

CHAPTER 2013-192

Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 247

An act relating to paper reduction; amending s. 97.052, F.S.; providing that the uniform statewide voter registration application be designed to elicit the e-mail address of an applicant and whether the applicant desires to receive sample ballots by e-mail; amending s. 101.20, F.S.; authorizing a supervisor of elections to send a sample ballot to a registered elector by e-mail under certain circumstances; amending s. 125.66, F.S.; requiring the clerk of a board of county commissioners to electronically transmit enacted ordinances, amendments, and emergency ordinances to the Department of State; amending s. 194.034, F.S.; permitting a value adjustment board to electronically provide the taxpayer and property appraiser with notice of the decision of the board; creating s. 192.048, F.S.; allowing certain ad valorem communications to be sent electronically in lieu of regular mail; providing requirements and conditions applicable to such electronic communications; amending s. 903.14, F.S.; permitting the electronic filing of certain affidavits; amending s. 903.26, F.S.; authorizing a clerk of court to mail or electronically transmit a notice relating to a bond forfeiture proceeding; amending s. 903.27, F.S.; permitting a clerk of court to furnish certain required documents and notices relating to bond forfeitures by mail or electronic means; amending s. 903.31, F.S.; providing that a certificate of cancellation of an original bond may be furnished by mail or electronically; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Paragraphs (e) through (t) of subsection (2) of section 97.052, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as paragraphs (f) through (u), respectively, and a new paragraph (e) is added to that section, to read:

97.052 Uniform statewide voter registration application.—

(2) The uniform statewide voter registration application must be designed to elicit the following information from the applicant:

(e) E-mail address and whether the applicant wishes to receive sample ballots by e-mail.

The registration application must be in plain language and designed so that convicted felons whose civil rights have been restored and persons who have been adjudicated mentally incapacitated and have had their voting rights restored are not required to reveal their prior conviction or adjudication.

Section 2. Subsection (2) of section 101.20, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

101.20 Publication of ballot form; sample ballots.—

(2) Upon completion of the list of qualified candidates, a sample ballot shall be published by the supervisor of elections in a newspaper of general circulation in the county, ~~before prior to~~ the day of election. A supervisor may send a sample ballot to each registered elector by e-mail at least 7 days before an election if an e-mail address has been provided and the elector has opted to receive a sample ballot by electronic delivery. If an e-mail address has not been provided, or if the elector has not opted for electronic delivery ~~If the county has an addressograph or equivalent system for mailing to registered electors,~~ a sample ballot may be mailed to each registered elector or to each household in which there is a registered elector, ~~in lieu of publication,~~ at least 7 days ~~before an~~ prior to any election.

Section 3. Paragraph (b) of subsection (2) and subsection (3) of section 125.66, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

125.66 Ordinances; enactment procedure; emergency ordinances; rezoning or change of land use ordinances or resolutions.—

(2)

(b) Certified copies of ordinances or amendments thereto enacted under this regular enactment procedure shall be filed with the Department of State by the clerk of the board of county commissioners within 10 days after enactment by said board and shall take effect upon filing with the Department of State. However, any ordinance may prescribe a later effective date. In lieu of delivery of the certified copies of the enacted ordinances or amendments by first-class mail, the clerk of the board of county commissioners shall transmit the enacted ordinances or amendments to the department by e-mail. The department shall confirm by e-mail the receipt and effective date of the ordinances or amendments with the clerk of the board of county commissioners.

(3) The emergency enactment procedure shall be as follows: The board of county commissioners at any regular or special meeting may enact or amend any ordinance with a waiver of the notice requirements of subsection (2) by a four-fifths vote of the membership of such board, declaring that an emergency exists and that the immediate enactment of said ordinance is necessary. However, no emergency ordinance or resolution shall be enacted which establishes or amends the actual zoning map designation of a parcel or parcels of land or changes the actual list of permitted, conditional, or prohibited uses within a zoning category. Emergency enactment procedures for land use plans adopted pursuant to part II of chapter 163 shall be pursuant to that part. Certified copies of ordinances or amendments thereto enacted under this emergency enactment procedure by a county shall be filed with the Department of State by the clerk of the board of county commissioners as soon after enactment by said board as is practicable. An emergency ordinance enacted under this procedure shall be transmitted by the clerk of the board of county commissioners by e-mail to the Department of

State. It shall be deemed to be filed and shall take effect when a copy has been accepted and confirmed by the department by e-mail deemed to be filed and shall take effect when a copy has been accepted by the postal authorities of the Government of the United States for special delivery by certified mail to the Department of State.

Section 4. Subsection (2) of section 194.034, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

194.034 Hearing procedures; rules.—

(2) In each case, except if the complaint is withdrawn by the petitioner or if the complaint is acknowledged as correct by the property appraiser, the value adjustment board shall render a written decision. All such decisions shall be issued within 20 calendar days after the last day the board is in session under s. 194.032. The decision of the board must contain findings of fact and conclusions of law and must include reasons for upholding or overturning the determination of the property appraiser. If a special magistrate has been appointed, the recommendations of the special magistrate shall be considered by the board. The clerk, upon issuance of a decision, shall, on a form provided by the Department of Revenue, notify each taxpayer and the property appraiser of the decision of the board. This notification shall be by first-class mail or by electronic means if selected by the taxpayer on the originally filed petition ~~each taxpayer and the property appraiser of the decision of the board.~~ If requested by the Department of Revenue, the clerk shall provide to the department a copy of the decision or information relating to the tax impact of the findings and results of the board as described in s. 194.037 in the manner and form requested.

Section 5. Section 192.048, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

192.048 Electronic transmission.—

(1) Subject to subsection (2), the following documents may be transmitted electronically rather than by regular mail:

(a) The notice of proposed property taxes required under s. 200.069.

(b) The tax exemption renewal application required under s. 196.011(6)(a).

(c) The tax exemption renewal application required under s. 196.011(6)(b).

(d) A notification of intent to deny a tax exemption required under s. 196.011(9)(e).

(e) The decision of the value adjustment board required under s. 194.034(2).

(2) Electronic transmission pursuant to this section is authorized only under the following conditions:

(a) The recipient consents in writing to receiving the document electronically.

(b) On the form used to obtain the recipient's written consent, the sender must include a statement in substantially the following form and in a font equal to or greater than the font used for the text requesting the recipient's consent: "Notice: Under Florida law, e-mail addresses are public records. By consenting to communicate with this office electronically, your e-mail address will be released in response to any applicable public records request."

(c) Before sending a document, the sender verifies the recipient's address by sending an electronic transmission to the recipient and receiving an affirmative response from the recipient verifying that the recipient's address is correct.

(d) If a document is returned as undeliverable, the sender must send the document by regular mail, as required by law.

(e) Documents sent pursuant to this section must comply with the same timing and form requirements as if the documents were sent by regular mail.

(f) The sender renews the consent and verification requirements every 5 years.

Section 6. Subsection (1) of section 903.14, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

903.14 Contracts to indemnify sureties.—

(1) A surety shall file with the bond an affidavit stating the amount and source of any security or consideration which the surety or anyone for his or her use has received or been promised for the bond. The affidavit may be filed in person or electronically.

Section 7. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1), paragraph (a) of subsection (2), and subsection (3) of section 903.26, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

903.26 Forfeiture of the bond; when and how directed; discharge; how and when made; effect of payment.—

(1) A bail bond shall not be forfeited unless:

(b) The clerk of court gave the surety at least 72 hours' notice, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, before the time of the required appearance of the defendant. Notice shall not be necessary if the time for appearance is within 72 hours from the time of arrest, or if the time is stated on the bond. Such notice may be mailed or electronically transmitted.

(2)(a) If there is a breach of the bond, the court shall declare the bond and any bonds or money deposited as bail forfeited. The clerk of the court shall mail or electronically transmit a notice to the surety agent and surety company ~~in writing~~ within 5 days ~~after~~ of the forfeiture. A certificate signed by the clerk of the court or the clerk's designee, certifying that the notice required herein was mailed or electronically transmitted on a specified date and accompanied by a copy of the required notice, shall constitute sufficient proof that such mailing or electronic transmission was properly accomplished as indicated therein. If such mailing or electronic transmission was properly accomplished as evidenced by such certificate, the failure of the surety agent, of a company, or of a defendant to receive such ~~mail~~ notice shall not constitute a defense to such forfeiture and shall not be grounds for discharge, remission, reduction, set aside, or continuance of such forfeiture. The forfeiture shall be paid within 60 days of the date the notice was mailed or electronically transmitted.

(3) Sixty days after the forfeiture notice has been mailed or electronically transmitted:

(a) State and county officials having custody of forfeited money shall deposit the money in the fine and forfeiture fund established pursuant to s. 142.01.;

(b) Municipal officials having custody of forfeited money shall deposit the money in a designated municipal fund.;

(c) Officials having custody of bonds as authorized by s. 903.16 shall transmit the bonds to the clerk of the circuit court who shall sell them at market value and disburse the proceeds as provided in paragraphs (a) and (b).

Section 8. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 903.27, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

903.27 Forfeiture to judgment.—

(1) If the forfeiture is not paid or discharged by order of a court of competent jurisdiction within 60 days and the bond is secured other than by money and bonds authorized in s. 903.16, the clerk of the circuit court for the county where the order was made shall enter a judgment against the surety for the amount of the penalty and issue execution. However, in any case in which the bond forfeiture has been discharged by the court of competent jurisdiction conditioned upon the payment by the surety of certain costs or fees as allowed by statute, the amount for which judgment may be entered may not exceed the amount of the unpaid fees or costs upon which the discharge had been conditioned. Judgment for the full amount of the forfeiture shall not be entered if payment of a lesser amount will satisfy the conditions to discharge the forfeiture. Within 10 days, the clerk shall furnish the Department of Financial Services and the Office of Insurance Regulation of the Financial Services Commission with a certified copy of the

judgment docket and shall furnish the surety company at its home office a copy of the judgment, which shall include the power of attorney number of the bond and the name of the executing agent. If the judgment is not paid within 35 days, the clerk shall furnish the Department of Financial Services, the Office of Insurance Regulation, and the sheriff of the county in which the bond was executed, or the official responsible for operation of the county jail, if other than the sheriff, two copies of the judgment and a certificate stating that the judgment remains unsatisfied. When and if the judgment is properly paid or an order to vacate the judgment has been entered by a court of competent jurisdiction, the clerk shall immediately notify the sheriff, or the official responsible for the operation of the county jail, if other than the sheriff, and the Department of Financial Services and the Office of Insurance Regulation, if the department and office had been previously notified of nonpayment, of such payment or order to vacate the judgment. The clerk may furnish documents or give notice as required in this subsection by mail or electronic means. The clerk shall also immediately prepare and record in the public records a satisfaction of the judgment or record the order to vacate judgment. If the defendant is returned to the county of jurisdiction of the court, whenever a motion to set aside the judgment is filed, the operation of this section is tolled until the court makes a disposition of the motion.

(2) A certificate signed by the clerk of the court or her or his designee, certifying that the notice required in subsection (1) was mailed or electronically delivered on a specified date, and accompanied by a copy of the required notice constitutes sufficient proof that such mailing or electronic delivery was properly accomplished as indicated therein. If such mailing or electronic delivery was properly accomplished as evidenced by such certificate, the failure of a company to receive a copy of the judgment as prescribed in subsection (1) does not constitute a defense to the forfeiture and is not a ground for the discharge, remission, reduction, set-aside, or continuance of such forfeiture.

Section 9. Subsection (1) of section 903.31, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

903.31 Canceling the bond.—

(1) Within 10 business days after the conditions of a bond have been satisfied or the forfeiture discharged or remitted, the court shall order the bond canceled and, if the surety has attached a certificate of cancellation to the original bond, the clerk of the court shall mail or electronically furnish an executed certificate of cancellation to the surety without cost. An adjudication of guilt or innocence, an acquittal, or a withholding of an adjudication of guilt shall satisfy the conditions of the bond. The original appearance bond shall expire 36 months after such bond has been posted for the release of the defendant from custody. This subsection does not apply to cases in which a bond has been declared forfeited.

Section 10. This act shall take effect October 1, 2013.

Approved by the Governor June 14, 2013.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 14, 2013.