

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 712 (HB 581)

2024 Regular Session

Thomas

New law provides that whenever a document required by or provided for in the La. Election Code is required to be witnessed, the witness shall be at least 18 years old. Requires a witness signing an absentee by mail certificate to provide a mailing address.

Existing law provides that during the preparation and verification process for the counting of absentee by mail and early voting ballots before an election or on election day, any candidate or his representative, member of the parish board of elections supervisors, or qualified elector may challenge an absentee by mail or early voting ballot for cause, other than grounds specified in existing law. New law specifies that failure to include a witness's mailing address on an absentee ballot certificate shall not be grounds to challenge an absentee by mail ballot.

Existing law (R.S. 18:1306) prohibits a person, except an immediate family member of the voter, from witnessing more than one certificate of a voter. Existing law (R.S. 18:2) defines immediate family member as the individual's children, the spouses of his children, his brothers and their spouses, his sisters and their spouses, his parents, his spouse, and the parents of his spouse.

New law provides for the specific election offense of knowingly, willfully, or intentionally witnessing more than one certificate of a voter who is not an immediate family member in violation of existing law (R.S. 18:1306).

Existing law provides that a person who violates existing law relative to certain types of election offenses shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or be imprisoned for not more than one year, or both. On a second offense, or any subsequent offense, the penalty shall be a fine of not more than \$2,500 or imprisonment for not more than five years, or both. Violations of new law are subject to the existing law penalties.

Effective July 1, 2025.

(Amends R.S. 18:1315(B); Adds R.S. 18:4 and 1461.7(A)(7))