

GREEN SHEET REDIGEST

HB 953

2026 Regular Session

Fontenot

PLUMBERS: Provides relative to plumbing licenses.

DIGEST

Present law creates the State Plumbing Board and provides for its membership, including one mechanical engineer, one plumbing inspector, five master plumbers, one journeyman plumber, one residential plumber limited, and two members of the public.

Proposed law retains present law except removes the residential plumber limited member from the board and adds for two licensed contractor members, appointed from a list of names submitted by the Associated Builders and Contractors of Louisiana and the Louisiana Home Builders Association.

Present law provides that all members, except for the public members, shall be qualified electors of this state and licensed by the board. Further provides that six members shall constitute a quorum.

Proposed law retains present law except removes the requirement for the licensed contractors to be qualified electors and be licensed by the board and increases the number of members to constitute a quorum from six to seven.

Present law requires the board to recognize the system of qualification or registration of apprentices administered by approved apprenticeship programs and nonregistered apprentices employed by an entity.

Proposed law retains present law and includes apprentices enrolled in an approved Louisiana Community and Technical College System training program.

Present law requires the board to assist the Board of Supervisors of Community and Technical Colleges in developing training, program, and course requirements to prepare individuals for residential plumber limited licensure.

Proposed law retains present law except requires the board to assist in developing training, program, and course requirements to prepare individuals to meet the qualifications for a journeyman plumber license, instead of licensure for a residential plumber limited.

Proposed law requires the board to assess an annual \$100 fee on plumbing contractor license renewals and dedicates the proceeds to the Louisiana Community and Technical College System for plumbing training programs.

Proposed law provides that monies collected for plumbing training programs are supplemental and shall not replace, displace, or supplant any other funding received by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

Proposed law requires annual disbursement of such funds to the Louisiana Community and Technical College System by October first following the board's annual audit, after deducting an administrative fee retained by the board.

Proposed law provides that on August 1, 2026, a residential plumber limited holding a valid license issued by the board shall become a licensed journeyman plumber.

Present law provides for issuance of residential plumber limited and journeyman plumber licenses. Further, provides that applicants for a residential plumber limited license shall have a current apprentice registration certificate, complete at least 4,000 hours as an unindentured apprentice or at least 3,000 hours as an indentured apprentice under supervision, satisfy educational requirements, pass required examinations, and pay applicable fees.

Proposed law removes references to residential plumber limited license and provides requirements for journeyman plumber licensure, including possession of an apprentice registration certificate and completion of at least 2,000 hours as an indentured apprentice, at least 2,500 hours as an unindentured apprentice, or at least 1,000 hours as an unindentured apprentice combined with completion of an approved Louisiana Community and Technical College System training program. Further requires completion of educational requirements, passage of examinations, and payment of fees.

Present law provides that the board shall issue a master plumber license to any licensed journeyman plumber or other qualified applicant who passes a written master plumber examination, pays applicable fees, and satisfies statutory requirements.

Proposed law retains present law except establishes specific qualification requirements for master plumber licensure, including at least 1,500 verifiable hours as a licensed journeyman plumber, completion of a 24-hour responsible master plumber course, passage of required examinations, submission to a criminal background check, and payment of applicable fees.

Present law provides for penalties and enforcement by the board.

Proposed law authorizes the board, subject to rulemaking, to assess administrative fines of \$500 to \$5,000 per violation, requires notice and an opportunity for a hearing pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act, and provides that such fines are independent of consumer complaints and any criminal prosecution.

Present law defines the terms "journeyman plumber", "residential plumber limited", "apprentice plumber", and "apprentice gas fitter".

Proposed law removes the definition of "residential plumber limited" and amends the definition to "apprentice plumber" and "apprentice gas fitter" to and require individuals to be either indentured in a Louisiana Workforce Commission approved apprenticeship program or employed as unindentured apprentices.

Proposed law establishes legislative intent to increase recruitment, particularly among minority students, in the plumbing field. Requires the board, in collaboration with specified entities, to survey current efforts and submit a report by April 12, 2027, to designated legislative committees on the status of licensed plumbers in the state. Further requires the report to include the total number of licensed plumbers as of August 1, 2026, the number of licenses issued through April 1, 2027, including demographic data, and methods to increase minority participation, including recruitment and educational opportunities.

(Amends R.S. 37:1361(B)(intro para), 1361(B)(5), (D), and (E), 1366(C) and (L), 1368(A) and (B)(1), 1374(C), and 1377(B) and (C); adds R.S. 37:1366 (M) and (N), 1374(D), and 1381)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Make technical changes.
2. Define "equivalent license" as a license issued pursuant to proposed law that has all of the following characteristics:
 - (a) Requires successful passage of a standardized examination demonstrating competency in plumbing codes, safety, and installation practices.
 - (b) Requires completion of a minimum number of supervised work hours or experience sufficient to demonstrate practical competency, as established by rule of the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors.
 - (c) Establishes a defined scope of work authorized in accordance with such license.

- (d) Requires compliance with all applicable building codes and permitting requirements.
 - (e) Requires maintenance of insurance policies for workers' compensation and for general liability in the amount of three hundred thousand dollars for each policy.
 - (f) May include supervision or project limitations as established by rule.
3. Remove the provision that the La. State Bd. for Contractors may issue equivalent or similar licenses for residential, apprentice, journeyman, and master plumbers, and add a provision stating that La. State Bd. for Contractors may establish an alternative pathway for licensure of individuals performing plumbing work based on demonstrated competency through examination and practical experience requirements, to be designated a "certified plumbing technician" or similar title.
 4. Provide that for the alternative pathway license that may be created by La. State Bd. for Contractors to be considered an equivalent license, it must require experience sufficient to ensure basic competency and shall be established by rule and that a licensee pursuant to proposed law is required to maintain insurance policies for general liability and workers' compensation in the amounts of \$300,000 each.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Make technical changes.
2. Delete proposed law that would have enacted a concurrent authority to license plumbers shared by the State Plumbing Board and the State Licensing Board for Contractors.
3. Add proposed law that abolishes the State Plumbing Board and transfers all rights, obligations, property, employees, powers, and duties to the State Licensing Board for Contractors.
4. Amend legislative intent relative to licensing of contractors.
5. Define "apprentice plumber license", "journeyman plumber license", "master plumber license", "master plumbing contractor", "plumber", and "residential plumbing contractor".
6. Amend the definitions of "contractor" and "plumbing contractor".
7. Establish the Plumbing Contractors Subcommittee within the State Licensing Board for Contractors and provide for the membership, terms, powers, and duties of the subcommittee.
8. Amend licensing and renewal provisions relative to contractors to include plumbing contractors.
9. Amend major classifications of contractor licenses to include master plumbing.
10. Provide for requirements relative to master plumbing contractor and residential plumbing contractor licenses.
11. Provide for requirements relative to individual apprentice plumber licenses, journeyman plumber licenses, and master plumber licenses.
12. Provide the Plumbing Contractors Subcommittee with rulemaking authority relative to requirements for issuance of plumber's licenses.
13. Amend present law relative to revocation and suspension of contractors' licenses to provide the Plumbing Contractors Subcommittee with powers of license revocation and suspension.

14. Provide for violations by plumbing contractors that may be punished by license revocation or suspension.
15. Amends present law relative to violations and penalties for contractors to provide the Plumbing Contractors Subcommittee with power to assess violations and penalties.
16. Amend present law regarding violations and penalties for violations by contractors to add that provisions also apply to plumbers.
17. Provide for fines and penalties collected by the State Licensing Bd. for Contractors or the Plumbing Contractors Subcommittee for plumbing violations or plumbing contracting violations to be transferred to La. Community and Technical College System for plumbing training programs.
18. Abolish the State Plumbing Bd. and transfer all powers, duties, functions, legal standing, obligations, property, and employees in present law to the State Licensing Bd. for Contractors.
19. Repeal present law relative to licensing requirements and restrictions of plumbers to be enforced by the State Plumbing Bd.
20. Provide that on the effective date of proposed law, all plumbers currently licensed in this state issued by State Plumbing Bd. shall have the equivalent license recognized by the State Licensing Bd. for Contractors.
21. Direct State Plumbing Bd. and the State Licensing Bd. for Contractors to take all necessary actions prior to the effective date of proposed law to implement the provisions of proposed law.
22. Provide for multiple effective dates of proposed law.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and International Affairs to the reengrossed bill

1. Removes provisions of proposed law creating the Plumbing Contractors Subcommittee within the State Licensing Board for Contractors, abolishing the State Plumbing Board of Louisiana, and transferring all powers, duties, property, and obligations of the plumbing board to the contractors board.
2. Increases board members from 11 members to 12 members by replacing a residential plumber limited board member with two licensed contractors and increases the number of members that constitute a quorum from six to seven.
3. Exempts the two licensed contractors from the requirement that members be licensed by the board.
4. Requires the board to support journeyman training programs, imposes a \$100 contractor renewal fee dedicated to plumbing training, establishes requirements for the use and annual disbursement of training funds, and allows residential plumber limited licensees to obtain journeyman plumber licenses on August 1, 2026.
5. Reduces journeyman licensure requirements to 2,000 indentured hours, 2,500 unindentured hours, or 1,000 hours plus approved training, with education, exams, and fees required.
6. Requires 1,500 hours as a journeyman, completion of a 24-hour course, passage of exams, a background check, and payment of fees for master plumber licensure.

7. Authorizes administrative fees for violation of proposed law, and provides for notice and hearing. Provides that administrative fines imposed shall not require the filing of a consumer complaint and shall be independent of criminal prosecution.
8. Removes the definition of "residential limited plumber", and amends the definition of "apprentice plumber" and "apprentice gas fitter".
9. Establishes legislative intent to increase minority recruitment and requires a report on workforce data, license issuance, demographics, and recruitment efforts by April 12, 2027, to the legislature.
10. Makes technical changes.