
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii has an aging
2 electrical infrastructure. According to the American Society of
3 Civil Engineers' 2019 Hawaii Infrastructure Report Card, outages
4 in Hawaii are mainly caused by equipment deterioration, cable
5 faults, automobile accidents, or vegetation. Although
6 significant capital investments have been made to upgrade and
7 strengthen utility poles, lines, and equipment against the
8 increasingly frequent severe storms in recent years, over half
9 of the existing infrastructure is more than forty years old and
10 soon will be approaching the end of its expected life cycle.
11 The security and resilience of Hawaii's critical electrical
12 infrastructure are fundamental to the health and welfare of the
13 State's residents, visitors, and employees. Recent weather
14 events have further highlighted the importance of a resilient
15 electrical grid and the restoration of electricity in a safe and
16 efficient manner.



1 The legislature further finds that the construction and
2 maintenance of overhead high voltage power lines with
3 distribution and transmission voltages require the specialized
4 skills of electrical workers, such as journeymen linemen,
5 foremen, and general foremen, each of whom is a trained and
6 certified journeyman lineman. To address the need for
7 individuals qualified to work with high voltage power lines, the
8 legislature enacted Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, which
9 provided a limited exemption from electrician licensing
10 requirements for individuals employed by electrical contractors
11 who are retained by a public utility within the State to perform
12 high voltage work for the public utility and who are deemed
13 qualified by the public utility. Although the legislature later
14 extended the law for five more years through Act 60, Session
15 Laws of Hawaii 2018 (Act 60), Act 60 sunsets on June 30, 2023.
16 Continued maintenance of the aging electrical infrastructure is
17 needed to keep Hawaii's grid resilient. The legislature also
18 finds that as Hawaii continues to experience a shortage of
19 electricians, splicers, and linemen in the State who are
20 experienced and qualified to work with high voltage, it is



1 necessary to further extend the limited exemption from licensing
2 requirements for qualified electricians.

3 The purpose of this Act is to:

4 (1) Extend until June 30, 2028, the limited exemption from
5 licensing requirements for qualified electricians that
6 was originally enacted by Act 65, Session Laws of
7 Hawaii 2013, and extended pursuant to Act 60, Session
8 Laws of Hawaii 2018; and

9 (2) Make permanent the requirement for the board of
10 electricians and plumbers to submit to the legislature
11 reports relating to high voltage work.

12 SECTION 2. Section 448E-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
13 amended to read as follows:

14 "**§448E-13 Exemption of public utility and community**
15 **antennae television company personnel[-]; annual reports to the**
16 **legislature.** (a) The following persons shall be exempt from
17 this chapter:

18 (1) All employees of a public utility within the State
19 under a franchise or charter granted by the State,
20 which is regulated by the public utilities commission



1 and community antennae television company, while so
2 employed; and

3 (2) Employees of an electrical contractor duly licensed
4 under chapter 444; provided that:

5 (A) [~~Such~~] The contractor is retained by a public
6 utility within the State under a franchise or
7 charter granted by the State, which is regulated
8 by the public utilities commission to perform
9 high voltage [~~(six hundred volts or higher)~~]
10 electrical work for the public utility; [~~and~~]

11 (B) The public utility shall certify to the board
12 that, after a hiring call, no electrician
13 sufficiently qualified and licensed in the State
14 to perform high voltage electrical work applied
15 to timely perform or complete the necessary job
16 or task before the public utility recruited
17 qualified electricians outside the State;

18 [~~(B)~~ ~~Such~~] (C) The employees are deemed qualified by
19 the public utility to perform [~~such~~] the high
20 voltage electrical work; and



1 (D) The exemption is limited to use by a public
2 utility for high voltage electrical workers who
3 perform electric transmission and distribution
4 line construction and maintenance;

5 provided further that in no circumstance shall ~~[such]~~
6 the persons be less qualified than the public
7 utility's own employees ~~[that]~~ who perform ~~[such]~~ high
8 voltage electrical work.

9 (b) Persons retained by a public utility pursuant to
10 ~~[+]~~subsection~~[+]~~ (a)(2) shall be exempt from the provisions of
11 section 444-9.5.

12 (c) No later than twenty days prior to the convening of
13 each regular session, the board shall submit a report to the
14 legislature that includes:

15 (1) A list of any programs in the State offering
16 vocational training for licensed electricians to
17 perform high voltage electrical work;

18 (2) An assessment of the availability of continuing
19 education, training, or both, necessary for licensed
20 electricians to acquire or keep current those skills
21 related to performing high voltage work;



1 (3) The number of licensed electricians in the State who
2 are qualified to perform high voltage electrical work;
3 and

4 (4) Recommendations on opportunities for growth in the
5 high voltage work subspecialty.

6 (d) For purposes of this section, "high voltage" means six
7 hundred volts or higher."

8 SECTION 3. Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, section 4,
9 as amended by Act 60, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, section 2, is
10 amended to read as follows:

11 "SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;
12 provided that on June 30, [~~2023~~] 2028, this Act shall be
13 repealed and section 448E-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes, shall be
14 reenacted in the form in which it read on the day before the
15 effective date of this Act."

16 SECTION 4. Act 60, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, is amended
17 by amending section 3 to read as follows:

18 "SECTION 3. The board of electricians and plumbers shall
19 submit reports to the legislature no later than twenty days
20 prior to the convening of the regular sessions of 2019, 2020,



1 2021, and 2022[, ~~and 2023~~]. The reports shall include but not
2 be limited to the following:

3 (1) Any programs in the State that offer vocational
4 training for licensed electricians to perform high
5 voltage electrical work;

6 (2) Availability of continuing education, training, or
7 both, necessary for licensed electricians to acquire
8 or keep current those skills related to performing
9 high voltage work;

10 (3) The number of licensed electricians in the State
11 qualified to perform high voltage electrical work; and

12 (4) Opportunities for growth in the high voltage work
13 subspecialty."

14 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
15 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

16 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2030;
17 provided that notwithstanding the repeal and reenactment
18 provision in section 4 of Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013,
19 as amended by section 2 of Act 60, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018,
20 and section 3 of this Act, subsections (c) and (d) of section
21 448E-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes, as added by section 2 of this



- 1 Act, shall not be repealed when that section is reenacted on
- 2 June 30, 2028, pursuant to section 4 of Act 65, Session Laws of
- 3 Hawaii 2013, as amended by this Act.



Report Title:

Electrical Contractors; Licensing; Exemptions; High Voltage;
Reports

Description:

Extends until 6/30/2028 Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, as amended by Act 60, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, which provides a limited exemption to the licensing requirements for certain individuals in situations when an electric utility must retain qualified individuals to work with high voltage (six hundred volts or higher) who are not licensed in the State but are otherwise deemed qualified by the electric utility, provided that the public utility certifies to the board of electricians and plumbers that, after a hiring call, no electrician sufficiently qualified and licensed in the State to perform high voltage electrical work applied to timely perform or complete the necessary job or task before the public utility recruited outside the State. Makes permanent the requirement for the board of electricians and plumbers to submit to the legislature annual reports relating to high voltage electrical work. Effective 7/1/2030. (HD2)

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