

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 1319

PRINTER NO. 1879

AMOUNT

See Fiscal Impact

FUND

General Fund Restricted Account

DATE INTRODUCED

September 13, 2024

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Farry

DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill 1319 amends the Architects Licensure Law to provide continuing education requirements for architects and certain interior designers.

This legislation provides for the certification of interior designers and defines “interior design services.” The certification for an interior designer is distinct from the license for the practice of architecture. The membership of the Architects Licensure Board (board) is altered to add two architects and one certified interior designer to the board.

Practice and title protection are established for architects licensed within the Commonwealth, and the application process for an architect with a criminal conviction is updated to comply with Act 53 of 2020.

The bill requires architects to comply with continuing education requirements in order for license renewal. An applicant must complete at least 24 hours of continuing education in the subject areas of health, safety and welfare. New licensees are exempted from completing the continuing education requirements during the initial licensure period. The board is permitted to waive continuing education requirements for a licensee who is unable to complete the requirements due to illness, emergency, hardship or active military service. The board may promulgate regulations on continuing education and preapprove continuing education providers and courses.

Individuals applying for an interior design certificate must be of good character or be subject to an assessment for a criminal conviction in accordance with Act 53 of 2020. An applicant must pay a required fee and meet eligibility requirements to take a national certification exam as approved by the board. The board is permitted to adopt the examination and grading procedures of the Council for Interior Design Qualification and to require an applicant to appear for an interview by the board.

The board may issue a certification without examination to any individual who is licensed or certified as an interior designer in another jurisdiction with equivalent qualifications. A certification may be issued to any individual who is licensed or certified in another jurisdiction and has provided services for more than ten years, if the individual passes an examination as determined by the board. An otherwise licensed or registered interior designer may provide services without first obtaining a certificate. The board is permitted to issue an interior designer certificate, without

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

FISCAL NOTE

examination or additional fees, to an applying architect who is able to demonstrate competency in the field of interior design.

The legislation prohibits the provision of interior design services as a certified interior designer if a certification is not renewed biennially or if a certificate is transferred. A certified interior designer is required to complete applicable continuing education requirements for license renewal. An applicant must complete at least 24 hours of continuing education, half of which shall be in the subject areas of health, safety and welfare. New licensees are exempt from completing the requirement in the initial licensure period. The board may waive continuing education requirements due to illness, emergency, hardship or active military service.

A certified interior designer is required to ensure all applicable interior design documents bear the signature, certificate number and date of when each document was signed. Certificate numbers are not required for documents that have been personally supervised by an architect. Uncertified individuals practicing as interior designers are subject to the same penalties as an unlicensed individual practicing as an architect.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.

FISCAL IMPACT:

According to information provided by the Department of State, Senate Bill 1319 will cost between \$130,000 and \$140,000 for changes to the Pennsylvania Licensure System (PALS). In addition, there may be additional staff costs dependent upon the number of new licensees, which will determine the cost of the application.