



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4749.03 License requirement.

Effective: April 9, 2025

Legislation: House Bill 238 - 135th General Assembly

(A)(1) Any individual, including a partner in a partnership, may be licensed as a private investigator under a class B license, or as a security guard provider under a class C license, or as a private investigator and a security guard provider under a class A license, if the individual meets all of the following requirements:

(a) Has not been adjudicated incompetent for the purpose of holding the license, as provided in section 5122.301 of the Revised Code, without having been restored to legal capacity for that purpose.

(b) Depending upon the class of license for which application is made, for a continuous period of at least two years immediately preceding application for a license, has been engaged in investigatory or security services work for a law enforcement or other public agency engaged in investigatory activities, or for a private investigator or security guard provider, or engaged in the practice of law, or has acquired equivalent experience as determined by rule of the director of public safety.

(c) Demonstrates competency as a private investigator or security guard provider by passing an examination devised for this purpose by the director, except that any individually licensed person who qualifies a corporation for licensure shall not be required to be reexamined if the person qualifies the corporation in the same capacity that the person was individually licensed.

(d) Submits evidence of comprehensive general liability insurance coverage, or other equivalent guarantee approved by the director in such form and in principal amounts satisfactory to the director, but not less than one hundred thousand dollars for each person and three hundred thousand dollars for each occurrence for bodily injury liability, and one hundred thousand dollars for property damage liability.

(e) Pays the requisite examination and license fees.



(2) A corporation may be licensed as a private investigator under a class B license, or as a security guard provider under a class C license, or as a private investigator and a security guard provider under a class A license, if an application for licensure is filed by an officer of the corporation and the officer, another officer, or the qualifying agent of the corporation satisfies the requirements of divisions (A)(1) and (F)(1) of this section. Officers and the statutory agent of a corporation shall be determined in accordance with Chapter 1701. of the Revised Code.

(3) At least one partner in a partnership shall be licensed as a private investigator, or as a security guard provider, or as a private investigator and a security guard provider. Partners in a partnership shall be determined as provided for in Chapter 1775. or 1776. of the Revised Code.

(B) An application for a class A, B, or C license shall be completed in the form the director prescribes. In the case of an individual, the application shall state the applicant's name, birth date, citizenship, current residence, residences for the preceding ten years, current employment, employment for the preceding seven years, experience qualifications, the location of each of the applicant's offices in this state, and any other information that is necessary in order for the director to comply with the requirements of this chapter. In the case of a corporation, the application shall state the name of the officer or qualifying agent filing the application; the state in which the corporation is incorporated and the date of incorporation; the states in which the corporation is authorized to transact business; the name of its qualifying agent; the name of the officer or qualifying agent of the corporation who satisfies the requirements of divisions (A)(1) and (F)(1) of this section and the birth date, citizenship, physical description, current residence, residences for the preceding ten years, current employment, employment for the preceding seven years, and experience qualifications of that officer or qualifying agent; and other information that the director requires. A corporation may specify in its application information relative to one or more individuals who satisfy the requirements of divisions (A)(1) and (F)(1) of this section.

The application described in this division shall be accompanied by both of the following:

(1) References from at least five reputable citizens for the applicant or, in the case of a corporation, for each officer or qualifying agent specified in the application as satisfying the requirements of divisions (A)(1) and (F)(1) of this section, each of whom has known the applicant, officer, or qualifying agent for at least five years preceding the application, and none of whom are connected



with the applicant, officer, or qualifying agent by blood or marriage;

(2) An examination fee of twenty-five dollars for the applicant or, in the case of a corporation, for each officer or qualifying agent specified in the application as satisfying the requirements of divisions (A)(1) and (F)(1) of this section, and a license fee in the amount the director determines, not to exceed two hundred dollars. The license fee shall be refunded if a license is not issued.

(C)(1) Each individual applying for a license and each individual specified by a corporation as an officer or qualifying agent in an application shall submit one complete set of fingerprints directly to the superintendent of the bureau of criminal identification and investigation for the purpose of conducting a criminal records check. The individual shall provide the fingerprints using a method the superintendent prescribes pursuant to division (C)(2) of section 109.572 of the Revised Code and fill out the form the superintendent prescribes pursuant to division (C)(1) of section 109.572 of the Revised Code. An applicant who intends to carry a firearm as defined in section 2923.11 of the Revised Code in the course of business or employment shall so notify the superintendent. This notification is in addition to any other requirement related to carrying a firearm that applies to the applicant. The individual or corporation requesting the criminal records check shall pay the fee the superintendent prescribes.

(2) The superintendent shall conduct the criminal records check as set forth in division (B) of section 109.572 of the Revised Code. If an applicant intends to carry a firearm in the course of business or employment, the superintendent shall make a request to the federal bureau of investigation for any information and review the information the bureau provides pursuant to division (B)(2) of section 109.572 of the Revised Code. The superintendent shall submit all results of the completed investigation to the director of public safety.

(3) If the director determines that the applicant, officer, or qualifying agent meets the requirements of divisions (A)(1)(a), (b), and (d) of this section and that an officer or qualifying agent meets the requirement of division (F)(1) of this section, the director shall notify the applicant, officer, or agent of the time and place for the examination. If the director determines that an applicant does not meet the requirements of divisions (A)(1)(a), (b), and (d) of this section, the director shall notify the applicant that the applicant's application is refused and refund the license fee. If the director determines that none of the individuals specified in the application of a corporation as satisfying the



requirements of divisions (A)(1) and (F)(1) of this section meet the requirements of divisions (A)(1)(a), (b), and (d) and (F)(1) of this section, the director shall notify the corporation that its application is refused and refund the license fee. If the bureau assesses the director a fee for any investigation, the director, in addition to any other fee assessed pursuant to this chapter, may assess the applicant, officer, or qualifying agent, as appropriate, a fee that is equal to the fee assessed by the bureau.

(4)(a) Subject to division (C)(4)(c) of this section, the director shall not adopt, maintain, renew, or enforce any rule, or otherwise preclude in any way, an individual from renewing a license under this chapter due to any past criminal activity or interpretation of moral character. If the director denies an individual a license renewal, the reasons for such denial shall be put in writing.

(b) The director may refuse to issue a license to an applicant because of a conviction of or plea of guilty to an offense if the refusal is in accordance with section 9.79 of the Revised Code.

(c) In considering a renewal of an individual's license, the director shall not consider any conviction or plea of guilty prior to the initial licensing. However, the director may consider a conviction or plea of guilty if it occurred after the individual was initially licensed, or after the most recent license renewal.

(d) The director may grant an individual a conditional license that lasts for one year. After the one-year period has expired, the license is no longer considered conditional, and the individual shall be considered fully licensed.

(D) If upon application, investigation, and examination, the director finds that the applicant or, in the case of a corporation, any officer or qualifying agent specified in the application as satisfying the requirements of divisions (A)(1) and (F)(1) of this section, meets the applicable requirements, the director shall issue the applicant or the corporation a class A, B, or C license. The director also shall issue an identification card to an applicant, but not an officer or qualifying agent of a corporation, who meets the applicable requirements. The license and identification card shall state the licensee's name, the classification of the license, the location of the licensee's principal place of business in this state, and the expiration date of the license, and, in the case of a corporation, it also shall state the name of each officer or qualifying agent who satisfied the requirements of divisions (A)(1) and



(F)(1) of this section.

Licenses issued before the effective date of this amendment expire on the first day of March following the date of initial issue, and on the first day of March every two years thereafter. Licenses issued on or after the effective date of this amendment expire two years after the date of initial issue. Renewals shall be according to the standard renewal procedures contained in Chapter 4745. of the Revised Code, upon payment of a renewal fee the director determines, not to exceed five hundred fifty dollars. No license shall be renewed if the licensee or, in the case of a corporation, each officer or qualifying agent who qualified the corporation for licensure no longer meets the applicable requirements of this section. No license shall be renewed unless the licensee provides evidence of workers' compensation risk coverage and unemployment compensation insurance coverage, other than for clerical employees and excepting sole proprietors who are exempted therefrom, as provided for in Chapters 4123. and 4141. of the Revised Code, respectively, as well as the licensee's state tax identification number. No reexamination shall be required for renewal of a current license.

For purposes of this chapter, a class A, B, or C license issued to a corporation shall be considered as also having licensed the individuals who qualified the corporation for licensure, for as long as they are associated with the corporation.

For purposes of this division, "sole proprietor" means an individual licensed under this chapter who does not employ any other individual.

(E) The director may issue a duplicate copy of a license issued under this section for the purpose of replacement of a lost, spoliated, or destroyed license, upon payment of a fee the director determines, not exceeding twenty-five dollars. Any change in license classification requires new application and application fees.

(F)(1) In order to qualify a corporation for a class A, B, or C license, an officer or qualifying agent may qualify another corporation for similar licensure, provided that the officer or qualifying agent is actively engaged in the business of both corporations.

(2) Each officer or qualifying agent who qualifies a corporation for class A, B, or C licensure shall surrender any personal license of a similar nature that the officer or qualifying agent possesses.



(3) Upon written notification to the director, completion of an application similar to that for original licensure, surrender of the corporation's current license, and payment of a twenty-five-dollar fee, a corporation's class A, B, or C license may be transferred to another corporation.

(4) Upon written notification to the director, completion of an application similar to that for an individual seeking class A, B, or C licensure, payment of a twenty-five-dollar fee, and, if the individual was the only individual that qualified a corporation for licensure, surrender of the corporation's license, any officer or qualifying agent who qualified a corporation for licensure under this chapter may obtain a similar license in the individual's own name without reexamination. A request by an officer or qualifying agent for an individual license shall not affect a corporation's license unless the individual is the only individual that qualified the corporation for licensure or all the other individuals who qualified the corporation for licensure submit such requests.

(G) If a corporation is for any reason no longer associated with an individual who qualified it for licensure under this chapter, an officer of the corporation shall notify the director of that fact by certified mail, return receipt requested, within ten days after the association terminates. If the notification is so given, the individual was the only individual that qualified the corporation for licensure, and the corporation submits the name of another officer or qualifying agent to qualify the corporation for the license within thirty days after the association terminates, the corporation may continue to operate in the business of private investigation, the business of security services, or both businesses in this state under that license for ninety days after the association terminates. If the officer or qualifying agent whose name is submitted satisfies the requirements of divisions (A)(1) and (F)(1) of this section, the director shall issue a new license to the corporation within that ninety-day period. The names of more than one individual may be submitted.