



Ohio Revised Code

Section 1321.37 Application for short-term loan license; fee; approval procedure; assets; bond.

Effective: December 29, 2023

Legislation: Senate Bill 131 (GA 134), House Bill 33 (GA 135)

(A) Application for an original or renewal license to make short-term loans shall be in writing, under oath, and in the form prescribed by the superintendent of financial institutions, and shall contain the name and address of the applicant, the location where the business of making loans is to be conducted, and any further information as the superintendent requires. At the time of making an application for an original license, the applicant shall pay to the superintendent a nonrefundable investigation fee of two hundred dollars. No investigation fee or any portion thereof shall be refunded after an original license has been issued. The application for an original or renewal license shall be accompanied by an original or renewal license fee, for each business location of one thousand dollars, except that applications for original licenses issued on or after the first day of July for any year shall be accompanied by an original license fee of five hundred dollars, and except that an application for an original or renewal license, for a nonprofit corporation that is incorporated under Chapter 1702. of the Revised Code, shall be accompanied by an original or renewal license fee, for each business location, that is one-half of the fee otherwise required. All fees paid to the superintendent pursuant to this division shall be deposited into the state treasury to the credit of the consumer finance fund.

(B) Upon the filing of an application for an original license and, with respect to an application filed for a renewal license, on a schedule determined by the superintendent by rule adopted pursuant to section 1321.43 of the Revised Code, and the payment of fees in accordance with division (A) of this section, the superintendent shall investigate the facts concerning the applicant and the requirements provided by this division. The superintendent shall request the superintendent of the bureau of criminal identification and investigation, or a vendor approved by the bureau, to conduct a criminal records check based on the applicant's fingerprints in accordance with section 109.572 of the Revised Code. Notwithstanding division (L) of section 121.08 of the Revised Code, the superintendent of financial institutions shall request that criminal record information from the federal bureau of investigation be obtained as part of the criminal records check. The superintendent of financial institutions shall conduct a civil records check. The superintendent shall approve an



application and issue an original or renewal license to the applicant if the superintendent finds all of the following:

- (1) The financial responsibility, experience, and general fitness of the applicant are such as to warrant the belief that the business of making loans will be operated lawfully, honestly, and fairly under sections 1321.35 to 1321.48 of the Revised Code and within the purposes of those sections; that the applicant has fully complied with those sections and any rule or order adopted or issued pursuant to section 1321.43 of the Revised Code; and that the applicant is qualified to engage in the business of making loans under sections 1321.35 to 1321.48 of the Revised Code.
 - (2) The applicant is financially sound and has a net worth of not less than one hundred thousand dollars, or in the case of a nonprofit corporation that is incorporated under Chapter 1702. of the Revised Code, a net worth of not less than fifty thousand dollars. The applicant's net worth shall be computed according to generally accepted accounting principles.
 - (3) The applicant has never had revoked a license to make loans under sections 1321.35 to 1321.48 of the Revised Code, under former sections 1315.35 to 1315.44 of the Revised Code, or to do business under sections 1315.21 to 1315.30 of the Revised Code.
 - (4) Neither the applicant nor any senior officer, or partner of the applicant, has pleaded guilty to or been convicted of a disqualifying offense as determined in accordance with section 9.79 of the Revised Code.
 - (5) Neither the applicant nor any senior officer, or partner of the applicant, has been subject to any adverse judgment for conversion, embezzlement, misappropriation of funds, fraud, misfeasance or malfeasance, or breach of fiduciary duty, or if the applicant or any of those other persons has been subject to such a judgment, the applicant has proven to the superintendent, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the applicant's or other person's activities and employment record since the judgment show that the applicant or other person is honest and truthful and there is no basis in fact for believing that the applicant or other person will be subject to such a judgment again.
- (C) If the superintendent finds that the applicant does not meet the requirements of division (B) of this section, or the superintendent finds that the applicant knowingly or repeatedly contracts with or



employs persons to directly engage in lending activities who have been convicted of a felony crime listed in division (B)(5) of this section, the superintendent shall issue an order denying the application for an original or renewal license and giving the applicant an opportunity for a hearing on the denial in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code. The superintendent shall notify the applicant of the denial, the grounds for the denial, and the applicant's opportunity for a hearing. If the application is denied, the superintendent shall return the annual license fee but shall retain the investigation fee.

(D) No person licensed under sections 1321.35 to 1321.48 of the Revised Code shall conduct business in this state unless the licensee has obtained and maintains in effect at all times a corporate surety bond issued by a bonding company or insurance company authorized to do business in this state. The bond shall be in favor of the superintendent and in the penal sum of at least one hundred thousand dollars, or in the case of a nonprofit corporation that is incorporated under Chapter 1702. of the Revised Code, in the amount of fifty thousand dollars. The term of the bond shall coincide with the term of the license. The licensee shall file a copy of the bond with the superintendent. The bond shall be for the exclusive benefit of any borrower injured by a violation by a licensee or any employee of a licensee, of any provision of sections 1321.35 to 1321.48 of the Revised Code.

(E) Notwithstanding any provision of this section to the contrary, the superintendent shall issue an original license in accordance with Chapter 4796. of the Revised Code to an applicant if either of the following applies:

(1) The applicant holds a license in another state.

(2) The applicant has satisfactory work experience, a government certification, or a private certification as described in that chapter as a short-term lender in a state that does not issue that license.

The Legislative Service Commission presents the text of this section as a composite of the section as amended by multiple acts of the General Assembly. This presentation recognizes the principle stated in R.C. 1.52(B) that amendments are to be harmonized if reasonably capable of simultaneous operation.