

**Alabama Board of Court Reporting
§ 34-8B-1 thru § 34-8B-18**

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Section 34-8B-1 Legislative findings.

The Legislature hereby finds and declares that it is the policy of the state to promote the skill, art, and practice of court reporting in order to assure that court reporters possess the necessary skills and qualifications and that a board be established to prescribe the qualifications of court reporters and to issue licenses to persons who demonstrate their ability and fitness for the licenses. This chapter is intended to establish and maintain a standard of competency for individuals engaged in the practice of court reporting and for the protection of the public, in general, and for the litigants whose rights to personal freedom and property are affected by the competency of court reporters. The examination, licensing, and supervision of the conduct and proficiency of court reporters are integrally related

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to the effective, impartial, and prompt operation of the judicial system of the State of Alabama.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §1.)

Section 34-8B-2 Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- (1) ACRA. The Alabama Court Reporters Association.
- (2) BOARD. The Alabama Board of Court Reporting.
- (3) CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER (C.C.R.). Any person licensed pursuant to this chapter to practice verbatim reporting.
- (4) CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER (C.S.R.). A designation of certification given by the Alabama Court Reporters Association for its certified members.
- (5) COURT REPORTER. Any person who is engaged in the practice of court reporting as a profession, including persons who actually report judicial proceedings in courts and persons who make verbatim records.
- (6) COURT REPORTING. The making of a verbatim record by means of manual shorthand, machine shorthand, closed microphone voice dictation silencer, or by other means of personal verbatim reporting of any testimony given under oath before, or for submission to, any court, referee, or court examiner or by any board, commission, or other body, or in any other proceeding where a verbatim record is required. The taking of a deposition is the making of a verbatim record.
- (7) CVR. Certified Verbatim Reporter.
- (8) FISCAL YEAR. October 1 through September 30.
- (9) FUND. The Alabama Board of Court Reporting Fund.
- (10) NCRA. The National Court Reporters Association.
- (11) NVRA. The National Verbatim Reporters Association.
- (12) RPR. Registered Professional Reporter.

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(13) SECRETARY. A person selected by the board to serve as secretary of the board.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §2.)

Section 34-8B-3 License required.

No person, except as otherwise provided by law, shall practice or attempt to practice court reporting in this state or hold himself or herself out as a court reporter unless the person is a licensed court reporter.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §3.)

Section 34-8B-4 Alabama Board of Court Reporting - Creation; composition; meetings; compensation.

(a) There is created the Alabama Board of Court Reporting. The board shall be operative within 60 days of June 1, 2006. ACRA shall provide administrative support to the board until such time as the board employs sufficient employees to implement and administer this chapter.

(b) The board shall consist of seven members as follows:

(1) Four court reporters certified by ABCR, NCRA, NVRA, or by the board, two of whom shall be employed in official capacities and two of whom shall be employed in a freelance setting.

(2) Two members in good standing with the Alabama State Bar Association.

(3) One additional member.

(c) Appointments to the board shall be made as follows:

(1) The Governor shall appoint one official court reporter, one freelance court reporter, and one member of the Alabama State Bar Association. ACRA, NCRA, NVRA, and the Alabama State Bar Association shall respectively submit a list of three names for each appointment to the Governor for consideration.

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(2) The Lieutenant Governor shall appoint one member of the Alabama State Bar Association from a list of three names submitted by the Alabama State Bar Association.

(3) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint one member who is an official court reporter from a list of three names submitted by ACRA.

(4) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint one member who is a freelance court reporter from a list of three names submitted by ACRA.

(5) The Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court shall appoint one member from a list of three names submitted by the Administrative Office of Courts.

(d) All members of the board shall be citizens of the United States and the State of Alabama. The lists of names shall be submitted by the designated organizations on or before June 1, 2006. The initial terms shall begin January 1, 2007, and all appointments shall be made prior to January 1 of every year.

(e) The initial members shall serve the following terms as designated by the Governor:

(1) Three members shall serve for two years.

(2) Two members shall serve for three years.

(3) Two members shall serve for four years.

(f) Subsequent terms of office shall be for four years. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms. In the event of a vacancy, the appointing authority for the position shall fill the vacancy. Each member shall serve until his or her successor is duly appointed and qualified.

(g) The membership of the board shall be inclusive and reflect the racial, gender, geographic, urban/rural and economic diversity of the state. The board shall annually report to the Legislature by the second legislative day of each regular session to what extent the board has complied with the diversity provisions provided for in this subsection.

(h) At its first meeting each calendar year, the board shall elect a chair, vice chair, and secretary from its membership. No member shall be elected to serve more than two consecutive years in the same office.

(i) After the initial appointments have been made, the board shall meet by January 2007, for the purpose of organizing and transacting business. Thereafter, the board shall meet not less than twice annually and as frequently as deemed necessary by the chair or a majority of the members. The board shall meet at such time and place as designated by the board. A quorum shall consist of four members.

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(j) Board members shall receive the same travel expenses and per diem as state employees pursuant to Article 2, commencing with Section 36-7-20, Chapter 7, Title 36. The compensation and expenses shall be paid out of the funds of the board. Reimbursement shall not be made if funds are insufficient.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective April, 2010.

(Act 2006-200, §4.)

Section 34-8B-5 Alabama Board of Court Reporting - Duties.

(a) The board shall have all of the following duties and responsibilities:

(1) Act on matters concerning competency licensure only and the process of granting, suspending, reinstating, and revoking a license.

(2) Establish a procedure for the investigation of complaints against licensed court reporters and for the conduct of hearings in which complaints are heard.

(3) Set a fee schedule for granting licenses and renewals of licenses subject to the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act.

(4) Maintain a current register of licensed court reporters and a current register of temporarily licensed court reporters. Registers shall be matters of public record.

(5) Maintain a complete record of all proceedings of the board.

(6) Submit an annual report detailing the proceedings of the board to the Governor for the previous fiscal year and file a copy of the report with the Secretary of State.

(7) Adopt continuing education requirements no later than October 1, 2007. Requirements shall be implemented no later than January 1, 2008, and shall include all courses approved by the Alabama State Bar for continuing legal education.

(8) Determine the content of and administer examinations to be given to applicants for licensure as certified court reporters and issue numbered licenses to applicants found qualified.

(9) Maintain records of its proceedings and a register of all persons licensed by the board which shall be a public record and open to inspection.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective April 2010.

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(Act 2006-200, §5.)

Section 34-8B-6 Complaints; hearing; penalties; appeal.

(a) All complaints shall be in writing, signed by the person making the complaint, and addressed to the chair of the board. All complaints shall contain the name and address of the person against whom the complaint is brought and a description of the conduct giving rise to the complaint. Complaints shall be submitted within 90 days of such conduct and a copy shall be provided to the licensed court reporter within five business days of receipt by the board. The copy shall be sent by certified mail or by such other means of delivery to ensure that the licensed court reporter charged in the complaint shall receive actual notice. After investigation of the charges, the board shall conduct a hearing at which time it may dismiss the charges, may impose a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or may revoke or suspend the license of the licensee.

(b) The licensee may appeal a decision of the board imposing an administrative fine or revoking or suspending a license by submitting a request to the board for reconsideration within 90 days following the decision of the board. If no resolution is achieved, further appeals shall be submitted to the circuit court in the jurisdiction of the residence of the licensee. Any licensee whose application for licensure or for renewal of licensure was denied, or whose license was revoked, may reapply after 12 months have elapsed. The board may then reissue a license or rescind any disciplinary action if a majority of the members vote in favor of the action.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §6.)

Section 34-8B-7 Promulgation of rules.

The board shall promulgate rules necessary to implement and administer this chapter. The rules shall be adopted pursuant to the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act. The rules shall be published in the standards of professional practice and made available to all licensees.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §7.)

Section 34-8B-8 Violations; penalties.

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After January 1, 2007, any person who undertakes or attempts to undertake the practice of court reporting for remuneration without first having procured a license, or who knowingly presents or files false information with the board for the purpose of obtaining a license or who violates this chapter shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor. A person who is not licensed may not bring or maintain an action to recover fees for court reporting services that he or she performed in violation of this chapter. Whenever it appears to the board that any court reporter has violated this chapter, the board may, in its own name, petition the circuit court of the county in which the violation occurred to enjoin the violation.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §8.)

Section 34-8B-9 Recovery by board of damages; liability of board members.

(a) The board may sue and be sued in its own name to recover actual or compensatory damages, including interest and court costs, sustained as the result of disciplinary action taken against any licensee or any other person who violates this chapter or rules promulgated hereunder.

(b) All members of the board shall be immune from civil liability while acting within the scope of their duties as board members.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective April 2010.

(Act 2006-200, §9.)

Section 34-8B-10 Examinations and testing; unauthorized use of license number.

(a) To be licensed as a court reporter, an applicant must pass the Written Knowledge Examination administered by NCRA and must pass an Alabama skills examination or provide documentation of having passed the NCRA Registered Professional Reporter Examination or NVRA CVR Examination. The board shall examine or establish, or both, examination and testing procedures to enable the board to ascertain the competency of applicants for licensure. Each such skills examination shall be given at least twice each calendar year. Applications for licensure shall be signed and sworn by the applicants and submitted on forms furnished by the board. An applicant who furnishes the board with satisfactory proof of graduation from an accredited high school or its equivalent shall, upon payment of a reasonable fee in an amount determined by

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the board, be examined by the board. All applicants who are found qualified to engage in the practice of court reporting pursuant to this chapter shall be issued a license as a certified court reporter and an identifying number. The license shall be valid until September 30th of the year of its issuance.

(b) No certified court reporter may authorize the use of his or her license number on any transcript not produced through his or her personal effort or supervision, or both. Violation of this subsection may be grounds for license suspension or revocation.

(c) The board shall hold at least two reporter examinations each year and may hold such additional examinations as are necessary. The secretary shall give public notice of the time and place of each examination at least 120 days prior to the date set for the examination. Any person desiring to take the examination shall file his or her application with the board at least 30 days prior to the date of the examination. The preparation, administration, and grading of the examination shall be governed by the rules prescribed by the board, but the board may engage ACRA to conduct the examination under the supervision of the board. Upon determining the results of the examination, the board shall notify each applicant as to whether the applicant has passed the examination. Notification shall be by written notice mailed to the applicant by certified mail to the applicant's address as indicated on the application.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §10.)

Section 34-8B-11 Reciprocity agreements; nonresidential licenses; fees.

(a) The board shall enter into reciprocal agreements with any state, agency, or other entity that licenses, certifies, or registers court reporters (NCRA or NVRA, or both) if the board finds that the state, agency, or other entity has substantially the same or more stringent requirements than the board.

(b) The reciprocity agreement shall provide that the board shall license a person who is currently licensed, certified, or registered in another state or by another agency or other entity if that state, agency, or other entity agrees to license, certify, or register any licensees licensed pursuant to this chapter.

(c) Nonresident court reporters desiring to make a verbatim record of any testimony of a proceeding, the jurisdiction of which is within the courts of Alabama or where appeal to any court of Alabama is allowable by law, shall make annual application for a nonresident license. The applicant shall make application on the same forms as required of other applicants, shall pay a fee in an amount determined by the board, and shall present proof that the applicant is a competent licensed court reporter in another state. The board shall issue a

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nonresident license upon the finding that the applicant is a competent licensed court reporter in another state. The license shall be valid for a period not to exceed one year from the date of issuance. A nonresident court reporter shall reapply for licensure annually. An annual fee in an amount determined by the board shall be required.

(d) The board shall establish the fees appropriate in processing reciprocal licensing.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §11.)

Section 34-8B-12 Licensing fees.

The annual fees for licensure pursuant to this chapter shall be established by the board and shall cover a 12-month period beginning October 1 of each year. All fees collected by the board shall be paid into the State Treasury to the credit of the Board of Court Reporting Fund which is hereby created. Moneys in the fund shall be subject to withdrawal only upon warrant of the state Comptroller to be issued upon certification of the secretary. Any funds remaining in the fund at the end of each fiscal year in excess of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000), shall be available to the board to provide for the education and training of court reporters. At all times the board shall retain a sum not in excess of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000), to meet any emergency which may affect the efficient operation of the board. No funds shall be withdrawn or expended except as budgeted and allocated pursuant to this chapter and only in amounts as stipulated in the general appropriations bill or other appropriations bills.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §12.)

Section 34-8B-13 Renewal of licenses.

Each person licensed pursuant to this chapter shall apply for renewal of his or her license pursuant to dates established by the board. A renewal fee in an amount determined by the board shall be paid and thereupon the board shall issue a numbered license establishing that the holder is entitled to practice court reporting for the period determined by the board. The board shall require specific continuing education as a condition for license renewal. The board may provide for the late renewal of a license which has lapsed and may require the payment

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of a late fee or an examination, or both, prior to issuing a renewal license. Licensees shall notify the board in writing of any change of address within 30 days of the change.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §13.)

Section 34-8B-14 Licensing of current court reporters; certified shorthand reporters.

(a) Any person who is engaged in the practice of court reporting on June 1, 2006, and who provides to the board an affidavit setting forth his or her past education and work experience as a court reporter and an affidavit of a judge for whom he or she has worked as an official court reporter or three licensed attorneys, unrelated by blood or marriage to the person and who have utilized the services of the court reporter, which attests to the court reporter's proficiency in court reporting, upon payment of a fee in an amount determined by the board, shall be licensed to practice as a court reporter.

(b) Any member in good standing of ACRA licensed as a certified shorthand reporter on June 1, 2006, upon payment of the licensure fee in an amount determined by the board, shall be automatically granted a license pursuant to this chapter and thereby may practice as a court reporter.

(c) Members of ACRA who hold the certified shorthand reporter certification and do not apply for certification within one year of June 1, 2006, shall be required to take the certified court reporter examination in order to become a certified court reporter.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §14.)

Section 34-8B-15 Temporary license.

(a) Any person who has engaged in the practice of court reporting in the State of Alabama for less than one year on June 1, 2006, and who provides to the board satisfactory proof of graduation from an accredited high school or its equivalent and the affidavits of three licensed attorneys, unrelated to the person by blood or marriage, who have utilized his or her services, and who attest to the person's proficiency in court reporting, shall, upon application to the board on forms approved by the board and payment of a fee in an amount determined by the

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board; be issued a temporary license to practice as a court reporter. This temporary license shall expire on the 60th day following the date upon which the next board-approved examination for licensure is given. No more than two additional temporary licenses shall be issued to any applicant who fails to pass the scheduled examination for licensure.

(b)Commencing on the effective date of the act adding this subsection, any person who is a graduate of a school of court reporting may receive a temporary license to practice as a court reporter from the board. Application for the temporary graduate license shall be made to the board, on forms approved by the board, and the payment of a fee in an amount determined by the board. The license shall be valid on the date of graduation and shall expire 18 months after issuance.

(c)In the event that a temporary license expires without the temporary licensee having passed the examination for full licensure, court reporting services by the temporary Licensee shall cease and desist immediately upon the expiration of the temporary license, and the board may not be held liable for lost income to the temporary licensee or to the court reporting firm.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective April 2010.

(Act 2006-200, §15.)

Section 34-8B-16 Inactive status.

The board shall establish an inactive status for persons who are not actively engaged in the practice of court reporting.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §16.)

Section 34-8B-17 Disposition of funds; collection of fees.

All moneys collected pursuant to this chapter shall be deposited into the Board of Court Reporting Fund. All expenses incurred by the board in implementing and administering this chapter shall be paid out of the fund provided that the expenses of the board shall not be in excess of the moneys in the fund. The board may charge and collect the following fees which shall be deposited into the fund:

(1) An application fee for any temporary or regular license.

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- (2) An examination fee.
- (3) A renewal fee for any temporary or regular license.
- (4) A reinstatement fee for any application for reinstatement of a temporary or regular license which has been revoked or suspended.
- (5) A fee for the renewal of a license after the due date which shall be increased 20 percent for each month or fraction thereof that payment is delayed, unless the delay is caused by conditions resulting from additional requirements imposed by the board. Notwithstanding the foregoing, delinquency of more than six months shall result in revocation of licensure.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §17.)

Section 34-8B-18 Sunset provision.

The board shall be an enumerated board pursuant to Sections 41-20-1 to 41-20-16, inclusive. The board is subject to the provisions of the Alabama Sunset Law of 1981. The board shall automatically terminate on September 30, 2008, and every four years thereafter, unless a bill is passed that the board be continued, modified, or reestablished.

HISTORY

Effective date: The act which added this chapter is effective July 1, 2006.

(Act 2006-200, §18.)