

18100913D

**HOUSE BILL NO. 78**

Offered January 10, 2018

Prefiled December 6, 2017

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 54.1-201 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 54.1-201.2, relating to the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation; waiver of first-time licensing fees for low-income applicants.*

Patrons—Yancey and Thomas

Referred to Committee on General Laws

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 54.1-201 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 54.1-201.2 as follows:**

**§ 54.1-201. Powers and duties of regulatory boards.**

A. The powers and duties of regulatory boards shall be as follows:

1. To establish the qualifications of applicants for certification or licensure by any such board, provided that all qualifications shall be necessary to ensure either competence or integrity to engage in such profession or occupation.

2. To examine, or cause to be examined, the qualifications of each applicant for certification or licensure within its particular regulatory system, including when necessary the preparation, administration and grading of examinations.

3. To certify or license qualified applicants as practitioners of the particular profession or occupation regulated by such board.

4. To levy and collect fees for certification or licensure and renewal that are sufficient to cover all expenses for the administration and operation of the regulatory board and a proportionate share of the expenses of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation and the Board for Professional and Occupational Regulation, *except as provided in § 54.1-201.2.*

5. To promulgate regulations in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) necessary to assure continued competency, to prevent deceptive or misleading practices by practitioners and to effectively administer the regulatory system administered by the regulatory board. The regulations shall not be in conflict with the purposes and intent of this chapter or of Chapters 1 (§ 54.1-100 et seq.) and 3 (§ 54.1-300 et seq.) of this title.

6. To ensure that inspections are conducted relating to the practice of each practitioner certified or licensed by the regulatory board to ensure that the practitioner is conducting his practice in a competent manner and within the lawful regulations promulgated by the board.

7. To place a regulant on probation or revoke, suspend or fail to renew a certificate or license for just causes as enumerated in regulations of the board. Conditions of probation may include, but not be limited to the successful completion of remedial education or examination.

8. To receive complaints concerning the conduct of any regulant and to take appropriate disciplinary action if warranted.

9. To provide a regulant subject to a disciplinary action with a notice advising the regulant of his right to be heard at an informal fact-finding conference pursuant to § 2.2-4019 of the Administrative Process Act. The notice shall state that if the regulant does not request an informal fact-finding conference within 30 days of receipt of the notice, the board may issue a case decision as defined in § 2.2-4001, with judicial review of the case decision in accordance with § 2.2-4026. If the regulant asserts his right to be heard prior to the board issuing its case decision, the board shall remand the case to an informal fact-finding conference. The notice required by this subdivision shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested or, if agreed to by the parties, electronic means, provided that the board retains sufficient proof of the electronic delivery, which may be an electronic receipt of delivery, a confirmation that the notice was sent by facsimile, or a certificate of service prepared by the sender confirming the electronic delivery.

10. To promulgate canons of ethics under which the professional activities of regulants shall be conducted.

B. A regulant shall furnish, upon the request of a person to whom the regulant is providing or offering to provide service, satisfactory proof that the regulant (i) is duly licensed, certified, or registered under this subtitle and (ii) has obtained any required bond or insurance to engage in his profession or occupation.

C. As used in this section, "regulant" means any person, firm, corporation, association, partnership,

59 joint venture, or any other legal entity required by this subtitle to be licensed, certified, or registered.

60 ***§ 54.1-201.2. Waiver of first-time licensing fees for low-income applicants.***

61 *Notwithstanding any provision of this subtitle to the contrary, any regulatory board within the*  
62 *Department shall waive the initial application fee for any low-income individual applying for any*  
63 *license, certificate, or registration issued under this subtitle.*

64 *For the purposes of this section, "low-income individual" means any individual whose gross annual*  
65 *income is less than \$25,000 per year.*