

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 827

BY REPRESENTATIVE JORDAN

PLUMBERS: Creates the Plumbing Workforce Access Act

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Part II of Chapter 16 of Title 37 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be
3 comprised of R.S. 37:1381 through 37:1391, relative to plumbing workforce
4 development; to create the Louisiana Plumbing Workforce Access Act; to establish
5 an institution-based pathway to plumbing licensure; to provide for curriculum
6 standards; to provide for responsibilities of Louisiana Works and the Louisiana
7 Community and Technical College System; to authorize competency-based
8 assessment; to create an industry rotation program; to provide for employer
9 incentives; to establish a returning citizen pathway; to provide for reciprocity by
10 examination; to provide for rules and regulations; and to provide for related matters.

11 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

12 Section 1. Part II of Chapter 16 of Title 37 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of
13 1950, comprised of R.S. 37:1381 through 37:1391, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

14 PART II. LOUISIANA PLUMBING WORKFORCE ACCESS ACT

15 §1381. Short title

16 This Part shall be known and may be cited as the "Louisiana Plumbing
17 Workforce Access Act".

18 §1382. Legislative findings and purpose

19 A. The legislature finds and declares all of the following:

1 (1) A critical shortage of licensed plumbers exists in this state, threatening
2 public health infrastructure, slowing construction and economic development, and
3 increasing costs for families and businesses in this state.

4 (2) The current employer-sponsorship model for plumbing apprenticeship
5 creates systemic inequities, conditions access to a public credential upon private
6 relationships and disproportionately excludes residents of low-income communities,
7 rural areas, and communities of color.

8 (3) This state's community colleges and vocational-technical schools are
9 well-positioned to provide structured, standardized training that maintains the rigor
10 of plumbing licensure while expanding access to the pathway.

11 (4) This state incarcerates its citizens at one of the highest rates in the nation,
12 and providing returning citizens with viable, licensed trade pathways reduces
13 recidivism and strengthens the workforce.

14 (5) Maintaining rigorous licensing standards while expanding access to the
15 licensing pathway serves the dual public interest of protecting public health and
16 promoting economic mobility.

17 B. The purpose of this Part is to establish an institution-based pathway to
18 plumbing licensure that eliminates the barrier of employer sponsorship, maintains
19 existing examination and competency standards, and expands the licensed plumbing
20 workforce in this state.

21 §1383. Definitions

22 As used in this Part, the following terms have the following meanings:

23 (1) "Approved institution" means a community college, vocational-technical
24 school, or correctional facility training program that has received board approval to
25 offer the Institutional Plumbing Pathway program pursuant to this Part.

26 (2) "Board" means the State Plumbing Board established in R.S. 37:1361 et
27 seq.

1 (3) "Competency checkpoint" means a standardized practical skills
2 assessment administered or certified by the board at defined stages of the
3 institutional pathway.

4 (4) "Industry rotation" means a structured period of supervised hands-on
5 work experience completed by an Institutional Plumbing Pathway student at a
6 participating licensed plumbing contractor's worksite.

7 (5) "Institutional Plumbing Pathway student" means a person enrolled in an
8 approved institution's program established pursuant to this Part.

9 (6) "LCTCS" means the Louisiana Community and Technical College
10 System.

11 (7) "Participating employer" means a licensed plumbing contractor that has
12 registered with the Board to accept Institutional Plumbing Pathway students for
13 industry rotation as provided in this Part.

14 (8) "Returning citizen" means a person who has been released from a state
15 or federal correctional facility within the preceding five years.

16 §1384. Institutional Plumbing Pathway established

17 A. The board, in coordination with LCTCS, shall establish the Institutional
18 Plumbing Pathway as an alternative route to qualify for the journeyman plumber
19 examination. The Institutional Plumbing Pathway consists of three components:

20 (1) Classroom and laboratory instruction at an approved institution as
21 provided in R.S. 37:1385.

22 (2) Competency checkpoints as provided in R.S. 37:1386.

23 (3) Industry rotation as provided in R.S. 37:1387.

24 B. Completion of the Institutional Plumbing Pathway satisfies the experience
25 and training requirements for application to sit for the journeyman plumber
26 examination in lieu of the employer-sponsored apprenticeship requirements provided
27 in R.S. 37:1367.

1 C. All other requirements for journeyman licensure, including passage of the
2 journeyman plumber examination administered by the board, remain in full force and
3 effect. Nothing in this Part shall be construed to alter examination content, passing
4 standards, or the board's authority over licensure decisions.

5 D. A person who completes the Institutional Plumbing Pathway is eligible
6 to apply for any license classification established in accordance with this Chapter or
7 administered by the board or the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors,
8 including any license classifications established by law or rule on or after the
9 effective date of this Part, if the applicant meets all applicable requirements. The
10 board and the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors shall determine
11 eligibility, scope of work, and appropriate level of licensure based on demonstrated
12 competency, training, and experience.

13 E. Nothing in this Section shall be construed to waive or reduce any
14 examination, competency, supervision, or public safety requirements established by
15 either board.

16 §1385. Curriculum and laboratory standards

17 A. The board shall promulgate rules establishing minimum curriculum
18 standards for approved institutions. Such standards shall include, at a minimum, all
19 of the following:

20 (1) The Louisiana Plumbing Code, including all applicable state amendments
21 to the International Plumbing Code.

22 (2) Pipe systems, materials, and installation techniques for residential,
23 commercial, and industrial applications.

24 (3) Blueprint reading and plumbing system design.

25 (4) Workplace safety, including Occupational Safety and Health
26 Administration standards applicable to plumbing work.

27 (5) Applied mathematics for the trades.

1 (6) Water supply, drainage, waste, and venting systems.

2 (7) Medical gas systems and specialty installations, at the board's discretion.

3 B. An approved institution shall maintain laboratory facilities sufficient to
4 allow students to develop hands-on competency in pipe fitting, fixture installation,
5 and system assembly under the supervision of a licensed master plumber or licensed
6 journeyman plumber employed by the institution.

7 C. An institution seeking approval shall submit its proposed curriculum to
8 the board for review. The board shall approve, conditionally approve, or deny the
9 application within ninety days of receipt and shall provide written findings
10 supporting its decision.

11 D. Approved institutions shall be subject to periodic review by the board no
12 less frequently than every three years. The board may revoke or suspend approval
13 for material deficiencies in curriculum, facilities, or instructional quality.

14 §1386. Competency checkpoints

15 A. The board shall establish a series of not fewer than three competency
16 checkpoints to be completed by Institutional Plumbing Pathway students at defined
17 stages of the program. Competency checkpoints shall assess practical skills in
18 accordance with standards promulgated by the board.

19 B. Competency checkpoints shall be administered by board-certified
20 assessors and shall be independent of the approved institution. No approved
21 institution employee shall serve as the sole assessor for that institution's own
22 students.

23 C. A student who fails a competency checkpoint may remediate and retake
24 the assessment in accordance with rules promulgated by the board. An approved
25 institution shall provide remediation support for a student who does not pass.

26 D. Successful completion of all required competency checkpoints shall be
27 documented by the board and constitutes official verification of the student's

1 practical competency for purposes of qualification to sit for the journeyman plumber
2 examination.

3 §1387. Industry rotation program

4 A. As a component of the Institutional Plumbing Pathway, a student shall
5 complete a minimum of two thousand hours of industry rotation across at least three
6 participating employers, with no single employer providing more than one thousand
7 of the required rotation hours.

8 B. Industry rotation shall expose the student to a range of plumbing
9 applications. An approved institution shall endeavor to ensure that each student
10 completes rotation hours in at least two of the following categories:

11 (1) Residential new construction.

12 (2) Residential service and repair.

13 (3) Commercial construction.

14 (4) Industrial or institutional applications.

15 C. A participating employer shall do all of the following:

16 (1) Register with the board and maintain a current registration in good
17 standing.

18 (2) Assign a licensed journeyman or master plumber to directly supervise
19 each institutional pathway student at all times during industry rotation.

20 (3) Submit quarterly hour verification reports to the board in a form
21 prescribed by the board.

22 (4) Certify that the student's work during rotation meets applicable safety
23 and workmanship standards.

24 D. Rotation hours are portable. If a student's rotation with one participating
25 employer is interrupted for any reason, documented hours shall be credited toward
26 the student's total and shall not be forfeited upon transfer to another participating
27 employer.

1 §1388. Returning citizen pathway

2 A. The board shall authorize approved institutions to include correctional
3 facilities operating under the jurisdiction of the Louisiana Department of Public
4 Safety and Corrections as delivery sites for the pre-apprenticeship and classroom
5 components of the Institutional Plumbing Pathway.

6 B. A person incarcerated in a Louisiana correctional facility who completes
7 a board-approved pre-apprenticeship plumbing program while incarcerated shall
8 receive all of the following:

9 (1) Credit toward the classroom and laboratory instruction component of the
10 Institutional Plumbing Pathway upon release.

11 (2) Automatic registration as an Institutional Plumbing Pathway student
12 upon release, subject to any applicable licensing restrictions imposed by the board
13 related to the nature of prior convictions.

14 (3) Eligibility to complete the industry rotation component through
15 participating employers at no additional registration fee for a period of two years
16 following release.

17 C. The board shall not deny licensure to a returning citizen solely on the
18 basis of a prior conviction unless the conviction is directly and substantially related
19 to the duties and responsibilities of a licensed plumber, as determined by the board
20 in accordance with R.S. 37:2950.

21 D. Louisiana Works and the Reentry Advisory Council shall collaborate with
22 the board to develop outreach, support services, and employer recruitment specific
23 to the returning citizen pathway established by this Section.

24 §1389. Louisiana equivalency examination for out-of-state licensees

25 A. A person who holds a current and valid journeyman or master plumber
26 license in good standing in another state may apply for licensure in this state by
27 equivalency examination, in lieu of completing the Institutional Plumbing Pathway
28 or an employer-sponsored apprenticeship.

1 B. The equivalency examination shall test the applicant's knowledge of all
2 of the following:

3 (1) Amendments to the International Plumbing Code specific to this state.

4 (2) Administrative licensing requirements and board rules applicable to this
5 state.

6 (3) Any specific construction or environmental conditions relevant to
7 plumbing practice in this state.

8 C. An applicant who passes the equivalency examination and satisfies all
9 other board requirements, including applicable background checks and fees, shall be
10 issued a journeyman or master plumber license at the level commensurate with the
11 applicant's out-of-state license.

12 D. The board shall promulgate rules establishing the content, passing score,
13 and administration of the equivalency examination within one hundred eighty days
14 of the effective date of this Part.

15 §1390. Financial assistance

16 A. Louisiana Works, in coordination with LCTCS and the board, shall
17 develop a financial assistance program for Institutional Plumbing Pathway students
18 who demonstrate financial need. The program may include any of the following:

19 (1) Stipends for students during the industry rotation component.

20 (2) Reimbursement of examination fees for students who pass the
21 journeyman or master plumber examination on the first attempt.

22 (3) Low-interest loans for tools, equipment, and program-related expenses.

23 B. A student who receives financial assistance in accordance with this
24 Section and becomes licensed in this state shall commit to working as a licensed
25 plumber in this state for not fewer than two years following licensure as a condition
26 of assistance. Louisiana Works shall promulgate rules governing repayment
27 obligations for a student who does not satisfy this commitment.

1 C. Financial assistance in accordance with this Section shall be funded
2 through appropriations made by the legislature. Louisiana Works shall report
3 annually to the legislature on the number of students assisted, pass rates, and
4 licensure outcomes.

5 §1391. Rulemaking; implementation

6 A. The board shall promulgate all rules necessary to implement this Part in
7 accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950 et seq. Initial rules
8 shall be promulgated within one hundred eighty days of the effective date of this
9 Part.

10 B. The board shall submit an annual report to the legislature, the governor,
11 and the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus not later than February first of each year,
12 beginning in the year following the first full year of program operation, which shall
13 include all of the following:

14 (1) The number of approved institutions and their locations.

15 (2) Enrollment and completion rates, disaggregated by race, gender,
16 geographic region, veteran status, and returning citizen status.

17 (3) Journeyman examination pass rates for Institutional Plumbing Pathway
18 graduates compared to traditional apprentices.

19 (4) The number of participating employers and employer tax credits claimed.

20 (5) Recommendations for program improvements.

21 C. The board may enter into interagency agreements with LCTCS, the
22 Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, Louisiana Works, and the
23 Louisiana Department of Revenue as necessary to implement this Part.

24 Section 2. The Louisiana State Law Institute is hereby authorized and directed to
25 designate R.S. 37:1381 through 1392 as "Part I. General Provisions" of Chapter 16 of Title
26 37 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950 and to change all references within such Part
27 from "Chapter" to "Part".

1 Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
 2 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
 3 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
 4 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
 5 effective on the day following such approval.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 827 Engrossed

2026 Regular Session

Jordan

Abstract: Creates the Plumbing Workforce Access Act, providing an alternative educational pathway to plumbing licensure in partnership with LCTCS.

Proposed law shall be known and may be cited as the "Louisiana Plumbing Workforce Access Act".

Proposed law provides legislative findings and purpose.

Proposed law defines "approved institution", "board", "competency checkpoint", industry rotation", "Institutional Plumbing Pathway student", "LCTCS", "participating employer", and "returning citizen".

Proposed law provides the Institutional Plumbing Pathway as an alternative route to qualify for the journeyman plumber examination and provides components.

Proposed law provides for rulemaking authority with respect to minimum curriculum standards and provides for laboratory standards and periodic review by the State Plumbing Board.

Proposed law provides that a person who completes the Institutional Plumbing Pathway shall be eligible to apply for any license classification established under this Chapter or administered by the State Plumbing Board or the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors, including any license classifications established on or after the effective date of proposed law.

Proposed law provides that the State Plumbing Bd. and the La. State Licensing Bd. for Contractors shall determine eligibility, scope of work, and appropriate level of licensure based on demonstrated competency, training, and experience and that nothing in proposed law shall be construed to waive or reduce any examination, competency, supervision, or public safety requirements established by either board.

Proposed law provides for required competency checkpoints which shall assess practical skills in accordance with standards promulgated by the board.

Proposed law requires a student to complete a minimum of 2,000 hours of industry rotation covering a range of plumbing applications across at least three participating employers, with no single employer providing more than 1,000 of the required rotation hours.

Proposed law provides that a participating employer shall do all of the following:

- (1) Register with the board and maintain a current registration in good standing.
- (2) Assign a licensed journeyman or master plumber to directly supervise each institutional pathway student at all times during industry rotation.
- (3) Submit quarterly hour verification reports to the board in a form prescribed by the board.

- (4) Certify that the student's work during rotation meets applicable safety and workmanship standards.

Proposed law provides for program participation by correctional facilities, and a person incarcerated in a correctional facility in this state who completes a board-approved pre-apprenticeship plumbing program while incarcerated shall receive all of the following:

- (1) Credit toward the classroom and laboratory instruction component of the Institutional Plumbing Pathway upon release.
- (2) Automatic registration as an Institutional Plumbing Pathway student upon release, subject to any applicable licensing restrictions imposed by the board related to the nature of prior convictions.
- (3) Eligibility to complete the industry rotation component through participating employers at no additional registration fee for a period of two years following release.

Proposed law provides that La. Works and the Reentry Advisory Council shall collaborate with the board to develop the correctional program in accordance with proposed law.

Proposed law provides that a person who holds a current and valid journeyman or master plumber license in good standing in another state may apply for licensure in this state by equivalency examination.

Proposed law provides for the content of the equivalency examination.

Proposed law provides that La. Works, in coordination with LCTCS and the board, shall develop a financial assistance program funded through appropriations made by the legislature for Institutional Plumbing Pathway students who demonstrate financial need, and that qualifying students shall commit to working as a licensed plumber in this state for no fewer than two years.

Proposed law provides for rulemaking authority and that initial rules shall be promulgated within 180 days.

Proposed law requires an annual report on program operation to the legislature, the governor, and the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus.

(Adds R.S. 37:1381-1391)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Commerce to the original bill:

1. Make technical changes.
2. Provide that a person who completes the Institutional Plumbing Pathway shall be eligible to apply for any license classification established under present law, or administered by the State Plumbing Board or the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors.
3. Provide that the State Plumbing Board and the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors shall determine eligibility, scope of work, and appropriate level of licensure based on demonstrated competency, training, and experience, and that nothing in proposed law shall be construed to waive or reduce any examination, competency, supervision, or public safety requirements established by either board.