program created in 1974 that provides funding for housing and community development activities.

<sup>76</sup> See ss. 420.907-420.9089, F.S.

<sup>77</sup> S. [420.9072\(7\), F.S.](#)

<sup>78</sup> S. [420.9075, F.S.](#) S. [420.9075\(3\), F.S.](#), outlines a list of strategies LHAPs are encouraged to employ, such as helping those affected by mobile home park closures, encouraging innovative housing design to reduce long-term housing costs, preserving assisted housing, and reducing homelessness.



meet the broad statutory guidelines and the requirements of the program rules. The guaranteed minimum allocation amount that will be disbursed on a quarterly or more frequent basis by the FHFC to local governments is \$350,000.<sup>79</sup>

Certain statutory requirements restrict a local government's use of funds made available under the SHIP program (excluding amounts set aside for administrative costs):

- At least 75 percent of SHIP funds must be reserved for construction, rehabilitation, or emergency repair of affordable, eligible housing;<sup>80</sup> and
- Up to 25 percent of SHIP funds may be reserved for allowed rental services.<sup>81</sup>

Within those distributions by local governments, additional requirements must be met:

- At least 65 percent of SHIP funds must be reserved for home ownership for eligible persons;<sup>82</sup>
- At least 20 percent of SHIP funds must serve persons with special needs;<sup>83</sup>
- Up to 20 percent of SHIP funds may be used for manufactured housing;<sup>84</sup> and
- At least 30 percent of SHIP funds must be used for awards to very-low-income persons or eligible sponsors serving very-low-income persons, and another 30 percent must be used for awards for low-income-persons or eligible sponsors serving low-income persons.<sup>85</sup>

### **USDA Section 515 Rural Affordable Housing**

Many of rural America's 65 million residents experience acute housing problems with nearly 30 percent of rural households experiencing at least one major housing problem, such as high cost, physical deficiencies, or overcrowding.<sup>86</sup> The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Section 515 program is a part of the national Rural Rental Housing program. Under the Section 515 program, USDA Rural Development makes direct loans to developers to finance affordable multifamily rental housing for very low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families, for elderly people, and for persons with disabilities.<sup>87</sup>

Section 515 funds can be used for any new construction and for the rehabilitation of existing rural properties. Funding can also be used to buy or improve land, and to provide critical infrastructure for properties such as water and waste disposal systems. However, no new rental properties have been developed under Section 515 since 2011.<sup>88</sup>

## **Small County Road Programs**

### **Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP)**

FDOT administers SCRAP to assist small county governments in resurfacing or reconstructing county roads that were part of the county road system on June 10, 1995.<sup>89</sup> Counties eligible to compete for funding based on population include those with a population of 75,000 or less according to the 1990 federal census. Under this criterion, there are currently 33 counties eligible to receive funding through the program. Capacity improvements

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<sup>79</sup> S. 420.9073 (3)(a-b) F.S.

<sup>80</sup> S. [420.9075\(5\)\(c\) F.S.](#)

<sup>81</sup> S. [420.9075\(5\)\(b\) F.S.](#) However, a local government may not expend money distributed to it to provide ongoing rent subsidies, except for: security and utility deposit assistance; eviction prevention not to exceed six months' rent; or a rent subsidy program for very-low-income households with at least one adult who is a person with special needs or is homeless, not to exceed 12 months' rental assistance.

<sup>82</sup> S. [420.9075\(5\)\(a\) F.S.](#) "Eligible person" or "eligible household" means one or more natural persons or a family determined by the county or eligible municipality to be of very low income, low income, or moderate income based upon the annual gross income of the household.

<sup>83</sup> S. [420.9075\(5\)\(d\) F.S.](#)

<sup>84</sup> S. [420.9075\(5\)\(e\) F.S.](#)

<sup>85</sup> S. 420.9075(5)(g)2., F.S.

<sup>86</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition, *USDA Rural Rental Housing Programs*, available at [https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/AG-2019/04-13\\_USDA-Rural-Rental-Housing-Programs.pdf](https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/AG-2019/04-13_USDA-Rural-Rental-Housing-Programs.pdf) (last visited Mar. 21, 2025).

<sup>87</sup> *Id.*

<sup>88</sup> *Id.*

<sup>89</sup> S. [339.2816\(4\) F.S.](#)

on county roads are not eligible for SCRAP funding, except when FDOT determines that widening existing lanes as part of a resurfacing or reconstruction project is necessary to address safety concerns.<sup>90</sup>

Currently, up to \$25 million annually from the State Transportation Trust Fund may be used to fund the SCRAP.<sup>91</sup> Available funds are allocated to the FDOT districts based on the number of counties eligible for funding under the criteria in [s. 339.2816, F.S.](#)

#### [Small County Outreach Program \(SCOP\)](#)

The SCOP assists small counties in repairing or rehabilitating county bridges, paving unpaved roads, addressing road-related drainage improvements, resurfacing or reconstructing county roads, or constructing capacity or safety improvements to county roads. Small counties eligible to compete for project funding include those with a population of 200,000 or less as determined by the most recent official estimate of the Office of Economic and Demographic Research.<sup>92</sup> Similar to the SCRAP, available funds are allocated to FDOT districts based on the number of counties eligible for funding under the criteria in [s. 339.2818, F.S.](#)

FDOT is required to fund 75 percent of the cost of projects on county roads selected for funding under the program and the county must provide 25 percent of such costs.<sup>93</sup> Rural counties qualifying under the Rural Economic Development Initiative<sup>94</sup> may apply for a waiver or reduction of the required 25 percent local match.<sup>95</sup> Subject to specific appropriation, municipalities within a rural area of opportunity may also compete for funding at up to 100 percent of the project costs.<sup>96</sup>

In 2024, the SCOP was amended to incorporate additional eligibility provisions. Specifically, subject to a specific appropriation, a local government either wholly or partially within the Everglades Agricultural Area, the Peace River Basin, or the Suwannee River Basin may compete for additional funding at up to 100 percent of project costs on state or county roads used primarily as farm-to-market connections between rural agricultural areas and market distribution centers, excluding capacity improvement projects.<sup>97</sup>

#### [Arterial Roads](#)

Under Florida's Transportation Code "arterial road" means a route providing service which is relatively continuous and of relatively high traffic volume, long average trip length, high operating speed, and high mobility importance.<sup>98</sup> Arterials include U.S. numbered highways and principal state roads that connect cities and towns. FDOT's Functional Classification system distinguishes between urban and rural designations for arterial roads.<sup>99</sup> FDOT routinely manages and improves arterial roads to increase capacity and facilitate traffic throughput, while at the same time achieving the paramount goal of improving safety.

FDOT is required to identify and include in the work program projects to increase capacity by widening existing two-lane arterial rural roads to four lanes. To be included in a work program project, the road must be classified as an arterial rural road, and truck traffic using the road must amount to at least 15 percent of all such traffic, as determined by the department. FDOT is required to fund at least \$20 million annually for such projects.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> FDOT, *Work Program Instructions FY 25/26-29/30*, September 6, 2024, at p. 394, available at <https://fdotewp1.dot.state.fl.us/fmsupportapps/Documents/development/WorkProgramInstructions.pdf>

<sup>91</sup> S. [339.2816\(3\), F.S.](#)

<sup>92</sup> S. [339.2818, F.S.](#)

<sup>93</sup> S. [339.2818\(4\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>94</sup> See [s. 288.056, F.S.](#), for a full description of the Rural Economic Development Initiative.

<sup>95</sup> FDOT, *Work Program Instructions FY 25/26-29/30*, September 6, 2024, at p. 384, available at <https://fdotewp1.dot.state.fl.us/fmsupportapps/Documents/development/WorkProgramInstructions.pdf> (last visited Mar. 21, 2025).

<sup>96</sup> S. [339.2818\(7\), F.S.](#)

<sup>97</sup> S. [339.2818\(8\), F.S.](#)

<sup>98</sup> S. [334.03\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>99</sup> FDOT, *2020 Urban Area Boundary and Functional Classification Handbook*, available at [https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/statistics/docs/urbanfunclass.pdf?sfvrsn=84c718c4\\_15](https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/statistics/docs/urbanfunclass.pdf?sfvrsn=84c718c4_15) (last visited Mar. 21, 2025).

<sup>100</sup> S. [339.68, F.S.](#)

## Community Redevelopment Agencies

The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 authorizes each county or municipality to create a CRA as a means for redeveloping slums and blighted areas in the community.<sup>101</sup> An area is considered a slum if it has elevated rates of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, poverty, or crime due to the large number of buildings or improvements in the area in a poor state of repair and has at least one of the following factors present:

- Inadequate ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;
- High population density (compared to adjacent areas within the county or municipality) and overcrowding (as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code); or
- The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.<sup>102</sup>

An area is considered blighted if there are a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating buildings that are causing economic distress or endangering the life or property of others and where two or more of the following factors are present:

- Inadequate or defective transportation facilities, including street layout, parking, roads, and bridges;
- Aggregate property values for property tax purposes have not increased in the past five years;
- Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- Deterioration of property improvements;
- Inadequate and outdated building density patterns;
- Falling lease rates for office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the rest of the county or municipality;
- Tax or special assessment delinquency that exceeds the fair market value of the land;
- Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the rest of the county or municipality;
- Higher crime rates than the rest of the county or municipality;
- Higher volume of fire and emergency medical service calls than the rest of the county or municipality;
- Greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title that prevent the free alienability of land within the area;
- Governmentally-owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity; or
- A substantial number or percentage of properties damaged by sinkhole activity that have not been adequately repaired or stabilized.<sup>103</sup>

An area also may be classified as blighted if one of the above factors is present and all taxing authorities with jurisdiction over the area have agreed that the area is blighted by interlocal agreement or by passage of a resolution by the governing bodies.<sup>104</sup>

As of April 17, 2025, there are 213 CRAs in operation.<sup>105</sup>

## Creation of a CRA

Before creating a CRA, a county or municipal government must adopt a resolution with a “finding of necessity.”<sup>106</sup> The resolution must contain legislative findings supported by data and analysis that the area to be included in the CRA’s jurisdiction is either blighted or a slum area and that redevelopment of the area is necessary to promote the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of residents.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> S. [163.356, F.S.](#) A charter county with a population less than or equal to 1.6 million may create more than one CRA if approved by a vote of a majority plus one of the entire governing body of the charter county. S. [163.356\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>102</sup> S. [163.340\(7\), F.S.](#)

<sup>103</sup> S. [163.340\(8\), F.S.](#)

<sup>104</sup> *Id.*

<sup>105</sup> See Florida Department of Commerce, [Official List of Special Districts](#) (last visited Apr. 17, 2025).

<sup>106</sup> S. [163.355, F.S.](#)

<sup>107</sup> *Id.*

A county or municipality may create a CRA upon the adoption of a finding of necessity and a finding that a CRA is necessary for carrying out the community redevelopment goals.<sup>108</sup> A CRA created by a county may only operate within the boundaries of a municipality when the municipality has concurred by resolution with the community redevelopment plan adopted by the county. A CRA created by a municipality may not include more than 80 percent of the municipality if it was created after July 1, 2006.<sup>109</sup>

The ability to create, expand, or modify a CRA is also determined by the county's status as a charter or non-charter county. In a charter county, the county possesses the authority to create CRAs within the county, but may delegate that authority to a municipality by interlocal agreement.<sup>110</sup> In non-charter counties, the county does not have authority over the creation of CRAs by municipalities, including any modification of the redevelopment plan or expansion of CRA boundaries.<sup>111</sup>

### [Scheduled Termination of CRAs](#)

Current law provides for the dissolution of CRAs in existence on October 1, 2019, at the earlier of September 30, 2039, or the date provided in their respective charters as of October 1, 2019.<sup>112</sup> However, the governing body of the county or municipality that created the CRA may approve its continued existence beyond those dates by a majority vote. If a county or municipality does not approve the continued existence of a CRA, and the CRA has outstanding bonds that will not mature until after the agency's dissolution date, the CRA remains in existence until the bonds mature.<sup>113</sup> A CRA operating until its bonds mature may not extend the maturity date of any outstanding bonds on or after September 30, 2039, and the county or municipality that created the CRA must issue a new finding of necessity limited to timely meeting the remaining bond obligations of the agency.

### [Redevelopment Trust Fund](#)

CRAs are not authorized to levy or collect taxes. Instead, the county or municipality that created the CRA may establish a community redevelopment trust fund that is funded through tax increment financing (TIF).<sup>114</sup> The amount of TIF available to the CRA in a given year is equal to 95 percent of the difference between:

- The amount of ad valorem taxes levied in the current year by each taxing authority,<sup>115</sup> excluding any debt service millage, on taxable real property within the boundaries of the community redevelopment area; and
- The amount of ad valorem taxes that would have been produced by levying the current year's millage rate for each taxing authority, excluding any debt service millage, on taxable real property within the boundaries of the community redevelopment area at the total assessed value of the taxable real property prior to the effective date of the ordinance providing for the redevelopment trust fund.<sup>116</sup>

For CRAs created on or after October 1, 2019, or a CRA created by Miami-Dade County on or after July 1, 1994, the governing body of the county or municipality may lower the TIF percentage, with a floor of 50 percent.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> S. [163.356\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>109</sup> S. [163.340\(10\), F.S.](#)

<sup>110</sup> S. [163.410, F.S.](#) If a municipality in a charter county created a CRA before the adoption of the county charter, the CRA continues to operate under provisions applicable for non-charter counties.

<sup>111</sup> S. [163.415, F.S.](#)

<sup>112</sup> S. [163.3755\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>113</sup> S. [163.3755\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>114</sup> S. [163.387, F.S.](#)

<sup>115</sup> A "taxing authority" is defined as any "public body that levies or is authorized to levy an ad valorem tax on real property located in a community redevelopment area," excluding school districts. S. [163.340, F.S.](#) In addition to school districts, special districts that levy ad valorem taxes in more than one county, special districts funded solely by ad valorem taxation, library districts (unless the CRA had validated bonds as of April 30, 1984), neighborhood improvement districts, metropolitan transportation authorities, water management districts, and hospital districts (if the CRA was created on or after July 1, 2016) are exempt from contributing to the redevelopment trust fund. In addition, CRAs may exempt other special districts following a specified procedure. S. [163.387\(2\)\(c\)-\(d\), F.S.](#)

<sup>116</sup> S. [163.387\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>117</sup> See [ch. 2019-163, s. 8, Laws of Fla.](#)

Each taxing authority must transfer TIF funds to the redevelopment trust fund of the CRA by January 1 of each year.<sup>118</sup> For CRAs created before July 1, 2002, each taxing authority must make an annual appropriation to the trust fund for a period of no more than 60 years from when the community redevelopment plan was adopted or no more than 30 years from when the plan was amended, whichever is less. For CRAs created on or after July 1, 2002, each taxing authority must make an annual appropriation to the trust fund for no more than 40 years from when the community redevelopment plan was adopted.<sup>119</sup> If there are any outstanding loans, advances, or indebtedness at the conclusion of these periods, the local governing body that created the CRA must continue transfers to the redevelopment trust fund until the debt has been retired.<sup>120</sup>

If a taxing authority does not transfer the TIF funds to the redevelopment trust fund, the taxing authority is required to pay a penalty of 5 percent of the TIF amount to the trust fund as well as 1 percent interest per month for the outstanding amount.<sup>121</sup> A CRA may choose to waive these penalties in whole or in part.

Money in the redevelopment trust fund may only be spent pursuant to an annual budget adopted by the CRA board and may be used to pay for the following expenses:

- Administrative and overhead expenses necessary to implement a community redevelopment plan adopted by the CRA.
- Expenses of redevelopment planning, surveys, and financial analysis, including reimbursement of the governing body or the CRA for such expenses incurred before the redevelopment plan was approved and adopted.
- Acquisition of real property in the redevelopment area.
- Clearance and preparation of any redevelopment area for redevelopment and relocation of residents.
- Repayment of principal and interest or any redemption premium for loans, advances, bonds, bond anticipation notes, and any other form of indebtedness.
- Expenses related to the issuance, sale, redemption, retirement, or purchase of bonds, bond anticipation notes, or other form of indebtedness.
- Development of affordable housing within the community redevelopment area.
- Development of community policing innovations.<sup>122</sup>
- Any expenses that are necessary to exercise the powers that have been granted to counties and municipalities for community redevelopment that have been delegated to the CRA.<sup>123</sup>

If any money remains in the redevelopment trust fund at the end of a fiscal year, the CRA must:

- Return the money to each taxing authority in proportion to its contribution for that year;
- Use the funds to reduce the amount of any indebtedness to which increment revenues are pledged;
- Deposit the funds into an escrow account for the purpose of later reducing any indebtedness to which increment revenues are pledged; or
- Appropriate the funds to a specific redevelopment project pursuant to an approved community redevelopment plan.<sup>124</sup>

If the funds are appropriated for a specific project, the funds may not be used for another purpose unless the project is amended, redesigned, or delayed, in which case the funds must be re-appropriated pursuant to the next annual budget adopted by the CRA board.<sup>125</sup>

## [Revenue Bonds](#)

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<sup>118</sup> S. [163.387\(2\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>119</sup> S. [163.387\(2\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>120</sup> S. [163.387\(3\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>121</sup> S. [163.387\(2\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>122</sup> A “community policing innovation” is a policing technique or strategy designed to reduce crime by reducing opportunities for, and increasing the perceived risks of engaging in, criminal activity through visible presence of police in the community, including, but not limited to, community mobilization, neighborhood block watch, citizen patrol, citizen contact patrol, foot patrol, neighborhood storefront police stations, field interrogation, or intensified motorized patrol. S. [163.340\(23\), F.S.](#)

<sup>123</sup> S. [163.387\(6\), F.S.](#)

<sup>124</sup> S. [163.387\(7\), F.S.](#)

<sup>125</sup> S. [163.387\(7\)\(d\), F.S.](#)



A county, municipality, or CRA may issue revenue bonds for the purpose of financing redevelopment projects and may issue refunding bonds for the repayment or retirement of bonds or other obligations previously issued.<sup>126</sup> Any revenue bonds or other obligation issued by a CRA must mature within 40 years for CRAs created on or after July 1, 2002, or 60 years for CRAs created before July 1, 2002, after the end of the fiscal year in which the community redevelopment plan was initially adopted, but no later than the expiration date of the plan in effect at the time the bond or obligation was issued.

Any revenue bonds issued by the CRA are payable from revenues pledged to and received by the CRA and deposited into the redevelopment trust fund.<sup>127</sup> If increment revenues are pledged to repay any bond or other obligation, the maturity date of the bonds may not exceed 30 years from the fiscal year in which the first increment revenues were deposited in the trust fund for CRAs created before July 1, 2002, or 40 years for CRAs created on or after July 1, 2002.<sup>128</sup> The lien created by the revenue bonds does not attach to the funds until the revenues are deposited in the redevelopment trust fund and do not grant bondholders any right to require taxation in order to retire the bond.<sup>129</sup>

Revenue bonds issued by a CRA are not a liability of the state or any political subdivision of the state, and this status must be made clear on the face of the bond.<sup>130</sup>

### **Continuing Education**

Continuing education includes any additional required education undertaken by a professional after receiving licensure. Below is a chart of the continuing education requirements for licensed professionals in Florida:<sup>131</sup>

<b>Profession</b>	<b>Continuing Education Requirements</b>
Community Association Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 hours of CE annually</li> <li>• 15 classroom hours of CE to reinstate an inactive license</li> </ul>
Building Code Officials, Inspectors, and Plans Examiners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 classroom hours biannually</li> </ul>
Home Inspectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 hours of CE biannually</li> <li>• 14 hours of CE to reinstate an inactive license</li> </ul>
Mold-Related Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 hours of CE biannually</li> </ul>
Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 hours of CE biannually</li> <li>• Up to 9 hours of CE for every year the license was inactive to reinstate an inactive license</li> </ul>
Public Accountancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80 hours biannually</li> <li>• Up to 120 hours to reinstate inactive license</li> </ul>
Veterinary Medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 30 hours of CE biannually</li> </ul>
Cosmetologists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 10 hours of CE biannually</li> <li>• Up to 10 hours of CE to reinstate inactive license.</li> </ul>
Barbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 hours of CE biannually</li> </ul>

<sup>126</sup> S. [163.385\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>127</sup> S. [163.387\(4\), F.S.](#)

<sup>128</sup> S. [163.385\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>129</sup> S. [163.387\(4\), F.S.](#)

<sup>130</sup> S. [163.387\(5\), F.S.](#)

<sup>131</sup> See Ss. [310.081](#), [455.2228](#), [468.4337](#), [468.4338](#), [468.627](#), [468.8316](#), [468.8317](#), [468.8416](#), [471.017](#), [471.019](#), [472.018](#), [472.019](#), [473.312](#), [473.313](#), [474.211](#), [475.17](#), [475.182](#), [475.182](#), [475.183](#), [477.019](#), [477.0212](#), [481.215](#), [481.217](#), [481.313](#), [481.315](#), [482.111](#), [489.115](#), [489.116](#), [489.517](#), [489.519, F.S.](#); Rules [61E14-4.004](#), [61-30.403](#), [61G3-16.0091](#), [61G10-13.003](#), [61G10-18.001](#), [61J2-1.011](#), [61J2-3.020](#), and [61H1-33.003](#) F.A.C.

Profession	Continuing Education Requirements
Architects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 hours of CE biannually</li> <li>• Up to 20 hours of CE to reinstate inactive license</li> </ul>
Landscape Architects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 hours of CE biannually</li> <li>• Up to 16 hours of CE to reinstate an inactive license.</li> </ul>
Construction contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 classroom hours of CE biannually</li> <li>• Up to 14 classroom hours of CE to reinstate an inactive license.</li> </ul>
Electrical Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 classroom hours of CE biannually if the person is fire alarm system agent.</li> <li>• 6 classroom hours of CE biannually if the person is burglar alarm system agent.</li> <li>• 7 classroom hours of CE biannually if the licensee is an alarm system or specialty contractor.</li> <li>• 11 classroom hours of CE biannually if the licensee is an electrical contractor.</li> <li>• Up to 11 classroom hours of CE to reinstate an inactive license.</li> </ul>
Harbor Pilots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board approved seminar biannually</li> </ul>
Asbestos Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-day course of CE biannually for asbestos contractor.</li> <li>• Two-day course of CE biannually for asbestos consultant.</li> <li>• One-day course of CE annually for onsite supervisor.</li> </ul>
Land Surveyors and Mappers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 hours of CE biannually</li> <li>• Up to 12 classroom hours of CE for each inactive year to reinstate an inactive license.</li> </ul>
Real Estate Brokers and Sales Associates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 hours of CE biannually.</li> <li>• 12 hours of CE for every year a license is inactive to reinstate an inactive license.</li> <li>• 45 hours for sales associates before the first renewal after initial licensure.</li> <li>• 60 hours for brokers before the first renewal after initial licensure.</li> </ul>

### Department of Business and Professional Regulation

The Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) regulates and licenses various businesses and professionals in Florida.<sup>132</sup>

The Division of Professions licenses and regulates more than 542,000 professionals through the following professional boards and programs:<sup>133</sup>

- Board of Architecture and Interior Design,
- Asbestos Licensing Unit,
- Athlete Agents,

<sup>132</sup> S. [20.165, F.S.](#)

<sup>133</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Division of Professions*, <http://www.myfloridalicense.com/DBPR/division-of-professions/> (last visited April 3, 2025).

- Board of Auctioneers,
- Barbers' Board,
- Building Code Administrators and Inspectors Board,
- Regulatory Council of Community Association Managers,
- Construction Industry Licensing Board,
- Board of Cosmetology,
- Electrical Contractors' Licensing Board,
- Board of Employee Leasing Companies,
- Home Inspectors,
- Board of Landscape Architecture,
- Mold-Related Services,
- Board of Pilot Commissioners,
- Board of Professional Geologists,
- Talent Agencies,
- Board of Veterinary Medicine, and
- Florida Board of Professional Engineers.

### The Division of Alcoholic Beverages (ABT)

[ABT](#) regulates the manufacture, distribution, sale, and service of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products in Florida, including:

- receipt and processing of license applications;
- collection and auditing of taxes, surcharges, and fees paid by licensees; and
- enforcement of the laws and regulations governing the sale of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products.<sup>134</sup>

ABT's Bureau of Law Enforcement is an accredited law enforcement agency with law enforcement officers who have the authority to make arrests, carry firearms, serve court process, and seize contraband and the proceeds of illegal activities.<sup>135</sup>

The Bureau's law enforcement officers are responsible for enforcing the Beverage Law and the laws relating to distribution and sale of tobacco and nicotine products. They do not have authority to enforce any other state laws unless it is incidental to enforcing the Beverage Law or the laws relating to the distribution and sale of tobacco and nicotine products.<sup>136</sup>

The Division may discipline an alcoholic beverage license for any violation of the laws of this state or any state or territory of the United States.<sup>137</sup> However, the Division may only discipline a tobacco retailer or nicotine product retailer's permit for violating any of the provisions relating to the retail sale of such products. Such discipline includes administrative fines up to \$1,000 and suspension or revocation of a permit.<sup>138</sup>

### Board of Auctioneers

The Board of Auctioneers is responsible for licensing and regulating auctioneers. The board generally meets four times a year to consider applications for licensure, to review disciplinary cases, and to conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes, administers the Auctioneer Recovery Fund, and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>139</sup>

<sup>134</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco*, <http://www.myfloridalicense.com/DBPR/alcoholic-beverages-and-tobacco/> (last visited April 3, 2025).

<sup>135</sup> S. 20.165(9), F.S.; Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Alcoholic Beverages & Tobacco – Law Enforcement*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/alcoholic-beverages-and-tobacco/law-enforcement/> (last visited April 3, 2025).

<sup>136</sup> *Id.*

<sup>137</sup> S. 561.29, F.S.

<sup>138</sup> Ss. 569.006 and 569.35, F.S.

<sup>139</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Auctioneers*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/auctioneers/> (last visited April 3, 2025).

The board consists of five members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Two of the members must be licensed auctioneers with at least five years of experience, two members must be laypersons, and one must be an auction company. Members serve for terms of four years.<sup>140</sup>

#### [Auctioneer Fees](#)

The Board of Auctioneers may establish application, examination, licensure, renewal, and other reasonable and necessary fees, based upon the department's estimate of the costs to regulate licensed auctioneers. Below is a table of the applicable fees for licensed auctioneers:<sup>141</sup>

Type of Fee	Fee amount
Application Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$50 for license by exam</li> <li>• \$75 for license by endorsement or reciprocity</li> <li>• \$50 apprentice license</li> <li>• \$50 auction business</li> </ul>
Exam Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$250</li> </ul>
Initial Licensure Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$150</li> </ul>
Unlicensed Activities Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5 upon initial license and each renewal</li> </ul>
Renewal Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$150</li> </ul>
Reactivation Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$50</li> </ul>
Examination Review Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50</li> </ul>
Auctioneer Recovery Fund Surcharge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$100 at the time of renewal</li> </ul>
Change of Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$50</li> </ul>
Delinquent License Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$25</li> </ul>
Reinstatement of a Void License Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$150 application</li> <li>• \$150 - \$300 renewal fee for each biennium when timely renewal was missed.</li> <li>• \$105.00 – \$210.00 Unlicensed Activity fee for each biennium when timely renewal was missed.</li> </ul>

#### [Florida Real Estate Commission](#)

The Florida Real Estate Commission (FREC) is responsible for licensing and regulating real estate sales associates and brokers. The FREC meets for two days every month. The FREC also engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes.<sup>142</sup>

The commission consists of seven members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Four members must be licensed brokers with at least five years of experience, one member must be a licensed broker or a licensed sales associate with at least two years of experience, and two members must be laypersons. At least one member must be 60 years of age or older. Members serve for terms of four years.<sup>143</sup>

The Division of Real Estate (DRE) is responsible for supporting the Florida Real Estate Commission and the Florida Real Estate Appraisal Board in the regulation of real estate sales associates, brokers, and appraisers, in conjunction with the.<sup>144</sup> DRE's offices are located in Orlando.<sup>145</sup>

#### [Florida Real Estate Appraisal Board](#)

The Florida Real Estate Appraisal Board (FREAB) administers and enforces the real estate appraiser license law. The FREAB has power to regulate the issuance of appraiser licenses, certifications, registrations, and permits; to

<sup>140</sup> S. [468.384, F.S.](#)

<sup>141</sup> S. [468.386, F.S.](#); R. 61G2-3.001, F.A.C.

<sup>142</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Real Estate Commission – Commission Information*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/real-estate-commission/commission-information/#1493754459693-55f707f3-f1ea> (last visited April 3, 2025).

<sup>143</sup> S. [475.02, F.S.](#)

<sup>144</sup> S. [475.021, F.S.](#)

<sup>145</sup> S. [20.165\(2\), F.S.](#)

discipline appraisers; to establish qualifications for appraiser licenses, certifications, registrations, and permits; to regulate approved courses; to establish standards for real estate appraisals; and to establish standards for and regulate supervisory appraisers. Additionally, the board has authority to adopt rules in order to implement its authorized duties and responsibilities.<sup>146</sup> The FREAB generally meets six times a year.<sup>147</sup>

The FREAB consists of nine members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Four members must be appraisers with at least five years of experience, one member must represent the appraisal management industry, one member must represent an organization that uses appraisals, and three members must represent the general public and have no connection to the practice of real estate appraisal.<sup>148</sup>

### [Division of Certified Public Accounting](#)

The Division of Certified Public Accounting (Division of CPA) within DBPR is responsible for the regulation of certified public accountants (CPAs) and accounting firms. The Division of CPA processes applications to sit for the CPA exam, original Florida licensure applications, licensure by endorsement applications, reactivation of a delinquent or inactive CPA license, temporary permit applications, accountancy firm licensure, and continuing education reporting forms. The Division of CPA also provides administrative support to the [Board of Accountancy](#).<sup>149</sup>

The offices for the Division of CPA are located in Gainesville.<sup>150</sup>

The Board of Accountancy is responsible for licensing and regulating CPAs. The board meets 10 times a year to consider applications, review disciplinary cases, and conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board also engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.

The board consists of nine members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Seven of the members must be licensed CPAs with at least five years of experience and two must be laypersons. At least one member must be over 60 years old.<sup>151</sup>

In order to obtain licensure as a CPA, an applicant must:<sup>152</sup>

- have at least 150 semester hours of college education, including a baccalaureate or higher degree conferred by an accredited college or university, with a concentration in accounting and business.
- Have one year of experience.
- Have good moral character.
- Pass an examination.

An applicant is also eligible for licensure by endorsement if the applicant has good moral character and meets one of the following requirements:<sup>153</sup>

- Is not licensed, but has otherwise met the licensing requirements and has passed a licensing examination that is substantially equivalent to the Florida examination;
- Holds a valid license to practice public accounting issued by another state or territory of the United States, if the criteria for issuance of such license are substantially equivalent to a Florida license or is otherwise permitted; or

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<sup>146</sup> S. [475.613, F.S.](#); Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Real Estate Appraisal – Board Information, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/real-estate-appraisal-board/board-information/#1493754459693-55f707f3-f1ea> (last visited April 18, 2025).

<sup>147</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Real Estate Appraisal – Meetings and Workshops, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/real-estate-appraisal-board/meetings-and-workshops/> (last visited April 19, 2025).

<sup>148</sup> S. [475.613, F.S.](#)

<sup>149</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Certified Public Accounting*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/certified-public-accounting/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>150</sup> S. [20.165\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>151</sup> S. [473.303, F.S.](#)

<sup>152</sup> Ss. [473.306](#), and [473.308, F.S.](#)

<sup>153</sup> [473.308, F.S.](#); Rule [61H1-29.003](#), F.A.C



- Holds a valid license to practice public accounting issued by another state or territory of the United States for at least 10 years before the date of application and has passed a licensing examination that is substantially equivalent to the Florida examination.

### Barbers' Board

The Barbers' Board is responsible for licensing and regulating barbers. The board meets regularly, which is generally six times a year, to consider applications for licensure, to review disciplinary cases, and to conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board also engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>154</sup>

The board consists of seven members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Five members must be licensed barbers with at least five years of experience, and two members must be laypersons. No member may be connected with the manufacture, rental, or wholesale distribution of barber equipment and supplies. Members serve for terms of four years.<sup>155</sup>

### Board of Cosmetology

The Board of Cosmetology is responsible for licensing and regulating cosmetology. The board meets approximately four times a year to consider applications for licensure, to review disciplinary cases, and to conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>156</sup>

The board consists of seven members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Five members must be licensed cosmetologists who have practiced cosmetology in Florida for at least five years and two members must be laypersons.<sup>157</sup>

### Barbers and Mobile Cosmetology Salons

Current law requires licensed cosmetologists to only practice in licensed cosmetology salons unless expressly allowed to practice elsewhere. Current law also allows for mobile cosmetology salons, which must meet the following requirements:<sup>158</sup>

- Must comply with all licensure and operating requirements for fixed cosmetology salons.
- Must maintain a permanent business address located in the inspection area of the local department office. The mobile salon's records must be kept at the permanent address.
- Must file a written monthly itinerary with the Board of Cosmetology.
- Must pay a fee, which may not be more than the fee for a fixed cosmetology salon.
- Must comply with all local laws and ordinances regulating business establishments, the applicable Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, and the applicable OSHA requirements.

Licensed barbers are also required to practice only in licensed barbershops unless expressly allowed to practice elsewhere. However, current law does not provide for mobile barbershops.<sup>159</sup>

### Construction Industry Licensing Board

The Construction Industry Licensing Board is responsible for licensing and regulating the construction industry. The board meets regularly, which is generally eleven times a year, to consider applications for licensure, to review disciplinary cases, and to conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in

<sup>154</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Barbers*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/barbers/> (last visited April 3, 2025)

<sup>155</sup> S. [476.054, F.S.](#)

<sup>156</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Cosmetology*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/cosmetology/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>157</sup> S. [477.015, F.S.](#)

<sup>158</sup> SS. [477.025\(10\)](#), and [477.0263, F.S.](#)

<sup>159</sup> S. [476.188, F.S.](#)

rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>160</sup>

The board consists of 18 members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The board must consist of four general contractors, three building or residential contractors (with at least one building contractor and one residential contractor), one sheet metal contractor, one pool contractor, one plumbing contractor, two building officials of a municipality or county, one roofing contractor, one air conditioning contractor, one mechanical contractor, one underground utility and excavation contractor, and two consumer members.<sup>161</sup>

#### [Electrical Contractors' Licensing Board](#)

The Electrical Contractors' Licensing Board is responsible for licensing and regulating electrical contractors. The board meets regularly, which is generally six times a year, to consider applications for licensure, to review disciplinary cases, and to conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>162</sup>

The board consists of 11 members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Seven members must be certified electrical contractors, two must be consumer members, and 2 must be certified alarm system contractors.<sup>163</sup>

#### [Regulatory Council of Community Association Managers](#)

The Regulatory Council of Community Association Managers duties relate to licensure examination, continuing education requirements, continuing education providers, fees and professional practice standards relative to the Community Association Manager profession.<sup>164</sup> The Council holds quarterly meetings and engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>165</sup>

The Council consists of seven members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Five members must be licensed community association managers and two members must be residents of Florida who must not be or ever have been connected with the business of community association management.<sup>166</sup>

#### [Drug Wholesale Distributor Advisory Council](#)

The Drug Wholesale Distributor Advisory Council of the [Division of Drugs, Devices, and Cosmetics \(DDC\)](#) reviews the Florida Drug and Cosmetic Act (Act) and the rules adopted thereunder, provides input to DBPR regarding all proposed rules to administer the Act, makes recommendations to DBPR to improve the protection of prescription drugs and public health, makes recommendations to improve coordination with other states' regulatory agencies and the federal government concerning the wholesale distribution of drugs, and makes recommendations to minimize the impact of regulation of the wholesale distribution industry while ensuring protection of the public health.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Construction Industry*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/construction-industry/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>161</sup> S. 489.107, F.S.

<sup>162</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Electrical Contractors*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/electrical-contractors/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>163</sup> S. 489.507(1), F.S.

<sup>164</sup> A community association manager or community association management firm manages community associations with more than 10 residential units or budgets greater than \$100,000 for compensation. Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Community Association Managers and Firms – Council Information*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/community-association-managers-and-firms/council-information/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>165</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Community Association Managers and Firms*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/community-association-managers-and-firms/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>166</sup> S. 468.4315, F.S.

<sup>167</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Division of Drugs, Devices and Cosmetics – Council Information*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/drugs-devices-and-cosmetics/council-information/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

The Council generally meets three times a year and consists of 12 members. The Council must consist of the Secretary of DBPR (or his or her designee), the Secretary of Health Care Administration (or her or his designee), and 10 DBPR appointees. The DBPR appointees must consist of three employees of different prescription drug wholesale distributors which operate nationally, one employee of a prescription drug wholesale distributor, one employee of a retail pharmacy chain located in Florida, one licensed pharmacist who is a member of the Board of Pharmacy, one licensed physician, one employee of a licensed hospital who is a licensed pharmacist, one employee of a permitted medical gas manufacturer or medical gas wholesale distributor who has been recommended by the Compressed Gas Association,<sup>168</sup> and one employee of a pharmaceutical manufacturer.<sup>169</sup>

#### Drug Wholesale Distributor Designated Representative

Each establishment that is issued a permit as a prescription drug wholesale distributor or an out-of-state prescription drug wholesale distributor must designate in writing to DBPR at least one natural person to serve as the designated representative of the wholesale distributor. Such person must have an active certification as a designated representative from DBPR.<sup>170</sup>

A designated representative:<sup>171</sup>

- Must be actively involved in and aware of the actual daily operation of the wholesale distributor.
- Must be employed full time in a managerial position by the wholesale distributor.
- Must be physically present at the establishment during normal business hours, except for time periods when absent due to illness, family illness or death, scheduled vacation, or other authorized absence.
- May serve as a designated representative for only one wholesale distributor at any one time.

To be certified as a designated representative, a natural person must:<sup>172</sup>

- Submit an application and pay the appropriate fees.
- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Have at least 2 years of verifiable full-time:
  - Work experience in a pharmacy licensed in Florida or another state, where the person's responsibilities included, but were not limited to, recordkeeping for prescription drugs;
  - Managerial experience with a prescription drug wholesale distributor licensed in Florida or in another state;
  - Managerial experience with the United States Armed Forces, where the person's responsibilities included, but were not limited to, recordkeeping, warehousing, distributing, or other logistics services pertaining to prescription drugs;
  - Managerial experience with a state or federal organization responsible for regulating or permitting establishments involved in the distribution of prescription drugs, whether in an administrative or a sworn law enforcement capacity; or
  - Work experience as a drug inspector or investigator with a state or federal organization, whether in an administrative or a sworn law enforcement capacity, where the person's responsibilities related primarily to compliance with state or federal requirements pertaining to the distribution of prescription drugs.
- Pass the required examination.
- Provide DBPR with a personal information statement and fingerprints.

If an entity, which has received a permit from DDC, changes a majority of the ownership or the controlling interest, then it must apply for a new permit from DDC **before** the change of ownership or controlling interest.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> The Compressed Gas Association is an American trade association that develops and promotes safety standards and safe practices for the industrial, medical, and food gases industry. International Society of Beverage Technologists, *Resources*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/landscape-architecture/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>169</sup> S. 499.01211, F.S.

<sup>170</sup> S. 499.012(15), F.S.

<sup>171</sup> *Id.*

<sup>172</sup> *Id.*

<sup>173</sup> S. 499.012(6), F.S.

### [Board of Landscape Architecture](#)

The Board of Landscape Architecture is responsible for licensing and regulating landscape architects. The board generally meets four times a year to consider applications for licensure, review disciplinary cases, and conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>174</sup>

The board consists of seven members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Five members must be registered landscape architects and two members must be laypersons who are not and have never been registered landscape architects or members of any closely related profession.<sup>175</sup>

### [Board of Architecture and Interior Design](#)

The Board of Architecture and Interior Design is responsible for licensing and regulating architects and interior designers. The board generally meets four times a year to consider applications for licensure, review disciplinary cases, and conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>176</sup>

The board consists of eleven members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Five members must be registered architects who have been engaged in the practice of architecture for at least five years, three members must be registered interior designers who have been offering interior design services for at least five years and who are not also registered architects, and three members must be laypersons who are not, and have never been, architects, interior designers, or members of any closely related profession or occupation. At least one member of the board must be 60 years of age or older.<sup>177</sup>

### [Board of Pilot Commissioners](#)

The Board of Pilot Commissioners is responsible for licensing and regulating state pilots and deputy pilots.<sup>178</sup> The board meets approximately four times a year to consider applications for licensure, review disciplinary cases, and conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>179</sup>

The board consists of 10 members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The board consists of five licensed and active state pilots, two members who are actively involved in a professional or business capacity in the maritime industry, one CPA who has at least five years of experience in financial management, and two citizens of Florida. The latter three board members may not be involved in, or have any financial interest in, the piloting profession, the maritime industry, the marine shipping industry, or the commercial passenger cruise industry.<sup>180</sup>

### [Board of Veterinary Medicine](#)

The Board of Veterinary Medicine is responsible for licensing and regulating veterinarians. The board meets approximately four times a year to consider applications for licensure, review disciplinary cases, and conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Cosmetology, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/cosmetology/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>175</sup> S. 481.305, F.S.

<sup>176</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Architecture and Interior Design*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/architecture-and-interior-design/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>177</sup> S. 481.205(1), F.S.

<sup>178</sup> State and deputy pilots navigate vessels within channels, waters, harbors, and ports.

<sup>179</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Harbor Pilots*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/harbor-pilots/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>180</sup> S. 310.011, F.S.

<sup>181</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Veterinary Medicine*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/veterinary-medicine/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

The board consists of seven members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Five members must be licensed veterinarians and two members must be laypersons who have no connection to the veterinary profession.<sup>182</sup>

#### [Board of Professional Geologists](#)

The Board of Professional Geologists is responsible for licensing and regulating the practice of professional geology. The board meets approximately four times a year to consider applications for licensure, review disciplinary cases, and conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.

The board is comprised of seven members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate and one ex officio member. Five members must be professional geologists and two must be laypersons who have no connection to the geology profession. The chief of the Bureau of Geology in the Department of Environmental Protection (or his or her designee) must serve as an ex officio member of the board.<sup>183</sup>

#### [Building Code Administrators and Inspectors Board](#)

The Building Code Administrators and Inspectors Board is responsible for licensing and regulating building code administrators, building code inspectors, and building code plans examiners. The board meets approximately six times a year to consider applications for licensure, review disciplinary cases, and conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>184</sup>

The board is comprised of nine members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The board must consist of one member who is either a licensed architect, engineer, or contractor, two members serving as building code administrators, two members serving as building code inspectors, one member serving as a plan examiner, one member who is a representative of a city or county, and two consumer members who are not, and have never been, members of such related professions. One of the consumer members must be a person with a disability or a representative of an organization which represents persons with disabilities.<sup>185</sup>

#### [Board of Employee Leasing Companies](#)

The Board of Employee Leasing Companies is responsible for licensing and regulating employee leasing companies.<sup>186</sup> The board meets approximately six times a year to consider applications for licensure, review disciplinary cases, and conduct informal hearings relating to licensure and discipline. The board engages in rulemaking to implement the provisions set forth in its statutes and conducts other general business, as necessary.<sup>187</sup>

The board is comprised of seven members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Five members must be engaged in the employee leasing industry and be Florida-licensed, where one of the licensed members is part of an employee leasing company that has an annual gross Florida payroll for its leased employees which is among the smallest 20 percent of licensed employee leasing companies in the state at the time of the member's appointment and each reappointment. The remaining two board members must be Florida residents who must not be, or ever have been, connected with the business of employee leasing.<sup>188</sup>

#### [Florida Board of Professional Engineers](#)

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<sup>182</sup> S. [474.204, F.S.](#)

<sup>183</sup> S. [492.103, F.S.](#)

<sup>184</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Building Code Administrators & Inspectors*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/building-code-administrators-and-inspectors/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>185</sup> S. [468.605, F.S.](#)

<sup>186</sup> "Employee leasing" is an arrangement where a leasing company assigns its employees to a client and allocates the direction of and control over the leased employees between the leasing company and the client. S. [468.520\(4\), F.S.](#)

<sup>187</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Employee Leasing Companies*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/employee-leasing-companies/> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>188</sup> S. [468.521, F.S.](#)



The practice of engineering is regulated by the Florida Board of Professional Engineers (FBPE) under the DBPR. FBPE is responsible for reviewing applications, administering exams, licensing qualified applicants, and regulating and enforcing the proper practice of engineering in the state. The administrative, investigative, and prosecutorial services for FBPE are administered by the Florida Engineers Management Corporation (FEMC). FEMC is a non-profit, single purpose corporation that operates through a contract with DBPR.<sup>189</sup>

Under current law, FBPE is required to certify as qualified for a license by endorsement an applicant who:

- Qualifies to take the fundamentals examination and the principles and practice examination under state law;
- Has passed a United States national, regional, state, or territorial licensing examination that is substantially equivalent to the fundamentals examination and principles and practice examination under state law and has satisfied certain experience requirements; or
- Holds a valid license to practice engineering issued by another state or territory of the United States, if the criteria for issuance of the license were substantially the same as the licensure criteria that existed in Florida at the time the license was issued.

FBPE must deem that an applicant who seeks licensure by endorsement has passed an examination substantially equivalent to the fundamentals examination when such applicant has held a valid professional engineer's license in another state for 10 years. FBPE must deem that an applicant who seeks licensure by endorsement has passed an examination substantially equivalent to the fundamentals examination and the principles and practices examination when such applicant has held a valid professional engineer's license in another state for 15 years.<sup>190</sup>

FBPE meets six times a year and consists of 11 members who are appointed by the Governor for terms of four years each. Nine members must be licensed engineers and two must be laypersons who are not and have never been engineers or members of any closely related profession or occupation. A member of the board who is a licensed engineer must be selected and appointed based on his or her qualifications to provide expertise and experience to the board at all times in civil engineering, structural engineering, electrical or electronic engineering, mechanical engineering, or engineering education.<sup>191</sup>

The board is made up of 11 members appointed by the Governor. Nine members must be licensed engineers and two members must be laypersons. Members are appointed to four-year terms. The board generally meets every month.<sup>192</sup>

#### [Licensure by Endorsement for Engineers and Architects](#)

Current law allows persons licensed as engineers or architects in other states or U.S. territories to receive a licensure by endorsement if the person meets one of the following:<sup>193</sup>

- Holds a valid license to practice engineering or architecture issued by another state or territory of the United States.
  - The criteria for issuance of the license in the other state or territory must be substantially the same as the licensure criteria that existed in Florida at the time the license was issued.
- Qualifies for and passes the licensure exam to be an engineer or architect and meets the experience requirement to be an engineer or architect.
- Holds a valid certificate issued by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, and holds a valid license to practice architecture issued by another state or jurisdiction of the United State (This option only applies to licensure as an architect).

Current law does not provide an option for licensure by endorsement for persons licensed as an engineer or architect in a foreign jurisdiction.

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<sup>189</sup> Ss. [20.165\(4\)\(a\)](#), and [471.038\(3\)](#), F.S.

<sup>190</sup> S. [471.015](#), F.S.

<sup>191</sup> S. [471.007](#), F.S.

<sup>192</sup> S. [471.007](#), F.S.; Florida Board of Professional Engineers, *Agenda, Minutes, & Meetings*, <https://fbpe.org/meetings-info/agendas-minutes-meetings/agenda-and-minutes-2024/#october> (last visited April 7, 2025).

<sup>193</sup> Ss. [471.015\(3\)](#) and [481.213\(3\)](#), F.S.

### [Board of Professional Surveyors and Mappers](#)

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) licenses and regulates professional surveyors and mappers in Florida through the Florida Board of Professional Surveyors and Mappers.

The Florida Board of Professional Surveyors and Mappers encourages the entry of qualified individuals into the profession by approving individuals and businesses applying for licensure as professional surveyors and mappers. In addition, the board protects the public by disciplining licensees who violate professional practice standards.<sup>194</sup>

The board must meet at least once a year and consists of nine members who are appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture and confirmed by the Senate. Seven members must be registered surveyors and mappers who are primarily engaged in the practice of surveying and mapping and two must be laypersons who are not and have never been surveyors and mappers or members of any closely related profession or occupation. Members serve four-year staggered terms.<sup>195</sup>

### [Division of Hotels and Restaurants](#)

The Division of Hotels and Restaurants of the DBPR licenses, inspects and regulates public lodging and food service establishments in Florida. The division also licenses and regulates elevators, escalators and other vertical conveyance devices.<sup>196</sup>

The division is authorized to revoke or suspend licenses, or issue fines, for public lodging or public food service establishments found to be operating in violation of ch. 509, F.S.<sup>197</sup>

### [Fingerprinting for Military Spouse Licensure](#)

Under certain circumstances, DBPR is required to issue professional licenses to applicants who are a spouse or surviving spouse of active duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces. To be eligible for such licensure, the spouse must provide the following to the department:<sup>198</sup>

- Proof that the applicant is or was married to a member of the U.S. Armed Forces serving on active duty.
- Proof that the applicant holds a valid license for the profession issued by another state, the District of Columbia, any possession or territory of the United States, or any foreign jurisdiction.
- Proof that the applicant, where required by the specific practice act, has complied with insurance or bonding requirements.
- A complete set of the applicant's fingerprints to the Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) for a statewide criminal history check.

FDLE must forward the fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a national criminal history check. DBPR must, and the board may, review the results of the criminal history checks, and determine whether the applicant meets the licensure requirements.<sup>199</sup>

The costs of fingerprint processing are borne by the applicant. If the applicant's fingerprints are submitted through an authorized agency or vendor, the agency or vendor shall collect the required processing fees and remit the fees to the Department of Law Enforcement.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> Professional surveyors and mappers make exact measurements and determine property boundaries. They provide data relevant to the shape, contour, gravitation, location, elevation, or dimension of land or land features on or near the earth's surface for engineering, mapmaking, mining, land evaluation, construction and other purposes. Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, *Professional Surveyors and Mappers*, <https://www.fdacs.gov/Business-Services/Surveyors-and-Mappers> (last visited April 8, 2025).

<sup>195</sup> S. 472.007, F.S.

<sup>196</sup> Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, *Division of Hotels and Restaurants*, <https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/hotels-restaurants/> (last visited April 8, 2025).

<sup>197</sup> S. 509.261, F.S.

<sup>198</sup> S. 455.02(3), F.S.

<sup>199</sup> *Id.*

<sup>200</sup> *Id.*

## [Elevator Regulation](#)

The Elevator Safety Act, located in ch. 399, F.S., establishes the minimum standards for elevator personnel in order “to provide for the safety of life and limb and to promote public safety awareness”.<sup>201</sup>

The Elevator Safety Act requires buildings more than three stories high, or buildings in which the vertical distance between the bottom terminal landing and the top terminal landing exceeds 25 feet, to contain at least one passenger elevator that will accommodate an ambulance stretcher 76 inches long and 24 inches wide in the horizontal position.<sup>202</sup>

## [Building Permits](#)

Chapter 553, part IV, F.S., is known as the “Florida Building Codes Act” (Act). The purpose and intent of the Act is to provide a mechanism for the uniform adoption, updating, interpretation, and enforcement of a single, unified state building code. The Florida Building Code must be applied, administered, and enforced uniformly and consistently throughout the state.<sup>203</sup>

It is the intent of the Legislature that local governments have the power to inspect all buildings, structures, and facilities within their jurisdiction in protection of the public’s health, safety, and welfare.<sup>204</sup> Every local government must enforce the Florida Building Code and issue building permits.<sup>205</sup>

A building permit is an official document or certificate issued by the local building official that authorizes performance of a specific activity.<sup>206</sup> It is unlawful for a person, firm, or corporation to construct, erect, alter, repair, secure, or demolish any building without first obtaining a building permit from the local enforcement agency or from such persons as may, by resolution or regulation, be directed to issue such permit.<sup>207</sup>

Local governments may not require an owner of a residence to obtain a permit to paint such residence.<sup>208</sup>

Current law requires local governments to post their building permit applications, including a list of all required attachments, drawings, and documents for each application, on its website. However, other than fire alarm building permit applications, local governments are not required to have uniform building permit applications, and they are free to create their own applications with their own requirements.<sup>209</sup>

Any construction work that requires a building permit also requires plans and inspections to ensure the work complies with the Florida Building Code. The Florida Building Code requires certain building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and gas inspections. Construction work may not be done beyond a certain point until it passes an inspection. Generally speaking, a permit for construction work that passes the required inspections is considered completed or closed.<sup>210</sup>

## **Consumptive Water Use Permitting**

A person must apply for and obtain a consumptive use permit (CUP) from the applicable water management district (WMD) before using surface or groundwater of the state, unless the person is solely using the water for domestic use.<sup>211</sup> To obtain a CUP, an applicant must satisfy three requirements, commonly referred to as the “the three-prong test.” To satisfy the test, an applicant must establish that the proposed use of water:

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<sup>201</sup> S. [399.001, F.S.](#)

<sup>202</sup> S. [399.035\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>203</sup> [553.72\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>204</sup> S. [553.72, F.S.](#)

<sup>205</sup> Ss. [125.01\(1\)\(bb\)](#), [125.56\(1\)](#), and [553.80\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>206</sup> S. [468.603, F.S.](#); S. [202 of the Eighth edition of the Florida Building Code \(Building\)](#).

<sup>207</sup> Ss. [125.56\(4\)\(a\)](#) and [553.79\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>208</sup> Ss. [125.571](#), and [166.0483, F.S.](#)

<sup>209</sup> Ss. [553.79\(1\)](#), and [553.7921, F.S.](#)

<sup>210</sup> [Section 110 of Eighth Edition of the Florida Building Code \(Building\)](#).

<sup>211</sup> S. [373.219, F.S.](#)

- Is for a “reasonable-beneficial use,” meaning the use of water in such quantity as is necessary for economic and efficient utilization for a purpose and in a manner, which is both reasonable and consistent with the public interest;<sup>212</sup>
- Will not interfere with any presently existing legal use of water; and
- Is consistent with the public interest.<sup>213</sup>

## Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) supports and promotes Florida agriculture, protects the environment, safeguards consumers, and ensures the safety and wholesomeness of food.<sup>214</sup> The Division of Licensing (Division) within DACS administers Florida’s concealed weapon licensing program<sup>215</sup> and oversees Florida’s private investigative, private security, and recovery services industries.<sup>216</sup> The Division’s regulatory oversight of those services includes licensing, enforcing compliance standards, and ensuring public protection from unethical business practices and unlicensed activity.<sup>217</sup>

### Private Investigative, Private Security, and Recovery Services Industries

Currently, the Division offers 22 different types of private investigative, private security, and recovery services licenses and four different types of concealed weapon or firearm licenses. As of March 31, 2025, the Division had issued a total of 213,977 private investigative, private security, and recovery services licenses. The following chart provides a breakdown of the total number of each license type.<sup>218</sup>

License Type	License Title	Total
C	Private Investigators	6,884
CC	Private Investigator Interns	1,380
A	Private Investigative Agencies	2,555
AA	Private Investigative Agency Branch Offices	18
MA	Private Investigative Agency Managers	82
M	Private Investigative/Security Agency Managers	438
D	Security Officers	167,488
B	Security Agencies	2,108
BB	Security Agency Branch Offices	178
MB	Security Managers	1,549
AB	Security Agency/Private Investigative Agency Branch Offices	10
DS	Security Officer Schools	483
DI	Security Officer Instructors	1,788
G	Statewide Firearm Licenses	26,790
K	Firearms Instructors	654
E	Recovery Agents	799
EE	Recovery Agent Interns	417
R	Recovery Agencies	293
RR	Recovery Agency Branch Offices	43
MR	Recovery Agency Managers	4
RS	Recovery Agent Schools	8

<sup>212</sup> S. [373.019\(16\), F.S.](#)

<sup>213</sup> S. [373.223, F.S.](#)

<sup>214</sup> Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, *About*, <https://www.fdacs.gov/About-Us> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>215</sup> S. [790.06, F.S.](#)

<sup>216</sup> Ch. [493, F.S.](#)

<sup>217</sup> Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, Government Program Summaries, *Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Licensing*, <https://www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices/Licensing> (last visited April 4, 2025).

<sup>218</sup> The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, *Division of Licensing Statistical Reports*, <https://www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices/Licensing/Statistical-Reports> (last visited April 4, 2025).

RI	Recovery Agent Instructors	8
<b>Total of Private Investigative, Private Security, and Recovery Services Licenses</b>		<b>213,977</b>

In order to receive a license for private investigative, private security, and recovery services industries from DACS, a person must meet the following in addition to any other specific requirements for each license:<sup>219</sup>

- Be at least 18 years old;
- Be one of the following:
  - A United States citizen,
  - A permanent legal resident, or
  - A holder of a work visa from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service;
- Have no disqualifying criminal history;
- Be of good moral character;
- Have no history of:
  - Mental illness,
  - Alcohol abuse, or
  - Substance abuse;
- Submit an application with certain identifying information.

### Private Investigators

A private investigator is any individual who, for consideration, advertises as providing or performs private investigations.<sup>220</sup> Any individual who performs the services of a private investigator must have a private investigator Class “C” license. In order to obtain a license a person must:<sup>221</sup>

- have two years of lawfully gained, verifiable, full-time experience to qualify for the license. This experience can be acquired through a combination of:
  - Private investigative work or related fields of work that provided equivalent experience or training;
  - College coursework related to criminal justice, criminology or law enforcement administration, or successful completion of any law enforcement-related training which may count for one year; or
  - A Class “CC” licensed private investigator intern.
- pay a fee of \$75
- pass an examination.

A private investigator intern is a person interning under a private investigator. Any person who wants to intern with a private investigator must have private investigator intern Class “CC” license. In order to obtain a license a person must:<sup>222</sup>

- Pay a fee of \$60
- Complete 40 hours of professional training pertaining to general investigative techniques.

Any person, firm, company, partnership or corporation that engages in business as a private investigative agency must have a Class “A” license for its main location. A Class “A” license is valid for only one location. In order to obtain a Class “A” license a person must pay a fee of \$450.<sup>223</sup>

A Class “A” license is valid for only one location. Any satellite or additional locations within a private investigative agency must obtain a Class “AA” license. In order to obtain a Class “AA” license a person must:<sup>224</sup>

- Have a Class “A” license for the main location.
- Pay a fee of \$125.

<sup>219</sup> Ss. [493.6105](#) and [493.6106](#), F.S.

<sup>220</sup> S. [493.6101\(17\)](#), F.S.

<sup>221</sup> Ss. [493.6202](#), and [493.6203](#), F.S.

<sup>222</sup> *Id.*

<sup>223</sup> *Id.*

<sup>224</sup> *Id.*



Every location with a Class “A” license or branch location with a Class “AA” license must have a licensed manager. A manager may supervise up to three locations within a 150-mile radius. A private investigator with a Class “C” license may act as a manager; however, any person who wants to be a licensed manager must have a Class “MA” license. In order to obtain such license a person must:

- Have two years of experience in the private investigative work or related fields of work that provided equivalent experience or training;
- Pass an exam; and
- Pay a fee of \$75.

### Security Officers

A security officer is any individual who, for consideration, advertises or performs the following:<sup>225</sup>

- Providing bodyguard protection.
- Guarding property.
- Transporting prisoners.
- Providing armored car services.
- Assisting in prevention of theft.
- Assisting in prevention of the misappropriation or concealment of articles of value or assisting in the return of such articles.

In order to be a security officer, an individual must have security officer Class “D” license from DACS.<sup>226</sup>

Any person, firm, company, partnership or corporation that engages in business as a security agency must have a security agency Class “B” license for its main location. A Class “B” license is valid for only one location. In order to obtain a Class “B” license a person must pay a fee of \$450.<sup>227</sup>

A Class “B” license is valid for only one location. Any satellite or additional locations within a security must obtain a security agency branch office Class “BB” license. In order to obtain a Class “BB” license a person must:<sup>228</sup>

- Have a Class “B” license for a different location.
- Pay a fee of \$125.

Every location with a Class “B” license or branch location with a Class “BB” license must have a licensed manager or a licensed security officer with at least two years of experience. Any person who wants to be a licensed manager must have a manager of a security agency Class “MB” license. In order to obtain such license a person must:<sup>229</sup>

- Have two years of experience in security work or related fields of work that provided equivalent experience or training (College coursework, law enforcement-related training, or managerial experience may count towards one year of experience); and
- Pay a fee of \$75.

### Dual Private Investigator and Security Agency Licenses

If a person, firm, company, partnership or corporation holds both a private investigative agency Class “A” and security agency Class “B” license, each additional or branch office must have a Class “AB” license. In order to obtain a Class “AB” license a person must:<sup>230</sup>

- Have a Class “A” and Class “B” license for the main location.
- Pay a fee of \$125.

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<sup>225</sup> S. [493.6101\(19\), F.S.](#)

<sup>226</sup> S. [493.6301, F.S.](#)

<sup>227</sup> Ss. [493.6301](#), and [493.6302, F.S.](#)

<sup>228</sup> *Id.*

<sup>229</sup> *Id.*

<sup>230</sup> Ss. [493.6201](#), and [493.6202, F.S.](#)

A person who qualifies as manager for a private investigative agency and a security agency may obtain a manager Class “M” license, which allows the person to be a manager for both types of agencies. In order to obtain a Class “M” license a person must:<sup>231</sup>

- Qualify for a private investigator manager Class “MA” license;
- Qualify for a security agency manager Class “MB” license;
- Pass an exam; and
- Pay a fee of \$75.

### Repossession Services

Repossession means the recovery of a motor vehicle, a mobile home, a motorboat, an aircraft, a personal watercraft, an all-terrain vehicle, farm equipment, or industrial equipment, by an individual who is authorized by the legal owner, lienholder, or lessor to recover that which has been sold or leased under a security agreement that contains a repossession clause.<sup>232</sup>

Any individual who performs repossession services must be licensed as a recovery agent and have a recovery agent Class “E” license issued by DACs. In order to obtain a license a person must:<sup>233</sup>

- Have one year of lawfully gained, verifiable, full-time experience to qualify for the license. This experience can be acquired through a combination of:
  - Repossession work; or
  - Completing a repossession internship
- Complete 40 hours of professional training
- Pay a fee of \$75.

A recovery agent intern is a person interning under a licensed recovery agent. Any person who wants to enter the internship must have Class “EE” license issued by DACs. In order to obtain a license a person must:<sup>234</sup>

- Pay a fee of \$60
- Complete 40 hours of professional training pertaining to general investigative techniques.

Any person, firm, company, partnership or corporation that engages in business as a recovery must have a recovery agency main office Class “R” license for their main office. A Class “R” license is valid for only one location. In order to obtain a Class “R” license a person must:<sup>235</sup>

- Pay a fee of \$450.

Any satellite or additional locations within a recovery agency must obtain a recovery agent intern Class “RR” license. In order to obtain a Class “RR” license a person must:<sup>236</sup>

- Have a Class “R” license for the main location.
- Pay a fee of \$125.

Every location with a Class “R” license or branch location with a Class “RR” license must have a licensed manager. However, a licensed recovery agent may also act as a manager. A licensed manager must have a manager of a recovery agency Class “MR” license. In order to obtain such license a person must:<sup>237</sup>

- Have one year of experience as a licensed recovery agent; and
- Pay a fee of \$75.

### Motor Vehicle Repair Advisory Council

The Motor Vehicle Repair Advisory Council advises and assists DACS in carrying out and reviewing the rules relating to the Florida Motor Vehicle Repair Act. The council also advises DACS on matters relating to educational

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<sup>231</sup> Ss. [493.6203](#), and [493.6303, F.S.](#)

<sup>232</sup> S. [493.6101\(22\), F.S.](#)

<sup>233</sup> Ss. [493.6402](#), and [493.6403, F.S.](#)

<sup>234</sup> *Id.*

<sup>235</sup> *Id.*

<sup>236</sup> *Id.*

<sup>237</sup> *Id.*

grants, advancements in industry standards and practices, and other issues that require technical expertise and consultation or that promise better consumer protection in the motor vehicle repair industry.<sup>238</sup>

The council is made up of nine members appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture. One person must be a motor vehicle mechanic, two persons must be laymen, and six members from the motor vehicle repair business including one from each of the below categories:<sup>239</sup>

- Independent automotive mechanics shop.
- Franchise or company-owned automotive mechanics shop.
- Automotive collision shop.
- Tire dealer.
- Independent motor vehicle dealer.
- Franchise motor vehicle dealer.

#### [Pest Control Enforcement Advisory Council](#)

The Pest Control Enforcement Advisory Council advises the Commissioner of Agriculture regarding the regulation of pest control practices. The council also advises government agencies with respect to those activities related to their responsibilities regarding pest control. The council shall serve as the statewide forum for the coordination of pest control related activities to eliminate duplication of effort and maximize protection of the public.<sup>240</sup>

The council shall consist of 11 members appointed to 4-year terms by the Commissioner of Agriculture. The 11 members must include the following:<sup>241</sup>

- A representative of DACS.
- A citizen not involved in the conduct of pest control;
- A state university urban entomologist.
- Two pest control operators actively involved in termite control.
- Two pest control operators actively involved in general household pest control.
- Two pest control operators actively involved in structural fumigation.
- Two pest control operators actively involved in lawn and landscape pest control.

#### [Babcock Ranch Advisory Group](#)

The Babcock Ranch Advisory Group assists DACS by providing guidance and advice concerning the management and stewardship of the Babcock Ranch Preserve.<sup>242</sup>

The Advisory Group is composed of nine members appointed to 5-year terms. Members are appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture based on recommendations from the Governor and Cabinet, and the governing boards of Charlotte County and Lee County. The nine members must include:<sup>243</sup>

- One member with experience in sustainable management of forest lands for commodity purposes.
- One member with experience in financial management, budget and program analysis, and small business operations.
- One member with experience in management of game and nongame wildlife and fish populations, including hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities.
- One member with experience in domesticated livestock management, production, and marketing, including range management and livestock business management.
- One member with experience in agriculture operations or forestry management.

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<sup>238</sup> S. [559.9221, F.S.](#)

<sup>239</sup> *Id.*

<sup>240</sup> S. [482.243, F.S.](#)

<sup>241</sup> *Id.*

<sup>242</sup> S. [259.1053\(4\), F.S.](#); The “Babcock Ranch Preserve constitutes a unique land mass that has significant scientific, cultural, historical, recreational, ecological, wildlife, fisheries, and productive values. The property is part of a potential greenway of undeveloped land extending from Lake Okeechobee to the east and Charlotte Harbor to the west. The natural beauty and abundant resources of the ranch provide numerous public recreational opportunities such as hiking, fishing, camping, horseback riding, and hunting. Ss. [259.1052](#), and [259.1053, F.S.](#)

<sup>243</sup> S. [259.1053\(4\), F.S.](#)

- One member with experience in hunting, fishing, nongame species management, or wildlife habitat management, restoration, and conservation.
- One member with experience in public outreach and education.
- One member who is a resident of Lee County, to be designated by the Board of County Commissioners of Lee County.
- One member who is a resident of Charlotte County, to be designated by the Board of County Commissioners of Charlotte County.

#### Agriculture Economic Development Project Review Committee

In 1991, the Legislature created the Agriculture Economic Development Program within DACS to promote and coordinate efficient and beneficial agricultural economic development within agriculturally depressed areas of the state.<sup>244</sup>

The program is administered by the Division of Marketing and Development within DACS. At that time, an Agriculture Economic Development Project Review Committee was created within DACS to facilitate the project selection process and to make recommendations to the Commissioner regarding project prioritization and selection.<sup>245</sup>

The Agricultural Economic Development Project Review Committee includes five members appointed by the commissioner and should include: The commissioner; One representative from the Farm Credit Service; One representative from the Department of Commerce; One representative from the Florida Farm Bureau Federation; One agricultural economist from the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences or from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. The committee reviews each application for assistance that meets the basic program criteria and makes recommendations to the commissioner regarding all aspects of each eligible application, including the acceptance or rejection of each application. It also prioritizes the applications recommended for assistance and forwards all written comments and recommendations to the commissioner, which shall be included in the annual report of the department. If the commissioner does not accept the recommendations or priorities of the review committee, the annual report of the department shall include justification for any or all rejections.<sup>246</sup>

#### Florida Department of Law Enforcement

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) is a state agency created in 1969 to provide investigative, forensic, and criminal justice services in support of Florida's law enforcement community.<sup>247</sup> FDLE operates under the direction of the Florida Cabinet and maintains its headquarters in Tallahassee, with regional operations throughout the state. FDLE's mission is to promote public safety and strengthen domestic security by providing services to local, state, and federal agencies.<sup>248</sup>

FDLE is responsible for processing criminal history background checks and fingerprint submissions for a wide range of professions and regulatory programs, including those involving licensure and employment eligibility.<sup>249</sup> The agency is authorized to exchange fingerprint data with the United States Department of Justice as part of national criminal history checks.<sup>250</sup>

As part of Florida's oversight of the insurance industry, the FDLE provides access to criminal history information to noncriminal justice agencies, such as the Department of Financial Services (DFS), for use in evaluating insurance licensure applications.<sup>251</sup> Individuals applying for licenses—such as insurance agents, adjusters, and other regulated professionals—must submit to fingerprint-based background screenings.<sup>252</sup> Fingerprints must be

<sup>244</sup> Ch. 91-268, Laws of Florida

<sup>245</sup> S. [570.248, F.S.](#)

<sup>246</sup> *Id.*

<sup>247</sup> [s. 943.03, F.S.](#)

<sup>248</sup> FDLE, *Mission Statement*, <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us> (last visited April 1, 2025).

<sup>249</sup> S. [943.053, F.S.](#)

<sup>250</sup> S. [943.054, F.S.](#)

<sup>251</sup> S. [943.053\(3\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>252</sup> S. [626.171\(4\), F.S.](#)

submitted electronically through a LiveScan vendor approved by FDLE.<sup>253</sup> FDLE processes the fingerprints and transmits the results to the appropriate licensing authority, typically DFS, to determine the applicant’s eligibility.<sup>254</sup>

BILL HISTORY				
COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
<a href="#">State Affairs Committee</a>	17 Y, 8 N, As CS	3/13/2025	Williamson	Darden
THE CHANGES ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provided a definition for “new project.”</li><li>• Revised the requirement for counties or municipalities that created a CRA that has outstanding bonds that mature after the dissolution deadline to issue a new finding of necessity to instead issue an amended community redevelopment plan</li></ul>			
<a href="#">Commerce Committee</a>	13 Y, 8 N, As CS	4/22/2025	Hamon	Keating
THE CHANGES ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prohibited expansion of CRA boundaries after July 1, 2025; allowed for new CRA projects and debt financing, provided that project completion or debt maturity occurs on or before the CRA’s termination date; and provided that certain provisions do not apply to CRA’s created by a county in specific circumstances.</li><li>• Adopted the provisions of CS/HB 1461 related to industries and professional activities.</li><li>• Adopted provisions of HB 1427 related to rural community economic development, housing, and infrastructure.</li></ul>			

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**THIS BILL ANALYSIS HAS BEEN UPDATED TO INCORPORATE ALL OF THE CHANGES DESCRIBED ABOVE.**  
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<sup>253</sup> Florida Department of Financial Services, *Fingerprinting Information*, <https://www.myfloridacfo.com/division/agents/licensing/agents-and-adjusters/fingerprinting-information>. (last visited on April 2, 2025).  
<sup>254</sup> *Id.*