

Sunset Report
Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board
Montgomery, Alabama

October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2025

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
EXAMINERS of Public Accounts

Rachel Laurie Riddle, *Chief Examiner* | **334-777-0500** | **www.alexaminers.gov**

State of Alabama
Department of
Examiners of Public Accounts
P.O. Box 302251, Montgomery, AL 36130-2251
401 Adams Avenue, Suite 280
Montgomery, Alabama 36104-4338
Telephone (334) 777-0500
FAX (334) 242-1775

Rachel Laurie Riddle
Chief Examiner

October 28, 2026

Representative Margie Wilcox
Chairman, Sunset Committee
Alabama State House
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

Dear Representative Wilcox:

This report was prepared to provide information for use by the Sunset Committee in conducting its review and evaluation of the operations of the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board in accordance with the ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 41-20-9.

The report contains unaudited information obtained from the management, staff, and records of the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board in addition to information obtained from other sources.

Please contact me if you have any questions concerning this report.

Sincerely,

Rachel Laurie Riddle
Chief Examiner

Examiners
Make`ylia Manuel
Rodney Wagstaff

CONTENTS

PROFILE **1**
Purpose/Authority 1
Characteristics 2
Operations 4
Financial 5
Licensure 5
ORGANIZATION **10**
PERSONNEL **10**
PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS **11**
COMPLAINT HANDLING **12**
REGULATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER ENTITIES **13**
FINANCIAL INFORMATION **14**
Schedule of Fees 14
Schedule of Receipts, Disbursements and Balances 15
Operating Receipts vs. Operating Disbursements 16
Summary Schedule of Professional Services Disbursements 17
Professional Services Disbursements Chart 17
SIGNIFICANT ISSUES **18**
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS/SIGNIFICANT ISSUES **18**
MATTERS OF CONCERN FROM QUESTIONNAIRES **18**
STATUS OF PRIOR MATTERS OF CONCERN FROM QUESTIONNAIRES **19**
QUESTIONNAIRES **20**
Board Member Questionnaire 20
Professional Bail Bondsman Questionnaire 22
Professional Surety Bondsman Questionnaire 26
Recovery Agent Questionnaire 28
Professional Bail Bond Company Questionnaire 30
Complainant Questionnaire 39
APPENDICES **41**
Appendix I: Applicable Statutes 42
Appendix II: Legislation Not Yet Codified 49
Appendix III: Professional Services by Vendor 75
Appendix IV: Board Members 77
Appendix V: Board's Response 79

PROFILE

Purpose/Authority

The Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board (the "Board") was created by Act Number 2019-409, Acts of Alabama. The Board licenses and regulates the bail bond industry, investigates complaints and administers disciplinary actions. Additionally, the Board evaluates pre-licensure and continuing education courses for the bail bond industry. The Board operates under the authority of the ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-200 through 15-13-219.

The following Act passed since the last sunset review and has not been codified in the current statutory authority. A copy of the Act can be found in Appendix II of this report.

Act Number 2026-542, Acts of Alabama, relating to bail and surety bonding was passed to amend Sections 15-13-112, 15-13-159, 15-13-160, 15-13-201, 15-13-202, 15-13-203, 15-13-205, 15-13-210, 15-13-211, and 15-13-217, ***Code of Alabama 1975***. This Act requires the Supreme Court of Alabama to require qualifying power of attorney documents issued by a professional surety company to be attached to all bail bond forms; requires a professional surety bondsman to be licensed for at least three years before he or she can own his or her own professional surety company; requires circuit clerks to report the authorized professional bail bond companies within 30 days of the close of annual recertification; provides that a professional bail company may only guarantee payments to the court through an escrow agreement; defines the terms "apprentice" and "employee"; extends the apprentice license expiration to 180 days; requires 19 or 20 year old apprentice bondsmen to complete an instructional course; provides that judges and clerks appointed by the Governor to the Alabama Bail Bonding Board may be presently serving, supernumerary, or retired; provides for the appointment of one serving sheriff and one lay person to be appointed by the Governor to the Alabama Bail Bonding Board; removes the requirement that a chair and vice chair be elected each time a new member is appointed to the Alabama Bail Bonding Board; imposes late fees on renewal applications; provides an additional late fee for license renewal fees paid after the deadline; requires bondsman license applicants to be a resident of this state; provides a process for placing a bondsman license in inactive status and reverting to active status; and makes nonsubstantive, technical revisions to update the existing code language to current style. This Act became effective October 1, 2026.

Characteristics	
Members and Selection	Prior to October 1, 2026, the Board consisted of nine members appointed by the Governor from a list of four nominees for each position provided by the Alabama Bail Bond Association as follows: • Seven professional bondsmen. • One serving circuit, district, or municipal court judge. • One serving circuit or municipal court clerk. Effective October 1, 2026, the Board consists of the following eleven members. Ten are appointed by the Governor from a list of four nominees for each position provided by the Alabama Bail Bond Association as follows: • Seven professional bondsmen, one from each of the seven congressional districts of the state. • One circuit, district, or municipal court judge who is presently serving, supernumerary, or retired. • One circuit or municipal court clerk who is presently serving, supernumerary, or retired. • One lay person. The eleventh member is a serving sheriff, nominated by the Alabama Sheriff's Association and appointed by the Governor from a list of four nominees. ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-203
Term	Members serve four-year terms. There are no term limits. ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-203
Qualifications	Professional Bondsman members of the Board must be an owner of a professional bail bond company and have at least five years of experience. ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-203
Consumer Representation	One lay person to be appointed by the Governor, effective October 1, 2026. Act 2026-542, Acts of Alabama
Racial Representation	No specific statutory requirement. Two minority members currently serving.

Geographical Representation	The seven professional bondsmen are to be appointed from each of the seven congressional districts of the state and no two professional bondsman shall reside in the same congressional district. ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-203(a)(1)
Other Representation	The nominating and appointing authorities shall coordinate their nominations and appointments to assure the membership is inclusive and reflects the racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and economic diversity of the state. ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-203(b)
Compensation	Each member of the Board shall receive travel and per diem compensation for expenses incurred in the conduct of official duties while attending meetings and transacting the business of the Board, in accordance with applicable state travel and per diem paid to state employees. ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-203(d)
Attended Board Member Training	Eight current Board members One former Board member Former Executive Director Current Executive Director Two staff members of former administrative services provider. Board Attorney

Operations	
Administrator	During the Sunset review period the Board contracted with Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. to provide administrative services to include an Executive Director, communication services, complaint handling, office space, equipment, a conference room and other services to facilitate the licensing and regulation of bail bondsmen and bail bond companies. Keith Warren, president of Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. served as Executive Director. The initial contract for one year began on December 19, 2023. The Board, on two occasions, exercised the option for a one-year renewal. The most recent contract was for a 12-month period beginning December 19, 2025, to be paid at a rate of $6,000 per month ($72,000 for the 12-month period). This contract was terminated by the Board. At its June 15, 2026 meeting, the Board voted to enter into an emergency contract with Arete Impact Management, LLC to provide administrative services to the Board. This contract began June 27, 2026 and went through October 27, 2026, paid at a rate of $7,000.00 per month ($28,000.00 for the four-month period). The Board's current administrative services contract is with Arete Impact Management, LLC to provide administrative office space, communication services, an Executive Director, and other related services to facilitate the licensing and regulation of bail bondsmen and bail bond companies. Patrick D. McWhorter, Sr., Managing Director of Arete Impact Management, LLC serves as the Board's Executive Director. The current annual contract is effective from October 8, 2026 through October 7, 2027, for $72,000.00 to be paid in monthly installments of $6,000.00. ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-207(c)
Location	400 Union Street, Suite 340 Montgomery, AL 36104 Office hours: Monday – Friday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Real Property Ownership	The Board does not own real property.
Employees	One part-time retired state employee.

<table>
<tr><td>Legal Counsel</td><td>Tara Hetzel, Assistant Attorney General, employee of the Attorney General's Office, provides legal services to the Board.

Code of Alabama 1975, Section 15-13-207(d)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Subpoena Power</td><td>The Administrative Procedures Act shall govern all matters and procedures respecting the hearing and judicial overview of any contested case.

Code of Alabama 1975, Section 15-13-216</td></tr>
<tr><td>Internet Presence</td><td>www.apbb.alabama.gov

The Board's website provides information for obtaining a license, the Board's statutes and Administrative Rules, a licensee search, complaints, news, educational providers, public records request, and a contact us page. Minutes of the Board's meetings are included on the website.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"><u>Financial</u></td></tr>
<tr><td>Source of Funds</td><td>License fees, fines and penalties.</td></tr>
<tr><td>State Treasury</td><td>Yes, Special Revenue Fund 1749.

Code of Alabama 1975, Section 15-13-206(a)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Required Distributions</td><td>No statutory requirement.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Unused Funds</td><td>The Board retains unused funds at fiscal year-end.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"><u>Licensure</u></td></tr>
<tr><td>Licensees</td><td>As of July 14, 2026:

<table>
<tr><td>Professional Bondsman</td><td>440</td></tr>
<tr><td>Professional Surety Bondsman</td><td>97</td></tr>
<tr><td>Recovery Agents</td><td>43</td></tr>
<tr><td>Apprentice</td><td>36</td></tr>
<tr><td>Business Licenses</td><td>212</td></tr>
<tr><td>Owner of Agency</td><td>150</td></tr>
<tr><td>Total</td><td>978</td></tr>
</table>

Source: Executive Director</td></tr>
</table>

Licensure Qualifications	Each individual applicant shall meet all of the following criteria, demonstrating that he or she: • Is at least 21 years of age. • Has not been declared by any court of competent jurisdiction as incompetent by reason of mental defect or disease unless a court of competent jurisdiction has subsequently declared the applicant competent. • Has not been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude, with the board having the final determination on the interpretation of moral turpitude. • Has not been convicted of a felony. • Has successfully completed pre-license education administered by an educational provider approved by the board. • Has been a resident of this state for at least one year, as demonstrated by the applicant's Alabama driver license or Alabama nondriver identification card. Additional requirements include: • The Board may issue an apprentice license, which expires 180 days after issuance, to any applicant who satisfies all criteria for licensure except passing the examination. The Board requires applicants to sign an affidavit attesting that the applicant has no felony convictions. Before expiration of the license, an apprentice who is 19 or 20 years of age shall complete an eight-hour continuing education instructional course conducted by an educational provider approved by the Board. • A professional surety bondsman shall obtain a license from the Department of Insurance and shall comply with all licensing requirements issued by the Department of Insurance. • All company owners, officers, directors, stockholders and partners are required to apply to the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency for a state and nationwide criminal background records check in accordance with license application. The criminal background records check is a requirement and will be required for any company owners, officers, directors, stockholders, partners, regardless of whether the owners, officers, directors, stockholders, partners are a licensed Alabama professional bail bondsman, professional surety, or recovery agent. ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Sections 15-13-202, 15-13-209, and 15-13-211 Act 2026-542, Acts of Alabama ***Administrative Rules*** 153-X-3-.03 and 153-X-3-.05

Examinations	The pre-licensing course is a 16-hour program (equivalent to 16 hours of classroom instruction) developed under the guidance of the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board. It consists of two main components. The online portion includes 10 comprehensive lessons covering key topics such as: • Bail Terminology. • Evolution of Suretyship throughout History. • Constitutional Right to Bail. • Bail in Alabama Today (including regulatory authority of the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board and the Department of Insurance). • Qualification Criteria and Rule 7 of the Rules of Criminal Procedure. • Standards of Professional Conduct. • Ethics in the Bail Bond Industry. • Disciplinary Actions by the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board. • Fugitive Recovery. • Opening a Bail Bonding Company (Professional Surety and Professional Bail). The in-person portion is classroom instruction (approximately 6 hours) that covers practical application topics including: • Safety and Recovery. • Risk Assessment and Underwriting. • Applied Ethics in Bail Bonding Today. • Court Proceedings and Legal Documents. • Building Professional Relationships. • Professional Development, Continuing Education, and Recertification.

Examinations (continued)

The in-person classes and examinations are held at various locations across Alabama, rotating to different cities to provide statewide access. Recent locations have included Selma, Atmore, Decatur, Anniston, Demopolis, Opelika, Fultondale, Dothan, Mobile, Tuscaloosa, Montgomery, Scottsboro, Troy, Gadsden, Calera, and Foley.

FY 2024			
Testing Month	**# Taken**	**# Pass**	**% Pass**
January 2024[(1)]	21	21	100%
March 2024	20	20	100%
April 2024	10	10	100%
May 2024	12	12	100%
June 2024	15	15	100%
August 2024	36	36	100%
September 2024	16	16	100%
Total	**130**	**130**	**100%**

[(1)]This was the first time the examination was offered.

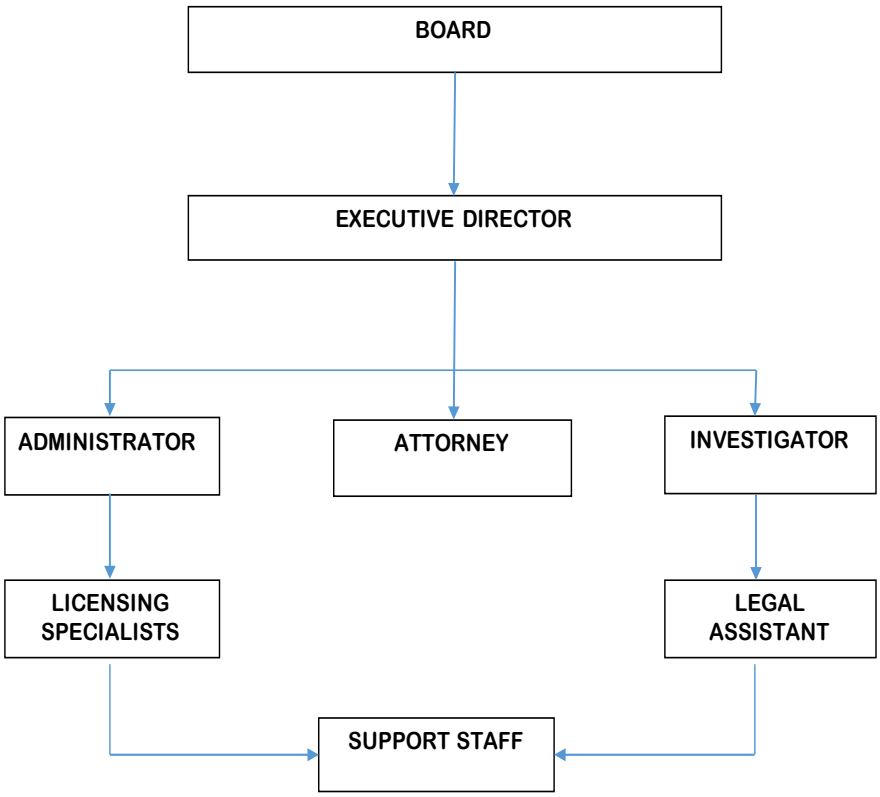
FY 2025			
Testing Month	**# Taken**	**# Pass**	**% Pass**
October 2024	2	2	100%
January 2025	11	10	91%
March 2025	7	7	100%
April 2025	20	20	100%
May 2025	14	14	100%
June 2025	32	32	100%
July 2025	18	18	100%
August 2025	4	4	100%
September 2025	20	20	100%
Total	**128**	**127**	**99%**

FY 2026			
Testing Month	**# Taken**	**# Pass**	**% Pass**
November 2025	15	15	100%
January 2026	25	24	96%
March 2026	11	11	100%
Total	**51**	**50**	**98%**

Source: Executive Director

Reciprocity	No statutory requirement.
Renewals	Licenses expire October 31st of each year. Late renewal within the next 12 months may be had by completing the eight hours of continuing education and paying a renewal license fee of twice the amount otherwise required. All licensees are required to renew online. ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Sections 15-13-212(c) & 15-13-217(g) ***Source:*** Executive Director
Licensee Demographics	Data not collected by the Board. ***Source:*** Executive Director
Continuing Education	• Professional bail bondsman, professional surety bondsman, and recovery agents are required to complete eight hours of continuing education conducted by an educational provider approved by the Board. • A professional bail company owner, who is at least 55 years of age and has five years of experience in the profession, is only required to complete four hours of continuing education. • Professional bail bondsman or professional bail company owner, who on August 1, 2021 was at least 65 years of age and has 15 years of experience in the profession are exempt from the continuing education requirement. ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-217(b) & (i)

ORGANIZATION



Source: Administrator

PERSONNEL

During the Sunset review period the Board contracted with Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. to provide administrative services to include an Executive Director, communication services, complaint handling, office space, equipment, a conference room and other services to facilitate the licensing and regulation of bail bondsmen and bail bond companies. Keith Warren, president of Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. served as Executive Director. The initial contract for one year began on December 19, 2023. The Board, on two occasions, exercised the option for a one-year renewal. The most recent contract was for a 12-month period beginning December 19, 2025, to be paid at a rate of $6,000 per month ($72,000 for the 12-month period). This contract was terminated by the Board.

At its June 15, 2026 meeting, the Board voted to enter into an emergency contract with Arete Impact Management, LLC to provide administrative services to the Board. This contract began June 27, 2026 and went through October 27, 2026, paid at a rate of $7,000.00 per month ($28,000.00 for the four-month period).

The Board's current administrative services contract is with Arete Impact Management, LLC to provide administrative office space, communication services, an Executive Director, and other related services to facilitate the licensing and regulation of bail bondsmen and bail bond companies. Patrick D. McWhorter, Sr., Managing Director of Arete Impact Management, LLC serves as the Board's Executive Director. The current annual contract is effective from October 8, 2026 through October 7, 2027, for $72,000.00 to be paid in monthly installments of $6,000.00.

The Board employs one retired state employee as a licensing agent at the rate of $34.86 per hour.

Legal Counsel

Tara Hetzel, Assistant Attorney General, employee of the Attorney General's Office, provides legal services to the Board.

PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS

Number of Licensees per Employee (FY 2025) – 961

Number of Licensees for the Past Four Fiscal Years

Type of Licenses	Fiscal Year			
	2022	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
Professional Bondsmen	395	410	429	434
Professional Surety Bondsmen	84	77	79	97
Recovery Agents	57	44	52	51
Apprentice		36	35	31
Business License			118	195
Owner of Agency	172	166	157	153
Total	**708**	**733**	**870**	**961**

Source: Administrator

Operating Disbursements per Licensee (FY 2025) – $188.79

Fines/Penalties as a Percentage of Operating Receipts

	FY 2022	**FY 2023**	**FY 2024**	**FY 2025**
Total Receipts	$294,920.53	$139,159.95	$163,745.00	$133,750.00
Fines	$1,750.00	$4,750.00	$3,250.00	$1,125.00
Percentage	**0.59%**	**3.41%**	**1.98%**	**0.84%**

Notification of Board Decisions to Amend Administrative Rules

The Board complied with notification procedures prescribed in the Administrative Procedure Act, which includes publication of proposed rules in the Administrative Monthly, and public hearings on proposed rules. Licensees are not specifically notified of proposed changes.

COMPLAINT HANDLING

The ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-216 and ***Administrative Rules*** 153-X-7; 153-X-8; and 153-X-11 provide the Board's procedures for receipt, documentation, and investigation of complaints received by the Board.

Initial Contact/ Documentation	Any person can file a complaint by mail, email, or fax. The complaint form is available for download on the Board's website. Complaints must be submitted within one hundred eighty (180) days of the alleged occurrence. Complaints must contain the notarized signature of the complainant. The Board notifies the complainant by mail the complaint was received.
Anonymous Complaints Accepted	No
Investigative Process/ Probable Cause Determination	Complaints received are submitted to the Investigative Committee. The Investigative Committee is appointed by the Board Chairman and consists of the Executive Director and two Board members. The Investigative Committee performs a preliminary review of the complaint to determine validity of the complaint. If further investigation is not warranted, the investigation file is closed without any further action. If it is determined further investigation is needed, the Board's investigator conducts the investigation at the direction of the Executive Director and designated Board member and submits a report to the Investigative Committee. Once the investigation has concluded, the Board can either dismiss the complaint for no violation found, enter into a consent agreement that must be accepted and approved by the Board, commence disciplinary proceedings for a hearing before the Board, or accept voluntary surrender of a license.
Negotiated Settlements	Yes
Notification of Resolution to the Complainant	The complainant is notified at the conclusion/resolution of the complaint by letter.

Source: Executive Director

Complaint Data

Schedule of Complaints Resolved Fiscal Year 2022 through 2025					
Year/Number of Complaints Received	**Year/Number Resolved**				
	2022	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**
2022 / 35	11	24			
2023 / 52	[redacted]	37	13	1	1
2024 / 63	[redacted]	[redacted]	54	6	3
2025 / 41	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	16	25
Source: Executive Director					

Average Time to Resolve Complaints – 126 business days.

Disposition of Resolved Complaints

Number of Actions	Resolution
53	Unfounded
48	Letter of Concern
27	Settlement Agreement
18	Administratively Closed
11	Complaint Withdrawn
10	No Evidence/Probable Cause
8	No Jurisdiction
7	License Surrender
4	In Compliance
3	Cease & Desist
1	License Revocation
1	Court or Other Prosecution

REGULATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER ENTITIES

Pursuant to the ***Code of Alabama 1975***, Section 15-13-209(a), professional surety bondsmen are also required to obtain licensure and comply with all licensure requirements issued by the Alabama Department of Insurance.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Source of Funds

Application fees, renewal fees, penalties, fines, late fees, are deposited into the Board's Fund Special Revenue maintained in the State Treasury.

Schedule of Fees

Fee	Statutory Authority	Rule	Amount Authorized	Amount Collected
Professional Bail Bondsmen, Professional Surety Bondsmen, Recovery Agent				
Application Fee	15-13-217(h)	153-X-9-.01	≤ $500.00	$125.00
Annual License Fee	15-13-217(h)	153-X-9-.01	$50.00 - $500.00	$125.00
Apprentice License Fee	15-13-202(c)	153-X-9-.01	≤ $50.00	$50.00
Inactive License Renewal Fee[(1)]	15-13-217(h)		≤ $100.00	N/A
Professional Bail Bond Company or Professional Surety Company				
Application Fee	15-13-217(h)	153-X-9-.01	≤ $500.00	$50.00
Annual License Fee	15-13-217(h)	153-X-9-.01	≤ $100.00	$50.00
Other Fees				
Late Renewal Application	15-13-210(b)(2)		$125.00	$125.00
Late License Renewal	15-13-217(g)	153-X-9-.01	Twice the Renewal Fee	Twice the Renewal Fee
Inactive License Late Renewal[(1)]	15-13-217(h)		Equal to Renewal Fee	N/A
Bad Check Fee	8-8-15(b)	153-X-9-.01	$30.00	$30.00
Other Fees Not Collected by Board				
I.D. Card	15-13-213	153-X-9-.01	N/A	Collected by Provider
Background Check	N/A	153-X-9-.01	N/A	Collected by Provider
CE Certification Fee	15-13-217(f)	153-X-9-.01	≤ $75.00	Collected by Provider
Pre-Licensure Instructional Course	15-13-217(e)		≤ $500.00	Collected by Provider
Continuing Education Course	15-13-217(f)		≤ $75.00	Collected by Provider

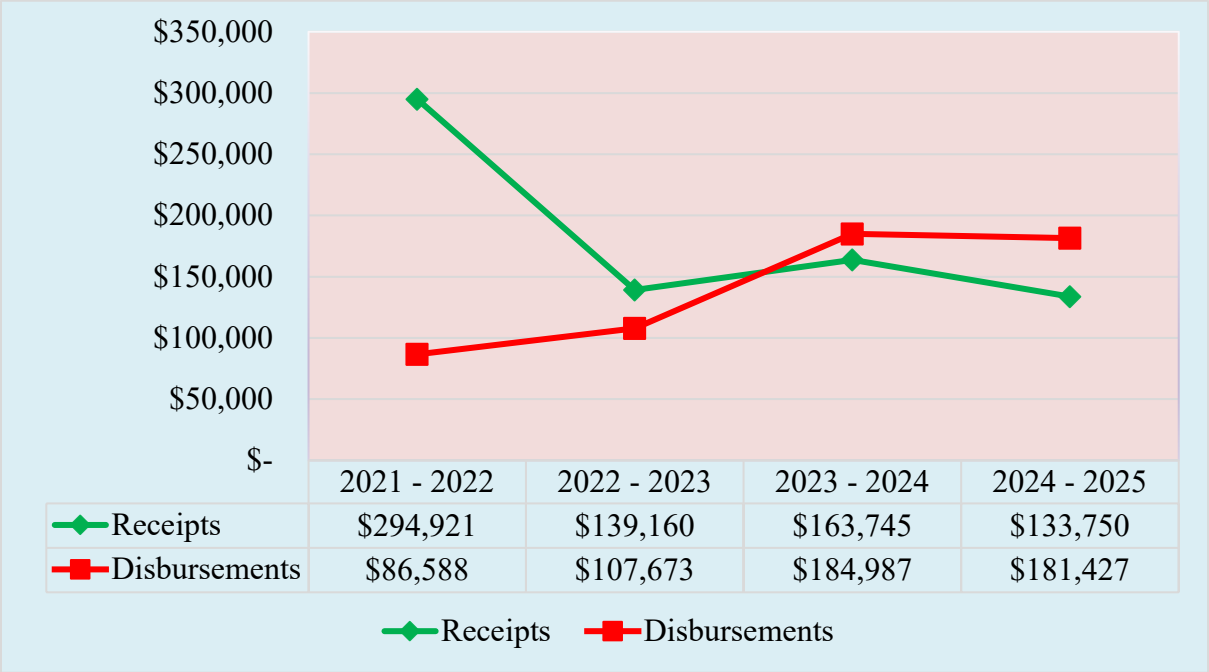
[(1)] Fees effective October 1, 2026. As of September 8, 2026, the Board has not amended rules to set added fee amounts.

Schedule of Receipts, Disbursements and Balances

October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2025

	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025
Receipts				
License Fees	$ 221,300.28	$ 117,629.20	$ 148,155.00	$ 132,625.00
Background Check Fees	71,870.25	16,780.75	12,340.00	
Professional/Occupational Board Penalties	1,750.00	4,750.00	3,250.00	1,125.00
Total	294,920.53	139,159.95	163,745.00	133,750.00
Disbursements				
Personnel Costs	18,027.09	18,885.64	22,296.05	20,009.65
Employee Benefits	1,379.07	1,444.75	1,705.65	1,530.75
Travel, In-State	7,234.89	10,729.35	20,023.78	14,559.65
Travel, Out-of-State			1,873.99	2,755.96
Utilities & Communications	2,089.76	2,360.31	2,931.64	2,872.97
Professional Services	54,606.60	72,174.30	129,502.57	134,886.42
Supplies, Materials, & Operating Expenses	3,251.00	2,079.00	4,265.20	4,811.49
Other Equipment Purchases			2,388.10	
Total	86,588.41	107,673.35	184,986.98	181,426.89
Excess (Deficiency) of Receipts over Disbursements	208,332.12	31,486.60	(21,241.98)	(47,676.89)
Cash Balance at Beginning of Year	55,572.02	263,904.14	295,390.74	274,148.76
Cash Balance at End of Year	263,904.14	295,390.74	274,148.76	226,471.87
Reserved for Year-End Obligations	(2,174.00)	(29,762.78)	(66,943.50)	(17,379.58)
Unobligated Cash Balance at End of Year	$ 261,730.14	$ 265,627.96	$ 207,205.26	$ 209,092.29

Operating Receipts vs. Operating Disbursements

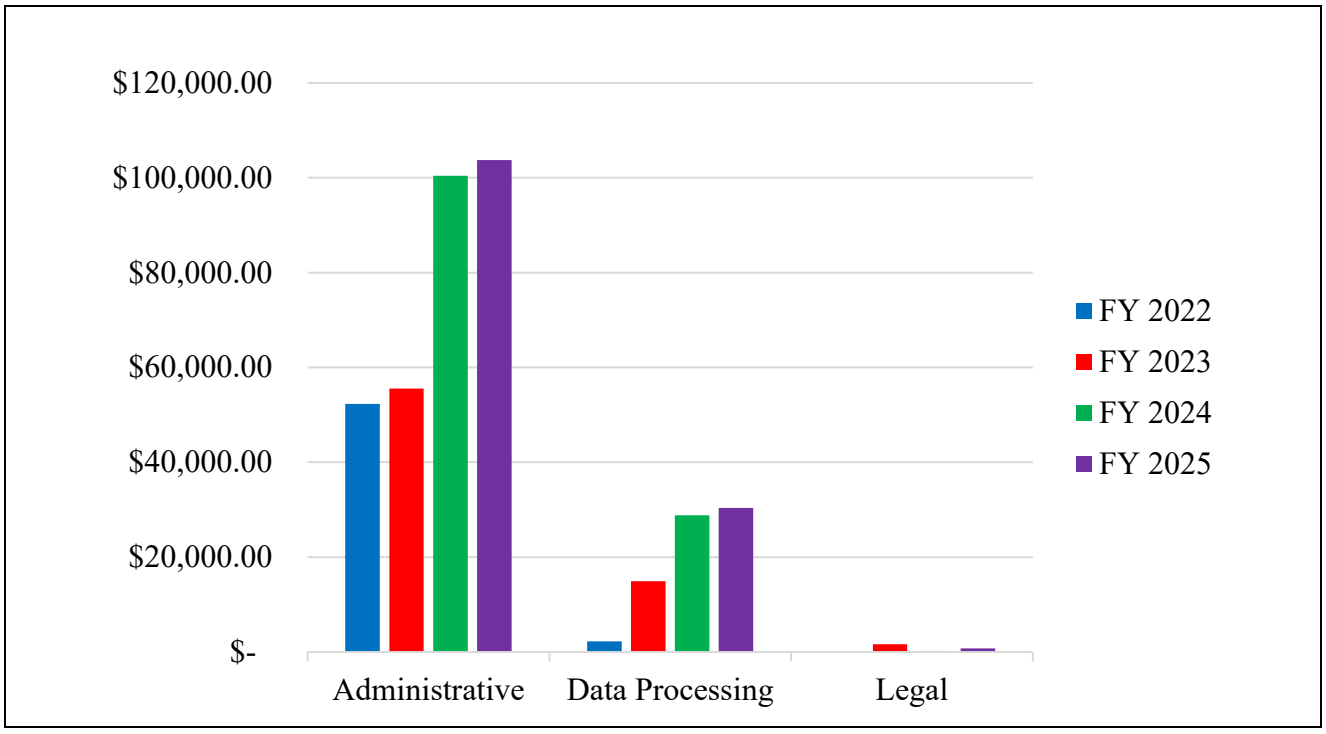


Summary Schedule of Professional Service Disbursements*

As of September 30th				
Type of Service	**FY 2022**	**FY 2023**	**FY 2024**	**FY 2025**
Administrative	$52,327.85	$55,542.55	$100,442.74	$103,744.30
Data Processing	2,278.75	14,964.75	28,816.83	30,396.52
Legal		1,667.00	243.00	745.60
Total	**$54,606.60**	**$72,174.30**	**$129,502.57**	**$134,886.42**

*Detailed information presented in Appendix III of this report.

Professional Service Disbursements



SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Significant Issue 2026-001: The Board operated without a contract in place for a period between December 2025 and January 2026. On December 19, 2024, the Board entered into a contract with Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. for administrative services effective through December 18, 2025, at a rate of $6,000.00 per month. The Board renewed this administrative services contract with Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. effective January 23, 2026 through January 22, 2027, at a rate of $6,000.00 per month. **Because the Board's contact expired on December 18, 2025, and the Board's subsequent renewal contract was not effective until January 23, 2026, the Board operated without a contract in place from December 19, 2025 through January 22, 2026.** On February 9, 2026, the Board paid Smith Warren Management Services, Inc. $2,322.58 for the period December 19th through December 31st and $6,000.00 for the entire month of January during this period despite no contract being in place.

STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS/SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

All prior findings/significant issues have been resolved.

MATTERS OF CONCERN FROM QUESTIONNAIRES

Matter of Concern 2026-001: Two of the four (50%) Board members responding to the survey indicated complaints received by the Board not being resolved in a timely manner as the most significant issue currently facing the Board.

Matter of Concern 2026-002: Five of the fifteen professional bail bondsmen (33%), two of the eight recovery agents (25%), and fourteen of the twenty-six professional bail bond companies (54%) responding to the survey indicated they have concerns about the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board and some of its members. Respondents stated concerns such as viewing the Board as competition. Additionally, respondents noted that because the Board has the authority to suspend or revoke licenses, its members may benefit from regulatory actions that reduce competition within the industry. Respondents further indicated that this concern is heightened by the overlap in membership between the Board and the Alabama Bail Bond Association. Respondents noted that individuals serve in influential positions within both organizations, creating rules that are being selectively enforced or shaped in ways to provide Board members and their allies with a competitive advantage over other licensees.

Matter of Concern 2026-003: Nine of the fifteen professional bail bondsmen (60%), three of the eight recovery agents (38%), and fifteen of the twenty-six professional bail bond companies (58%) responding to the survey indicated they are not adequately informed by the Board of changes to and interpretations of the Board's positions, policies, rules, and laws.

Matter of Concern 2026-004: Four of the fifteen professional bail bondsmen (27%), three of the eight recovery agents, and six of the twenty-six professional bail bonding companies (23%) indicated that the Board did not perform their licensing and renewal in a timely manner.

Matter of Concern 2026-005: Eight of the fifteen professional bail bondsmen (53%) and sixteen of the twenty-six professional bail bond companies (62%) responding to the survey indicated the Board's laws, rules, or policies, are an unnecessary restriction on the practice of the bail bonding profession.

Matter of Concern 2026-006: Five out of fifteen professional bondsmen (33%), two of the eight recovery agents (25%), and ten of the twenty-six professional bail bonding companies (38%) responding to the survey indicated the Board does not respond to their inquiries in a timely manner.

Matter of Concern 2026-007: Nine of the eighteen complainants (50%) responding to the survey indicated the Board did not communicate the results of its investigation into their complaint. Testing of complaint files indicated that the Board notified complainants of the resolution of their complaint as required. **Additionally, nine of the eighteen complainants (50%) responding to the survey indicated they do not think the Board did everything it could to resolve their complaint.**

STATUS OF PRIOR MATTERS OF CONCERN FROM QUESTIONNAIRES

There were no prior matters of concern.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Board Member Questionnaire

A letter was sent to all nine members of the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board requesting participation in our survey. Four participated in our survey. The percentages are based on the number who responded to the question.

1. **What do you consider the most significant issue(s) currently facing the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board and how is the Board addressing these issues?**

   Board Member #1 - "Timely complaint resolution...website updates"
   Board Member #2 - "Transparency within the Board to ensure licensees and the public are informed and accountability of each Board Member to follow all applicable laws and ethics is a recent issue. When Board Members are not following the laws and Administrative Rules, how can licensees be held accountable and how can the public trust that they are being protected? In that this is a new issue, the only way to address it is by thorough investigation and holding Board Members to a higher standard. Also, ensuring that the Board acts in the best interest of ALL licensees and the public and not be self-serving for their own interests in their decisions is a concern, and this can only be done when all work in unison."
   Board Member #3 - "Complaints from bonding agents not being taken care of in timely manner from previous Executive Director staff."
   Board Member #4 - "Continuing to have some one in Montgomery to make legislatures understand the role of the Bail Bonding Industries important role in the Courts and the Criminal Justice System."

2. **What, if any, changes to the Board's laws are needed?**

   Board Member #1 - "Laws were changed last session ..I dont believe any changes are needed at this time"
   Board Member #2 - "A stronger balance of Board members between those within the industry and those that are not. Currently the makeup of the Board consists of 7 licensees and 2 that are not; however, in October, two new non-licensee positions will be added."
   Board Member #3 - "A minimum of 50% of premium of bail fee should have to be paid up front before defendant can be released from jail. We have companys and agents signing bonds for zero or little down. This is the biggest threat to the industry. The standard fee is 10% of the bond. If a 50,000$ bond gets signed for 200$ down, it defeats the whole reason for setting bond. Our law enforcement and judicial system see this every day."
   Board Member #4 - "I think it seems to be good."

3. **Do you think the Board is adequately funded?**

Yes	**4**	**100%**

4. **Do you think the Board is adequately staffed?**

Yes	1	25%
No	1	25%
Unknown	**2**	**50%**

5. **Does the Board receive regular reports on its operations from the Executive Director?**

Yes	**4**	**100%**

6. **Has the Board experienced any significant change to its operations?**

Yes	**4**	**100%**

7. **Does the Board plan to make any significant changes to its operations?**

Yes	**2**	**50%**
No	1	25%
Unknown	1	25%

8. **Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?**

Board Member #1 - "Hopefully all current issues will be resolved with the transition to our new Director"
Board Member #2 - "While the Board has only been in existence approximately 6 years, historically the Board has been united in its decisions; however, there has now risen distrust and concern of members not abiding by the established laws and rules which has created instability within the Board. With the sudden and recent change in Executive Director and leadership without specific cause, the future of the Board is unsettling at this time."
Board Member #3 - "We have a new Executive Director"
Board Member #4 - "none"

Professional Bail Bondsmen Questionnaire

A letter was sent to one hundred and three licensees requesting participation in our survey. Fifteen participated in the survey. The percentages are based on the number who responded to the question.

1. What do you consider the most significant issue(s) facing your profession in Alabama?

Respondent #1 - "Working under other Bail Companies for three years is difficult because there's a lot of companies who aren't hiring or its family owned business. I think this law should change to one year at the minimum to establish the training and materials."
Respondent #2 - "N/A"
Respondent #3 - "Lots of issues"
Respondent #4 - "Signature bonds/cash bonds"
Respondent #5 - "cash bail"
Respondent #6 - "1. Unequal treatment of bail agents with courts, some cities (mobile) gives certain bail agents more access (I.D. badges to gain access to defendants, attorneys, etc. allowing certain bail agents computer access to court system in court house, allowing bail agents to sit at state attorney desks or public defender desks, and at times the jury box.) Allowing non-licensed people to take paperwork to the jail for the jail to begin the release when other agents have to drive there in order to start the process. taking advantage that the bail bond president is a business owner and directly profits from these special privileges given to his company and partners in Mobile. 2. Allowing bail companies to be named "[redacted]" in Bay Minette, AL. And if that is NOT their legal business name they have a advertisement on the side of the building that says that and claims to only collect 5%(half the bond premium). 3. [redacted] in Baldwin County doing bonds with no c-signer or no premium paid in order to beat other bail agents from posting bonds. 4. Brewton, AL . Allowing a bail bonds company owner to also own a tow company that the county uses to repo vehicles from traffic stops that leads people to automatically assume they have to use them for the bail bonds as well. Seems like a conflict of interest to me...."
Respondent #7 - "Safety"
Respondent #8 - "Most of the people on the Board and Association are my competition and use the laws, rules and policies to their advantage."
Respondent #9 - "The biggest issue is pricing on bonds when they call someone and they give them a price less then 10% but tell them they cant do the bond till 1 hr and they call around and get mad when we dont do less then 10% Als other companies charging less than 10% and giving credit but not doing the bond. I feel like we should not price or offer credit unless we really are gonna do it"
Respondent #10 - "Signature bonds have to be stopped. The numbers don't lie. Over 50% of the people released on a signature bond Do Not show up in court."
Respondent #11 - "I think the professionalism of bail bonding companies."
Respondent #12 - "People in power on the board using their influence to gatekeep the bailbonding industry"
Respondent #13 - "Monopolistic behavior from the higheruos; to much conflict of interest"

Respondent #14 - "The Bail Bonding Board has an inherent conflict of interest. Many of its members are also active bail bond agents who operate in the same industry they are responsible for regulating. The Board does not adequately include or consider the perspectives of existing bail bond agents when proposing or implementing changes to laws and regulations that directly affect their businesses. Instead, it has adopted and enforced rules that make it increasingly difficult for existing bail bond agents to operate while simultaneously expanding the circumstances under which a license may be revoked. Because the Board has the authority to suspend or revoke bail bond licenses, its members may benefit from regulatory actions that reduce competition within the industry. This concern is heightened by the overlap in membership between the Bail Bonding Board and the Bail Bond Association. The same individuals serve in influential positions within both organizations, creating rules that are being selectively enforced or shaped in ways that provide Board members and their allies with a competitive advantage over other licensed bail bond agents. This overlap undermines confidence in the fairness, impartiality, and integrity of the regulatory process and raises serious concerns regarding conflicts of interest and equal treatment under the law."

Respondent #15 - "Improper relationship between APBB and ABBA. Not a fair and reasonable process to set initial APBB board up. (Stakeholders wasn't Involed in this process on selected companies)"

2. **Do you think regulation of your profession by the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board is necessary to protect the public welfare?**

Yes	**12**	**80%**
No	3	20%

3. **Do you think any of the Board's laws, rules, or policies are an unnecessary restriction on the practice of your profession?**

Yes	**8**	**53%**
No	7	47%

4. **Are you adequately informed by the Board of changes to and interpretations of the Board's positions, policies, rules, and laws?**

Yes	6	40%
No	**9**	**60%**

5. **Do you consider mandatory continuing education necessary for the competent practice of your profession?**

Yes	**10**	**67%**
No	5	33%

6. **Does the Board respond to your inquiries in a timely manner?**

Yes	**8**	**53%**
No	5	33%
Unknown	2	14%

7. Has the Board performed your licensing and renewal in a timely manner?

Yes	**11**	**73%**
No	4	27%

8. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?

Respondent #1 - "None"
Respondent #2 - "N/A"
Respondent #3 - "I think continuing education should provide updated laws and rules to us and also discuss matters at hand in the profession thats going on around the world. And those that are new should have a class on its own."
Respondent #4 - "It's good that some bag actors are being weeded out by the regulatory board"
Respondent #5 - "We sit through these CE classes every year, and it feels like 90% of the sessions are sponsored presentations where someone is trying to sell us a product or service. This year, the recovery class was a refreshing change because it was informative and provided practical knowledge we can actually use. I would like to see more classes that focus on educating attendees about relevant laws, required paperwork, filing requirements for different situations, and other practical topics that help us do our jobs better and stay compliant. Those are the kinds of classes that provide lasting value, rather than presentations centered on selling another product or service."
Respondent #6 - "1. Unequal treatment of bail agents with courts, some cities (mobile) gives certain bail agents more access (I.D. badges to gain access to defendants, attorneys, etc. allowing certain bail agents computer access to court system in court house, allowing bail agents to sit at state attorney desks or public defender desks, and at times the jury box.) Allowing non-licensed people to take paperwork to the jail for the jail to begin the release when other agents have to drive there in order to start the process. taking advantage that the bail bond president is a business owner and directly profits from these special privileges given to his company and partners in Mobile. 2. Allowing bail companies to be named "[redacted]" in Bay Minette, AL. And if that is NOT their legal business name they have a advertisement on the side of the building that says that and claims to only collect 5%(half the bond premium). 3. [redacted] in Baldwin County doing bonds with no c-signer or no premium paid in order to beat other bail agents from posting bonds. 4. Brewton, AL . Allowing a bail bonds company owner to also own a tow company that the county uses to repo vehicles from traffic stops that leads people to automatically assume they have to use them for the bail bonds as well. Seems like a conflict of interest to me.... The whole state needs to be regulated better with actual consequences with non-business owners to over see it like the state of Florida....."
Respondent #7 - "N/A"
Respondent #8 - "The Board suspended my business license because my competition sent 7 complaints to the board within 3 months time period. The boards code 153-x-11-.01 states within 10 business days of a written complaint the board would notify the licensee of the allegations and would have 15 business days to respond. My business [redacted] License number [redacted] was not given a notice within 10 business days after complaints filed and was not able to respond to the complaints. The people and bail bond businesses that made the complaints all 7 failed to show up to the hearing after signing a sworn affidavit with no penalties. My name is [redacted] License number [redacted]. Phone number [redacted]. I will be willing to testify in private because Im on a 2 year probation."

Respondent #9 - “Everyone at the board is amazing i love [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted], they are amazing people will answer questions quick and very helpful when someone has a problem.”
Respondent #10 - “Professional bondsman must do more in the community to improve our reputation. Get involved and work with non profits. Donate to schools etc. The only time we make the news is when something bad happens.”
Respondent #11 - “I think every year the bonding companies need to be investigated. I feel like if you have complaints a sit down fave to face between those with complaimts need to be settled so no lies. Actually a tall with each employee and employer should be done”
Respondent #12 - “I have been working in this industry since w017 abd it seems like every year there is some new hoop that we have through that’s not necessarily about protecting the public welfare but making sure certain individuals maintain dominance in the industry”
Respondent #13 - “My personal issue is; They are definitely squeezing the smaller bondsman like myself. If the Board squeezes any tighter then it’s going to force us to have to leave the industry empty handed.”
Respondent #14 - “There is a significant conflict of interest because members of the Bail Bond Board are also active bail bond agents who directly participate in the same industry they are responsible for regulating. Some board members have utilized certain strategies and opportunities to build and maintain their own businesses, while at the same time condemning or restricting other bail bond agents from utilizing those same practices. There is also concern that rules are being changed or interpreted in ways that benefit established board members and protect the advantages they currently have, while preventing existing and future bail bond agents from accessing the same opportunities.This creates the appearance that regulatory authority is being used not simply to establish fair industry standards, but in a manner that may preserve the business interests and competitive positions of those serving on the Board. Additionally, the Bail Bond Board has conducted itself in an unprofessional manner. There has been frequent use of profanity, inappropriate stories and physical contact, as well as derogatory comments about women. This conduct raises further concerns regarding the professionalism, impartiality, and integrity expected of individuals serving in a regulatory capacity.”
Respondent #15 - “Not involving and ignoring stakeholders suggestions and concerns involving industry standards and regulatory oversight. This relationship is more damaging because it has the same principles controlling the whole industry seemingly for selected companies interest. Being regulated by companies and active agenst stakeholders are in competition with. A monopoly on continuing education through ABBA (only 1 company approved by APBB for CE since inception of both orgs.) No public criteria for approval or application process. I believe this is used to control industry advocacy in the legislature through lobbying the companies in charge of both boards interest instead of the majority decision of the stakeholders. ABBA lobbying bills the body voted against and adding things to the bills without informing stakeholders. Then use APBB to enforce new rules (both have same board members, related board members or board members who have rotated since inception of both orgs.). Seems like a strategy control the industry for a few selected companies Seemingly Using both boards to influence and create negative narratives with county and state gov't officials like county judges, circuit court clerks, sherrifs, DA office behind scenes against companies that both board members are heavily competitive with. Just a total conflict of interest”

Professional Surety Bondsmen Questionnaire

A letter was sent to eighty-four licensees requesting participation in our survey. Eight participated in the survey. The percentages are based on the number who responded to the question.

1. **What do you consider the most significant issue(s) facing your profession in Alabama?**

   Respondent #1 - "The minimum amount for bail. I think it should be 10% across the board minimum. To many companies out here charging way less."
   Respondent #2 - "No issues as of now"
   Respondent #3 - "Scammers"
   Respondent #4 - "The jail wait times, they make us sit at some jails for 4+ hours"
   Respondent #5 - "Court delays cases that drag on for months even years keeps bonds active longer and ties up company resources."
   Respondent #6 - "Judges setting cash component bonds."
   Respondent #7 - "That some of the Bondman are charging less then 10% for a Bond"
   Respondent #8 - "Fly by night bonding companies offering ridiculous low rates that is unfair to others and will not cover there potential losses. I do believe there should be a base percent."

2. **Do you think regulation of your profession by the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board is necessary to protect the public welfare?**

Yes	**5**	**62%**
No	3	38%

3. **Do you think any of the Board's laws, rules, or policies are an unnecessary restriction on the practice of your profession?**

Yes	2	25%
No	**5**	**62%**
Unknown	1	13%

4. **Are you adequately informed by the Board of changes to and interpretations of the Board's positions, policies, rules, and laws?**

Yes	**6**	**75%**
Unknown	2	25%

5. **Do you consider mandatory continuing education necessary for the competent practice of your profession?**

Yes	**4**	**50%**
No	**4**	**50%**

6. **Does the Board respond to your inquiries in a timely manner?**

Yes	3	38%
Unknown	**5**	**62%**

7. **Has the Board performed your licensing and renewal in a timely manner?**

Yes	**8**	**100%**

8. **Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?**

Respondent #1 - "Just make it a law of 10% minimum across the board. That would be amazing. Thanks for everyone at the board. You are always helpful."
Respondent #2 - "No"
Respondent #3 - "Not"
Respondent #4 - "[redacted]. [redacted] has been absolutely amazing with any question that I have had and she goes above and beyond find out the answer if she doesn't have it"
Respondent #5 - "N/a"
Respondent #6 - "I've been in this business over 25years only changes since the board has been formed, we are spending more time and money on continue educations and licenses. It hasn't benefited the Profession at all."
Respondent #7 - "None"
Respondent #8 - "Possibly doing annual continued training could be set up as an online system. New hires could be still done through an actual class with an exam."

Recovery Agent Questionnaire

A letter was sent to forty-one licensees requesting participation in our survey. Eight participated in the survey. The percentages are based on the number who responded to the question.

1. **What do you consider the most significant issue(s) facing your profession in Alabama?**

   Respondent #1 - "LACK OF TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS FOR RECOVERY AGENTS"
   Respondent #2 - "Professional bondsman are taking significantly less than the 10% for bonds while us Surety agents can not go that low on the premium."
   Respondent #3 - "Changing laws"
   Respondent #4 - "The regulation that is in place needs to be overhauled due to the irregularities from the association running the board."
   Respondent #5 - "Not being completely backed by law enforcement but rather looked down on."
   Respondent #6 - "Speeding"
   Respondent #7 - "Time"
   Respondent #8 - "N/a"

2. **Do you think regulation of your profession by the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board is necessary to protect the public welfare?**

Yes	**6**	**75%**
No	2	25%

3. **Do you think any of the Board's laws, rules, or policies are an unnecessary restriction on the practice of your profession?**

Yes	1	13%
No	**5**	**62%**
Unknown	2	25%

4. **Are you adequately informed by the Board of changes to and interpretations of the Board's positions, policies, rules, and laws?**

Yes	**3**	**37.5%**
No	**3**	**37.5%**
Unknown	2	25%

5. **Do you consider mandatory continuing education necessary for the competent practice of your profession?**

Yes	**7**	**87%**
No	1	13%

6. **Does the Board respond to your inquiries in a timely manner?**

Yes	**5**	**62%**
No	2	25%
Unknown	1	13%

7. **Has the Board performed your licensing and renewal in a timely manner?**

Yes	**5**	**62%**
No	3	38%

8. **Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?**

Respondent #1 - "I THINK THERE NEEDS TO BE WEAPONS TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS ROOM CLEARING INVESTIGATION TRAINING FOR RECOVERY AGENTS"
Respondent #2 - "I feel like bail bonds should be overseen but not by the Alabama Board which is ran by other bondsman but by the state itself. Also the classes could be done by more than just the Bail Board since that seems more of a way for the president to help friends campaign for election than it is about continuing your education on the bail bond field. If it was state ran you could have bondsman that have been in business for a while get the qualifications they need to teach the class and then send the hours in for the people that took the class into the states department that oversees bail bonds."
Respondent #3 - "No"
Respondent #4 - "The board needs to be abolished due to the heads of the board are direct competitors and it should be part of a governing entity with ethics."
Respondent #5 - "I think we need better backing by law enforcement and I also feel like as a veteran officer of law enforcement we need approval to run blue lights to a certain extent to be able to better identify ourselves beforehand in certain situations"
Respondent #6 - "NA"
Respondent #7 - "No"
Respondent #8 - "N/a"

Professional Bail Bond Company Questionnaire

A letter was sent to one hundred licensees requesting participation in our survey. Twenty-six participated in the survey. The percentages are based on the number who responded to the question.

1. What do you consider the most significant issue(s) facing your profession in Alabama?

Respondent #1 - "Signature bonds"
Respondent #2 - "N/A"
Respondent #3 - "The legislation for the past several years has proposed a bill where a defendant could be released from jail by paying 10 percent of the bail amount directly to the court."
Respondent #4 - "The bail bond board doesn't help with anything. I make detailed notes every year of what is taught in the class that is required. Every bit of it contradicts what they said the year before. Most of the members of the board are rude. Not helpful. It's a waste of money."
Respondent #5 - "Inconsistent application/understanding of the law by different jurisdictions."
Respondent #6 - "Release on own recognizance, collecting less than 10% on bond fees, scammers, and soliciting customers at the jail"
Respondent #7 - "[redacted] [redacted] should not be allowed to be the Chair of the Board and the President of the Alabama Bail Bond Association. This to me is a direct conflict of interest. No one who disagrees with [redacted] [redacted] ever is appointed to the Board, all Board members are hand picked by [redacted], hmmmmmmmm. How are felons still writing bonds?"
Respondent #8 - "Board President trying to wear two hats"
Respondent #9 - "Other Companies Doing Bonds for Less than the required fee"
Respondent #10 - "cash bail"
Respondent #11 - "The industry becoming extinct"
Respondent #12 - "The threat of taking the bonding industry completely out of the equation."
Respondent #13 - "People taking 2 or 3% on a bond."
Respondent #14 - "Cash bail reform."
Respondent #15 - "No major concerns I feel like the board is doing an awesome job staying ahead of the issues for the companies"
Respondent #16 - "Don't think Bailsbonding Company should be on the board"
Respondent #17 - "Scammers"
Respondent #18 - "The most significant issues facing Alabama's bail bond profession are transparency, public confidence, regulatory independence, and meaningful participation by licensees in decisions affecting the industry. I support state regulation of the profession; however, I believe improvements are needed to strengthen confidence that regulatory decisions are made objectively and in the best interests of the public rather than any particular segment of the industry. Based on my observations and experience, I respectfully request the Sunset Committee evaluate the following: The relationship between the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board (APBB) and the Alabama Bail Bond Association (ABBA), including historical overlap in leadership and the appearance of conflicts of interest. Whether legislative proposals presented as representing the bail bond industry accurately reflected the positions of the broader membership. Whether licensees receive adequate notice and opportunity to review proposed legislation before it is presented to lawmakers. Whether current governance provides meaningful participation for all licensed bail bond professionals, regardless of company size or Association involvement.

Respondent #19 - “In my opinion, one of the greatest challenges facing Alabama's bail bond industry is maintaining public confidence in the fairness and integrity of its regulatory process. Every licensed bail bond professional should have confidence that decisions affecting the profession are made independently, transparently, and with equal consideration for all licensees. While I believe regulation is necessary to protect the public and uphold professional standards, the current system raises concerns about accountability, communication, and equal representation. Strengthening these areas would help improve trust in both the regulatory process and the profession as a whole. I respectfully encourage the Sunset Committee to examine the following issues: Whether the relationship between the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board and the Alabama Bail Bond Association has created actual or perceived influence over regulatory decisions due to overlapping leadership or longstanding affiliations.

Whether legislation introduced on behalf of the bail bond profession genuinely reflected the opinions and interests of the majority of licensed bail bond professionals throughout Alabama.

Whether all licensees are given sufficient notice, access to information, and an opportunity to provide feedback before legislative proposals are advanced. Whether the Board's current structure and decision-making process ensure that all licensed professionals—regardless of their business size, location, or association membershiphave an equal voice in matters affecting the profession. My goal is not to criticize regulation itself, but to encourage a system that is transparent, impartial, and accountable to every licensed professional it serves, while preserving the public's trust in the profession.

Respondent #20 - “The primary concerns facing Alabama's bail bond industry involve accountability, public trust, independent oversight, and ensuring that licensed professionals have a meaningful voice in decisions that impact their profession. Although I support state oversight of the industry, I believe additional safeguards are necessary to ensure that regulatory actions remain impartial, transparent, and focused on serving the public interest rather than benefiting any particular organization or group. I encourage the Sunset Committee to examine the following issues: The relationship between the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board (APBB) and the Alabama Bail Bond Association (ABBA), including whether overlapping leadership roles have created actual or perceived conflicts of interest. Whether legislative proposals presented as representing the bail bond industry genuinely reflect the opinions and interests of the broader community of licensed bail bond professionals. If license holders are provided timely notice and a fair opportunity to review and comment on proposed legislation before it is introduced or considered by lawmakers. If license holders are provided timely notice and a fair opportunity to review and comment on proposed legislation before it is introduced or considered by lawmakers. If Current regulatory structure allows all licensed bail bond professionals regardless of the size of their business or their affiliation with any association—to participate fairly in matters affecting the profession.

Respondent #21 - “Transparency of the board and the protection of the bail industry as a whole not for just the big companies. I have been bonding for 35 years and the board is supposed to protect us. It’s really hard to be a legitimate bonding company when other companies are undercutting you at every turn. I think we are our own worst enemy”

Respondent #22 - "The Alabama Bail Bond Board trying to control my business."
Respondent #23 - "Too much control and I think they are breaking the customer privacy laws and the companies."
Respondent #24 - "Divisionism and accountability."
Respondent #25 - "The association is trying to be too involved in our businesses."
Respondent #26 - "The most significant issues facing the bail bonds profession in Alabama are adapting to the changes in the criminal justice policies and maintaining public confidence in the industry."

2. **Do you think regulation of your profession by the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board is necessary to protect the public welfare?**

Yes	**16**	**62%**
No	10	38%

3. **Do you think any of the Board's laws, rules, or policies are an unnecessary restriction on the practice of your profession?**

Yes	**16**	**62%**
No	9	34%
Unknown	1	4%

4. **Are you adequately informed by the Board of changes to and interpretations of the Board's positions, policies, rules, and laws?**

Yes	10	38%
No	**15**	**58%**
Unknown	1	4%

5. **Does the Board respond to your inquiries in a timely manner?**

Yes	**13**	**50%**
No	10	38%
Unknown	3	12%

6. **Has the Board performed your licensing and renewal in a timely manner?**

Yes	**20**	**77%**
No	6	23%

7. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?

Respondent #1 - "They seem to do a good job"
Respondent #2 - "[redacted] is very bias and ignorant."
Respondent #3 - "On question 4, I have not been made aware of any changes or interpretations to board policies or rules in the past couple of years."
Respondent #4 - "There is no reason to have a regulatory board in this industry. Things were so much better and less complicated before we had to pay so much money. It makes it nearly impossible to hire to new help because of all the testing and how long the process takes. And how much the fees are. And the cost of the classes. It's ridiculous. I don't know any bondsman's that agree with all the rules and costs and fees we have now."
Respondent #5 - "I was skeptical of the need for a bail bonding board before it was formed, but now after a few years and seeing what they do I think it's a good thing."
Respondent #6 - "I think the Board serves a vital function and accountability for the bonding companies in this state"
Respondent #7 - "Remove [redacted] from one position or the other."
Respondent #8 - "[redacted] is a walking disaster trying to work as a state representative and claiming to work for his members in the association"
Respondent #9 - "I appreciate the Board for being a voice and fighting for our Profession. I personally feel the board is doing a great job keeping us informed and training us on new or old regulations [redacted]"
Respondent #10 - "We sit through these CE classes every year, and it feels like 90% of the sessions are sponsored presentations where someone is trying to sell us a product or service. This year, the recovery class was a refreshing change because it was informative and provided practical knowledge we can actually use. I would like to see more classes that focus on educating attendees about relevant laws, required paperwork, filing requirements for different situations, and other practical topics that help us do our jobs better and stay compliant. Those are the kinds of classes that provide lasting value, rather than presentations centered on selling another product or service."
Respondent #11 - "My biggest issue with the board is they create laws and rules that benefit only a small number instead rules that benefit our whole industry. The board makes the rules, enforces them and then directly competes with us for profit, creating an unfair advantage."
Respondent #12 - "N/A"
Respondent #13 - "I would like things to be taken more seriously when reported to board. It sometimes seems its more of who likes you or knows you to be something looked into."

Respondent #14 - "I've been in the bail bond industry 5years after retiring from Law Enforcmemt. I was a full time warrants officer for 6 of those years. I didn't realize how big of a role bail companies play in the system. Creating laws to shut them down is just greedy government overreach. Creating laws and regulations so that the bail industry can support the process is the answer. Drug court companies are private and they work closely with the courts; so should the bail industry and they kind of already do, however, most law enforcement will not work together with bail agents. Private companies pay out of pocket to hunt down skips only to hopefully recover their losses after the fact. Law Enforcement refuse to extradite because of funding. The government is making it harder to pick up skips out of state all the while refusing to give the funding to extradite across lines. It makes no sense. If AL Law Makers reform cash bail so defendants can afford to get out then they should be held accountable when they refuse to fund extradition expenses. (The money is THERE because they took it from them) The government DOES NOT CARE about people not being able to afford anything. The government only cares about putting more money in their budget. Nationwide, TOO many new reforms are going against "The Good" for the law abiding citizens. Example, "Joe Blow" gets out of jail and flees to a state that makes it nearly impossible for bonding companies to get their skips then the court jurisdiction who issued the warrant and forfeiture refuse to extradite due to NO funding. There is no balance in such a system. So that leaves the good people of the world living with fugitives who sought out refuge in those kinds of states. NOT COOL! Alabama is headed in that direction. The bail industry is truly threatened most by the momentum of greed and vanity. Those who honestly care about our nation and the good citizens within will support a reform that unites the bail industry with the courts NOT remove it. Stricter laws about WHO can actually work in the bail industry will help more than anything. It's far too easy to get into this profession. When I got in I said it out loud.. "Really, is this all there is to it? And then I'm given a license to kick someone's door in? Coming from law enforcement I was against at how easy I got in because I walked in the most qualified among any other newcomer. It should be strict as far as "WHO" gets to do it and the best way to weed em out is make em go to school for it according to what role they play.. I.e, company owner, bondsman, recovery… etc."
Respondent #15 - "n/a"
Respondent #16 - "No"
Respondent #17 - "No"

Respondent #18 - “I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments during the Sunset Review. I support regulation of the bail bond profession; however, I believe this review presents an opportunity to strengthen transparency, accountability, and public confidence in Alabama's regulatory system. I respectfully request that the Sunset Committee review the following: 1. Regulatory Independence Evaluate whether adequate safeguards exist to maintain independence between the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board (APBB) and the Alabama Bail Bond Association (ABBA), including historical overlap in leadership and any actual or perceived conflicts of interest. 2. Board Formation and Governance Review how the original APBB Board members were identified and appointed, whether all stakeholders had an opportunity to participate, what qualifications and term limits were established, and whether ABBA played any role in recommending or supporting Board appointments. 3. Continuing Education Determine whether APBB has established an open, objective, and publicly available process for approving continuing education providers. Since APBB's creation in 2019, I understand only one provider has been approved, and I am unaware of any published application process or approval standards. 4. Legislative Transparency Review whether legislation presented as representing the bail bond industry accurately reflected membership votes, whether material provisions were added after member review, and whether adequate notice and written drafts were provided before legislative proposals were submitted. 5. Financial Transparency Evaluate whether sufficient transparency exists regarding continuing education revenue, membership dues, donations, lobbying expenditures, professional services, vendor payments, and other significant expenditures where they relate to APBB's governance or statutory responsibilities. 6. Confidentiality and Public Confidence Review whether adequate safeguards exist to protect confidential business information, prevent actual or perceived conflicts of interest, and ensure regulatory decisions are made impartially and applied consistently to all licensees.

I appreciate the Committee's consideration of these issues and respectfully request a thorough review to strengthen transparency, accountability, and confidence in Alabama's bail bond regulatory system.”

Respondent #19 - “I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the Sunset Review process. I believe state oversight of the bail bond profession is important and serves a valuable public purpose. At the same time, every regulatory system should be periodically evaluated to ensure it remains transparent, accountable, and fair to both the public and the professionals it regulates. To that end, I respectfully ask the Sunset Committee to consider the following matters: 1. Independence of the Regulatory Board Please examine whether the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board operates with sufficient independence from private industry organizations. Any past or present overlap in leadership, the Board and outside associations should be reviewed to determine whether appropriate safeguards exist to prevent actual or perceived bias. 2. Creation and Administration of the Board It would be helpful to review how the original Board was established, including the appointment process, qualifications for service, term limits, and whether all segments of the profession had an opportunity to participate. The Committee may also wish to determine whether recommendations from private organizations influenced Board appointments. 3. Approval of Continuing Education Providers I encourage the Committee to evaluate whether the process for approving continuing education providers is transparent, objective, and available toall qualified applicants. Since the Board's creation, it appears that very few providers have been approved, and I have not been able to identify publicly available application procedures or evaluation criteria. 4. Openness in the Legislative Process The Committee should review whether proposed legislation attributed to the bail bond profession accurately reflected the views of licensed professionals across the state. It would also be beneficial to determine whether licensees received draft legislation with adequate time to review and provide feedback before proposals were presented to lawmakers. 5. Financial Accountability
A review of financial practices could help ensure confidence in the regulatory process. This includes examining revenues associated with continuing education, membership dues, donations, expenditures for lobbying or professional services, vendor payments, and other financial activities connected to the Board's statutory responsibilities. 6. Protection of Confidential Information and Fair Decision-Making I also encourage the Committee to determine whether appropriate policies exist to protect confidential business information, avoid conflicts of interest, and ensure that all regulatory actions are applied consistently and impartially to every licensed bail bond professional. Thank you for considering these comments. My intention is not to criticize the existence of regulation, but to encourage a regulatory system that is open, impartial, accountable, and worthy of the confidence of both the public and the licensed professionals it serves.”

Respondent #20 - “Thank you for opportunity to participate in the Sunset Review. I support state regulation of the bail bond profession and encourage a review that promotes openness, accountability, and public trust. Regulatory Independence Review whether the APBB operates independently from the ABBA. Examine any overlapping leadership or potential conflicts of interest. Board Appointments Review how the original Board members were selected. Determine whether the appointment process was fair, transparent, and open to all qualified stakeholders. Consider whether the ABBA influenced Board appointments. Continuing Education Determine whether a clear, public process exists for approving continuing education providers. Review whether approval standards are objective and consistently applied. Legislative Process Examine whether legislation claimed to represent the industry reflected the views of licensed professionals. Review whether members received proposed bills in advance and had an opportunity to provide input before introduction. Financial Accountability Review transparency involving continuing education revenue, dues, donations, lobbying expenses, contracts, vendor payments, and other expenditures connected to the Board's responsibilities. Conflicts of Interest & Public Confidence Evaluate safeguards protecting confidential business information. Ensure conflicts of interest are avoided and regulatory decisions are fair, impartial, and consistently applied. Thank you for considering these concerns. I respectfully request a thorough review to strengthen transparency, accountability, fairness, and public confidence in Alabama's bail bond regulatory system.”

Respondent #21 - “I really think we need some regulation but just like everything else when you have a few bad apples we tend to over regulate and punish everyone instead of just handing the problem”

Respondent #22 - “I don’t like that all members of the Alabama Bail Bonds Board are all Bail Bond Company owners in Alabama and are licensed in the same area as me. It’s a conflict of interest to me as competitors of theirs.”

Respondent #23 - “Please check the bonding laws”

Respondent #24 - "As a bail bondsman, licensed as a surety agent through the Alabama Department of Insurance, we already had a regulatory governing body. That regulatory body has prescribed pre-licensing rules and regulations and qualifications readily available on the state website. The rules and regulations to maintain your license and all fees are set and also readily available with full disclosure.The state has no conflict of interest. Once the Professional Board was established it immediately began to usurp authority over already state licensed bondsman. This put double regulation and conflicting regulations on bail bondsman already in compliance to state regulations.Yes, professional bail bondsman were not under the same or any regulatory body and needed to be. However, the Professional Board should have adopted the same rules, regulations and laws already in place governing surety bail agents. There were already state educational and testing requirements in place to become a bail bondsman. Already regulations including educational requirements to maintain and renew your bail bondsman license and oversight for failure to comply. There are numerous state approved educational providers that offer numerous and diverse educational programs to satisfy the state requirements with various learning styles and price points to accommodate every licensee. The Professional Board lacks professionalism, accountability and oversight and because of the lack of transparency maybe integrity. When a regulatory board is made up of people who work in the same trade, other bondsman, there is always the propensity, conscious or unconscious, to NOT remain fair and neutral. Rules maybe written that favor themselves instead of the public. They can even use their power to shut out and disenfranchise other bondsman and cut down competition to boost their own profits. The Professional Board should be a group of disinterested third party professionals in law and education like retired attorneys and judges and curriculum experts.

Respondent #25 - "There is a conflict of interest in that the board members are Bail Bond Owners and are our competitors."

Respondent #26 - "no additional comments"

Complainant Questionnaire

A letter was sent to eighty-nine complainants requesting participation in our survey. Eighteen participated in the survey. The percentages are based on the number who responded to the question.

1. Was the receipt of your complaint acknowledged by the Board?

Yes	**16**	**88%**
No	1	6%
Unknown	1	6%

2. Approximately how long after filing your complaint did the Board contact you?

Within 15 days	6	33%
Within 30 days	**7**	**39%**
Within 60 days	1	6%
Unknown	4	22%

3. Did the Board communicate the results of its investigation into your complaint to you?

Yes	**9**	**50%**
No	**9**	**50%**

4. Do you think the Board did everything it could to resolve your complaint?

Yes	7	39%
No	**9**	**50%**
Unknown	2	11%

5. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?

Respondent #1 - "NA"
Respondent #2 - "When I was contacted by a board member with my complaint, he told me that if he addressed my complaint with the bondsman they could potentially revoke the bond and my loved one could go back to jail until their court date. He advised me to leave it alone. And he wouldn't say anything to the bondsman. So therefore, no corrective action was taken. To this date, I still feel that the bondsman was very unprofessional and does not work well with the public. He knew full well that he was the only bondsman in the county at that time and I was at his mercy to bond my loved one out of jail, and he took advantage of verbally abusing me. That was the first time I've ever been in a situation like that and hopefully it will be my last. No matter the situation, people should be treated with dignity and respect."
Respondent #3 - "The board does not help with anything. Never had a good experience with anything pertaining to the board."
Respondent #4 - "No"

Respondent #5 - “yes, she reiterated that she was currently on 7 boards. I had no telephone calls, and the issue was not resolved. Recently the same bonding company who was the bondsman son, took someone's money, and knew that person would not be released, when she asked for the money back, the son posted the bond a week later and then revoked the bond causing a felony to be placed on the inmate to cover up that he was going to keep the bond money. They are still out there, running my credit and having creditors call that i have no knowledge of debt. It is terrible that the board continues to let these people take advantage of others.”
Respondent #6 - “I did not recieve any further communication or dispostion of my complaint.”
Respondent #7 - “N/A”
Respondent #8 - “No”
Respondent #9 - “The Board handled the matter with professionalism and to a satisfactory resolution.”
Respondent #10 - “They got me my money back very quickly. And I hope they close that bondsman down he is at blatant crook.”
Respondent #11 - “I work for the [redacted] and filed a complaint on April 4, 2025, via email, I received no response. On May 28, 2025, I emailed again and received a response indicating they received my complaint on April 4, 2025 and it had been assigned an investigator. I have no documentation via email, in my digital file, nor my paper file that I received any further response. I want to be honest, and I vaguely remember being notified the complaint was denied, but I have no documentation of it. I pulled everything from that time before submitting this survey. I know this is supposed to be anonymous, but I would be happy to converse about this further. I still have the original complaint. My email is [redacted]@[redacted].[redacted].”
Respondent #12 - “no”
Respondent #13 - “The person looking into my complaint stayed in touch with me.”
Respondent #14 - “The complaint was about [redacted] son [redacted] having a bailbond license while running the Pickens county jail where she is approved to do bail business.”
Respondent #15 - “It was so obviously a hustle on the part of the bondsman, I was shocked the board declined me”
Respondent #16 - “I don’t think the investigation was handled properly because I had an attorney to tell me that I was being extorted for money. But the board seems to think there was nothing there to investigate.”
Respondent #17 - “Horrible communication and nothing was resolved,even though they lied and said it was resolved…I am still experiencing the same thing and the same treatment from the same person but Im about to contact congresswoman because you all let anybody become a bailbond and break laws to get people locked up for no reason to have them [redacted]…but when somebody [redacted] his [redacted] yall so quick to judge people and wanna lock people up for protecting themselves..This board is a [redacted] joke…This is why I do not like people..and make this yall last time contacting me about anything because it sure will be my last.”
Respondent #18 - “If the Board had done more to the person I filed the complaint on and quickly made an example of him, he would not have felt comfortable to continue to do many, many more things over the past several years. People are so disgusted with the actions or lack of actions of the Board that they won't even file complaints on legitimate violations because there is either no follow through or repercussions to the violations.”

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Applicable Statutes

Article 8 Alabama Bail Bond Regulatory Act.

Section 15-13-200 Short Title.
This article shall be known and may be cited as the Alabama Bail Bond Regulatory Act.
(Act 2019-409, §1.)

Section 15-13-201 Definitions.
For the purposes of this article, the following terms shall have the following meanings:
(1) BOARD. Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board.
(2) PROFESSIONAL BAIL COMPANY. A person, individual proprietor, partnership corporation, or other entity, other than a professional surety company, that furnishes bail or becomes surety for a person on an appearance bond and does so for a valuable consideration.
(3) PROFESSIONAL BONDSMAN. Any individual or agent who is employed by a professional bail company or professional surety company to solicit and execute appearance bonds or actively seek bail bond business for or on behalf of a professional bail company, including any individual who has a direct or indirect ownership interest in a professional bail company.
(4) PROFESSIONAL SURETY BONDSMAN. Any individual who is employed by a professional surety company to solicit and execute appearance bonds or actively seek bail bond business for or on behalf of a professional surety company, including any individual who has a direct or indirect ownership interest in a professional surety company.
(5) PROFESSIONAL SURETY COMPANY. An insurance company, domestic or foreign corporation, or association engaged in the business of insurance, or a surety with a bail line of insurance to which has been issued a certificate of authority or certificate of compliance by the Department of Insurance to execute appearance bonds or bail bonds in criminal cases in the state.
(6) RECOVERY AGENT. Any individual, other than an attorney or law enforcement officer, utilized by a professional surety company, professional bail company, or professional bondsman to apprehend a defendant who was released on bail and who violated the terms of his or her bail.
(Act 2019-409, §2; Act 2021-499, §1.)

Section 15-13-202 License Requirements; Apprentice License.
(a) An individual may not hold himself or herself out to the public as a professional bondsman or a professional surety bondsman, operate as a recovery agent, or use any term, title, or abbreviation that expresses, infers, or implies that the individual is licensed as a professional bondsman unless the individual at the time holds a valid license as a professional bondsman as provided in this article.
(b) All applicants shall pass an examination, unless exempted by this article, based on criteria established by the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board and established under Section 15-13-203 and shall comply with the continuing education requirements established by this article.
(c) The board may issue an apprentice license, which expires 120 days after issuance, to any applicant who satisfies all criteria for licensure except passing the examination. The board may require an applicant for licensure as an apprentice to sign an affidavit, on a form provided by the board, attesting that the applicant has no felony convictions. The board, by rule, may also provide an age exception to allow any applicant who is 19 or 20 years of age to work as an apprentice until he or she reaches the age of 21 years. The board may charge a fee, not exceeding fifty dollars ($50), for an apprentice license.
(Act 2019-409, §3; Act 2021-499, §1.)

Section 15-13-203 Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board - Creation; Composition; Adoption and Enforcement of Rules; Compensation.

(a) The Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board is created to administer and enforce this article. The board shall consist of all of the following members:

(1) Seven professional bondsmen, one from each of the seven congressional districts of the state, nominated by the Alabama Bail Bond Association and appointed by the Governor from a list of not more than four nominees for each position on the board. For the initial terms of office, the President of the Alabama Bail Bond Association shall be the professional bondsman member of the board who represents the congressional district in which he or she resides. Each professional bondsman member appointed to the board shall be the owner of a professional bail bond company with at least five years of experience. Except as otherwise provided, no two professional bondsman members shall reside in the same congressional district. If no professional bondsman is available for nomination by the Alabama Bail Bond Association for a congressional district, the Alabama Bail Bond Association shall provide a list of four professional bondsman nominees from the state at large to the Governor for that congressional district, and the Governor shall appoint one of those nominees to fill that position on the board.

(2) One serving circuit, district, or municipal court judge, nominated by the Alabama Bail Bond Association and appointed by the Governor from a list of four nominees.

(3) One serving circuit or municipal court clerk, nominated by the Alabama Bail Bond Association and appointed by the Governor from a list of four nominees.

(b) The appointments to the board shall be for terms of four years. The nominating and appointing authorities shall coordinate their nominations and appointments so that diversity of gender, race, and geographical areas is reflective of the makeup of this state. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the Governor for the unexpired portion of the term.

(c) The board, pursuant to the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act, Chapter 22 of Title 41, shall adopt and enforce reasonable rules as the board determines necessary to effectively and efficiently carry out its official duty of licensing and regulating professional bail bond companies and professional bondsmen.

(d) Each member of the board shall receive travel and per diem compensation for expenses incurred in the conduct of official duties while attending meetings and transacting the business of the board, in accordance with applicable state travel and per diem paid to state employees. The compensation of members shall be paid from funds available to the board in the same manner as other expenses are paid.

(Act 2019-409, §4; Act 2021-499, §1.)

Section 15-13-204 Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board - Liability.

(a) Pursuant to Section 36-1-12, the members and employees of the board are granted immunity from civil liability and may not be liable for damages when acting in the performance of their duties under this article.

(b) Board members and employees shall be defended by the Attorney General in regard to any criminal or civil litigation filed against them based on the performance of their official duties under this article.

(Act 2019-409, §5.)

Section 15-13-205 Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board - President and Vice President.
At the initial meeting of the board and each time a new member is appointed to the board, the members of the board shall select from among their members a president to preside over meetings of the board, a vice president to preside in the absence of the president, and a secretary.
(Act 2019-409, §6.)

Section 15-13-206 Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board - Alabama Bail Bond Board Fund.
(a) There is created in the State Treasury for the use of the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board a fund to be known as the Alabama Bail Bond Board Fund.
(b) All application, apprentice, and license fees, penalties, fines, late fees, and any other fees or funds collected by the board under this article are to be deposited in this fund and used only to carry out the operations of the board.
(c) For the purpose of carrying out the objectives of this article and for the exercise of the powers granted in this article, the board may direct the disbursement of the funds from the Alabama Bail Bond Board Fund necessary to cover reasonable and necessary operating costs and board member compensation and expenses as provided by this article, which shall be paid on warrant of the Comptroller upon certificate or voucher of the secretary of the board, approved by the president or vice president of the board. Funds may not be withdrawn or expended except as budgeted and allotted according to the provisions of Article 4 of Chapter 4 of Title 41.
(Act 2019-409, §7; Act 2021-499, §1.)

Section 15-13-207 Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board - Rulemaking Authority; Canons of Ethics and Professional Standards; Personnel.
(a) The board may adopt rules necessary to implement this article and accomplish its objectives subject to the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act.
(b) The board may adopt and establish canons of ethics and minimum acceptable professional standards of practice for licensees within any rules that it adopts.
(c) The board may hire personnel necessary or as advisable to carry out the purposes of this article.
(d) The Attorney General shall provide legal services to the board and its employees in connection with official duties and actions of the board or the board may employ legal counsel, when deemed necessary by the board, whose compensation shall be fixed by the board and paid in the same manner as the per diem and expenses of the board members are paid.
(Act 2019-409, §8; Act 2021-499, §1.)

Section 15-13-208 Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board - Meetings; Quorum.
(a) The board shall establish regular and special meetings for the purpose of transacting its business as provided by rules adopted by the board. Notice of board meetings shall comply with the Alabama Open Meetings Act.
(b) A majority of the board shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the board.
(Act 2019-409, §9.)

Section 15-13-209 Licensing Violations.
(a) Except as otherwise provided in this article, it shall be unlawful for any individual to act as a professional bondsman or recovery agent, or transact business as either, without first obtaining a license from the board, but a professional surety bondsman shall obtain a license from the Department of Insurance and shall comply with all licensing requirements issued by the Department of Insurance.
(b) Any individual who willfully violates subsection (a) or any other provision of this article, or a rule adopted or order issued by the board pursuant to this article, upon conviction, shall be guilty of a Class D felony.
(c) Each individual licensed in accordance with this article shall designate to the board a physical address where his or her records are to be kept.
(Act 2019-409, §10; Act 2021-499, §1.)

Section 15-13-210 Application for Licensure.
(a) An application and all information on an application for licensure pursuant to this article shall be treated as confidential and shall be filed with the board on forms prescribed by the board. The application shall include all of the following information of the applicant:
(1) His or her full name.
(2) His or her date of birth.
(3) All residences during the immediate past five years.
(4) All employment or occupations engaged in during the immediate past five years.
(5) A list of convictions and pending charges involving a felony or misdemeanor in any jurisdiction.
(b) On or before September 1 each year, the board shall send an email reminder to each licensee stating that the last day for submitting an application for a license renewal is September 30 of that year.
(Act 2019-409, §11; Act 2021-499, §1.)

Section 15-13-211 Licensure Requirements.
Each individual applicant shall meet all of the following criteria, demonstrating that he or she:
(1) Is at least 21 years of age.
(2) Has not been declared by any court of competent jurisdiction incompetent by reason of mental defect or disease unless a court of competent jurisdiction has subsequently declared the applicant competent.
(3) Has not been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude, with the board having the final determination on the interpretation of moral turpitude.
(4) Has not been convicted of a felony.
(5) Has successfully completed pre-licensure education administered by an educational provider approved by the board.
(Act 2019-409, §12; Act 2021-499, §1.)

Section 15-13-212 Denial of Licensure; Application for Reconsideration; Issuance and Display of License.

(a)(1) If an application for a license is denied, the board shall notify the applicant in writing and specify the grounds for denial. If the grounds are subject to correction by the applicant, the notice shall so state and specify a reasonable period of time within which the applicant shall make the required correction.

(2) The applicant may submit an application for reconsideration to the board within 30 days from the date of receipt of the denial.

(b) The board shall issue a license to all licensees that shall be at least 8″ x 10″ in size and shall be displayed on a wall of the workplace of the licensee. This license shall be deemed property of the state and subject to forfeiture to the state upon revocation.

(c) All licenses issued or renewed under this article shall be valid for a period from the date of issuance until October 31.

(Act 2019-409, §13.)

Section 15-13-213 Identification Card.

(a) The board shall issue to every bondsman licensee an identification card, which shall be issued in credit card size, be permanently laminated, and contain the following information of the licensee:

(1) Name.

(2) Photograph.

(3) Bondsman's license number.

(4) Expiration date of license.

(b) The identification card shall be carried on the person of the licensee when engaged in the activities of the licensee.

(Act 2019-409, §14.)

Section 15-13-214 Civil Penalty for False Statements to Board.

Making a false statement to the board shall be punishable by a civil penalty not to exceed one thousand dollars ($1,000) and assessment of the maximum application fee as provided in Section 15-13-217.

(Act 2019-409, §15; Act 2021-499, §1.)

Section 15-13-215 Suspension, Revocation, Etc., of License; Renewal of Suspended License.

(a) The board may suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue or renew any license issued by it upon finding that the holder or applicant has committed any of the following acts:

(1) A violation of this article or any rule adopted pursuant to this article.

(2) Fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation regarding an application or license.

(3) Knowingly and willfully making a material misstatement in connection with an application for a license or renewal.

(4) A conviction by a court of competent jurisdiction of a felony.

(5) A conviction by a court of competent jurisdiction of a Class A misdemeanor, if the board finds that the conviction reflects unfavorably on the fitness of the individual for the license.

(6) The commission of any act which would have been cause for refusal to issue the license or identification card had it existed and been known to the board at the time of issuance.

(b) A license may be suspended for the remaining license period and renewed during any period in which the license was suspended.

(Act 2019-409, §16.)

Section 15-13-216 Application of Administrative Procedure Act.
The Administrative Procedure Act shall govern all matters and procedures respecting the hearing and judicial overview of any contested case.
(Act 2019-409, §18.)

Section 15-13-217 Examination; Continuing Education; Certification; Costs and Fees.
(a) A professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent commencing business in any judicial circuit in this state on and after June 1, 2020, shall attend a 16-hour instructional course conducted by an educational provider approved by the board and pass an examination approved by the board and administered by an educational provider approved by the board. Upon completion of the course and passage of the examination, the individual shall be awarded a pre-licensure examination certificate by the board, copies of which may be submitted to the presiding circuit judge, or other judicial authority, along with the other requirements set forth in Section 15-13-159 or Section 15-13-160. Those professional bondsmen, professional surety bondsmen, and recovery agents doing business immediately prior to June 1, 2020, are exempt from the initial instructional course and examination.
(b) Unless exempted pursuant to subsection (i), a professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent making an annual filing in any circuit in this state pursuant to Section 15-13-159 or Section 15-13-160 on and after March 1, 2020, shall first complete eight hours of continuing education conducted by an educational provider approved by the board. A professional bail company owner, who is at least 55 years of age and has five years of experience in the profession, shall only be required to complete four hours of continuing education. The educational provider approved by the board shall provide the board with the name of all professional bondsmen, professional surety bondsmen, or recovery agents completing eight hours of continuing education. Upon completion of the eight hours of continuing education, the individual shall request issuance of an annual continuing education certificate from the board, copies of which may be submitted to the presiding circuit judge along with the other requirements set forth in Section 15-13-159 or Section 15-13-160.
(c) The instructional course, examination, or continuing education courses shall be taught or sponsored by an educational provider approved by the board, which must apply annually for authority to offer such examination or courses.
(d) A list of approved course providers shall be published on the website of the board.
(e) The cost of the instructional course shall be set by the approved course provider but shall not exceed five hundred dollars ($500) per course. Upon completion of the instructional course, the approved course provider shall issue an instructional course completion certificate in a form approved by the board. This completion certificate, along with the application fee, must be presented to the board in order to take the pre-licensure examination. An instructional course completion certificate shall be valid for a period of 12 months.
(f) The cost of continuing education courses shall be set by the approved course provider but shall not exceed seventy-five dollars ($75) per hour. Any fee required to be paid by a course provider for reporting continuing education course completion to the board may be added to the maximum charges provided in this subsection.

(g) Each professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, and recovery agent must renew his or her certification with the board by completing eight hours of approved continuing education prior to September 30 each year. Late renewal within the next 12 months may be had by completing the eight hours of continuing education and paying a renewal license fee of twice the amount otherwise required. If a professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent fails to renew a certification for a 12-month period, the professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent will be required to take the instructional course and examination to again become certified.
(h) The board, by rule, shall set the fees to be paid to the board in the administration of this section, not to exceed the maximum amounts set forth below:
(1)a. Application fee for a professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or a recovery agent, a nonrefundable fee to be paid to take the examination and for the issuance of the pre-licensure examination certificate, per examination attempt: Up to five hundred dollars ($500).
b. Application fee for a professional bail company or a professional surety company, a nonrefundable fee to be paid for the issuance of an initial license: Up to five hundred dollars ($500). Payment of this fee does not alleviate the requirement that each individual professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, and recovery agent be licensed under this chapter.
(2)a. Annual license renewal fee for a professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent, to be paid to receive the annual continuing education certificate: From fifty dollars ($50) up to five hundred dollars ($500).
b. Annual license renewal fee for a professional bail company or a professional surety company, to be paid to receive the renewal license: Up to one hundred dollars ($100).
(i) Any professional bondsman or professional bail company owner who, on August 1, 2021, is at least 65 years of age and has 15 years of experience in the profession, shall be exempt from the continuing education requirements of this article.
(j) The board shall adopt rules necessary to carry out this section.
(Act 2019-409, §19; Act 2021-499, §1.)

Section 15-13-218 Effect of Criminal or Civil Actions Under Article.
No criminal or civil action taken under this article precludes a prosecution or action under any other law of this state.
(Act 2019-409, §20.)

Section 15-13-219 Sunset Provisions.
The board shall be subject to the Alabama Sunset Law, Chapter 20 of Title 41, as an enumerated agency as provided in Section 41-20-3, and shall have a termination date of October 1, 2023, and every four years thereafter, unless continued pursuant to the Alabama Sunset Law.
(Act 2019-409, §21.)

HB302 ENROLLED

ACT #2026-542

HB302

7B15HVV-3

By Representative Brown

RFD: Boards, Agencies and Commissions

First Read: 21-Jan-26



Enrolled, An Act,

Relating to bail and surety bonding; to amend Sections 15-13-112, 15-13-159, 15-13-160, 15-13-201, 15-13-202, 15-13-203, 15-13-205, 15-13-210, 15-13-211, and 15-13-217, Code of Alabama 1975; to require the Supreme Court of Alabama to require qualifying power of attorney documents issued by a professional surety company to be attached to all bail bond forms; to require a professional surety bondsman to be licensed for at least three years before he or she could own his or her own professional surety company; to require circuit clerks to report the authorized professional bail bond companies within 30 days of the close of annual recertification; to provide that a professional bail company may only guarantee payments to the court through an escrow agreement; to define the terms "apprentice" and "employee"; to extend the apprentice license expiration to 180 days; to require 19 or 20 year old apprentice bondsmen to complete an instructional course; to provide that judges and clerks appointed by the Governor to the Alabama Bail Bonding Board may be presently serving, supernumerary, or retired; to provide for the appointment of one serving sheriff and one lay person to be appointed by the Governor to the Alabama Bail Bonding Board; to remove the requirement that a chair and vice chair be elected each time a new member is appointed to the Alabama Bail Bonding Board; to impose late fees on renewal applications; to provide an additional late fee for license renewal fees paid after the deadline; to require bondsman

license applicants to be a resident of this state; to provide a process for placing a bondsman license in inactive status and reverting to active status; and to make nonsubstantive, technical revisions to update the existing code language to current style.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Sections 15-13-112, 15-13-159, 15-13-160, 15-13-201, 15-13-202, 15-13-203, 15-13-205, 15-13-210, 15-13-211, and 15-13-217, Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as follows:

"§15-13-112

The Supreme Court of Alabama shall prescribe the different forms used for bail bonds and shall publish the forms in the Alabama Rules of Criminal Procedure. The supreme court shall require an original qualifying power of attorney to be attached to all bail bond forms. The original qualifying power of attorney shall: (i) be issued by a professional surety company; and (ii) specify the names of all agents that may execute and bind the company to a bail undertaking and any applicable limitations of the agents. The ~~Supreme Court~~supreme court may change the forms from time to time as the court deems necessary but the forms and their terms shall conform to the terms of this chapter or any other laws of the State of Alabama."

"§15-13-159

(a) No professional surety company shall execute or become surety on any appearance bond in this state, unless it has an order granting authorization to become professional

surety on any bail. The order granting the authorization shall be reissued annually, prior to January 1 of each year, by the presiding circuit judge of the county in which the company desires to execute bail or appearance bonds. Prior to the judge's issuance of the original order and no later than December 1 of each year, thereafter, professional surety companies shall submit annually to the presiding circuit judge the following:

(1) An original or certified copy of a certificate of authority or certificate of compliance from the Department of Insurance reflecting that the company is qualified to write a bail line of insurance and that the company is in good standing with the department.

(2) An original qualifying power of attorney issued by the professional surety company, specifying any applicable limitations and the names of the agents that may execute and bind the company to a bail undertaking. The qualifying power of attorney shall not name any company, corporation, or other entity as an agent except a person as defined as a professional bondsman in Division 1, Section 15-13-100, and that person shall be an agent of the company licensed with the Department of Insurance.

(3) A copy of the license issued by the Department of Insurance of each agent who is named in or appointed by the qualifying power of attorney in subdivision (2) or a letter or other documentation from the department indicating that the appointed agents are temporarily licensed as agents of the professional surety company for those lines of insurance.

(4) An affidavit or certification in writing, under oath, executed by a licensed agent of the professional surety company who is the manager or an owner or president of a corporation, company, partnership, or other entity that represents the professional surety company, filed with the clerk of the circuit court of each county in which the professional surety company executes or becomes surety on appearance bonds, stating the following:

a. That all appearance bonds shall be executed in the name of the professional surety company as surety by the agents listed or appointed in the qualifying power of attorney presented to the court or any other qualifying powers of attorney filed with the circuit clerk of the county.

b. That all agents listed or appointed in the qualifying powers of attorney shall be licensed by the Department of Insurance, prior to their appointments.

c. That any agency, company, corporation, or other entity that represents the professional surety company in the county, has no owners or other persons having a direct or indirect financial interest in such agency, company, corporation, or other entity, that have been convicted of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude. If any ~~person~~individual having a direct or indirect financial interest in such agency, company, corporation, or other entity has been convicted of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude, then the affidavit or certification shall certify that there has been such conviction, providing the name of the ~~person~~individual convicted, and certify that the

~~person~~individual convicted has been pardoned or has had a restoration of civil rights.

d. That the professional surety company has no knowledge of forfeitures or delinquent bail bond posting fees that have been final for more than 30 days and that have not been paid to the clerk of the court arising out of surety undertaking, and that the professional surety company has no petitions, motions, or other litigation matters pending.

e. That no agents of the professional surety company who have the authority to execute appearance bonds in its behalf or any person having a financial interest, direct or indirect, in the ownership or management of any agency, company, corporation, or other entity that represents the professional surety company in the execution of appearance bonds, is an attorney, a judicial official, a person authorized to accept an appearance bond, or an agent of an attorney, judicial official, or person authorized to accept an appearance bond.

f. The names and addresses of all persons, officers, employees, and agents of the agency, company, corporation, or other entity that represents the professional surety company becoming surety on appearance bonds who have a direct or indirect financial interest in the agency, company, corporation, or other entity representing the professional surety company and the nature and extent of each interest.

g. That those persons stated in this section have not, within a period of two years, violated any provisions of this chapter or any rules adopted by the Supreme Court of Alabama

in accordance with this chapter.

(5) A copy of the current license issued by the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board pursuant to the Alabama Bail Bond Regulatory Act, Article 8.

(b)(1) Not more than 30 days after the presiding circuit court judge of the county issues the order granting authorization to professional surety companies, the circuit clerk shall prepare a list of authorized surety companies. The list shall include all of the following information:

a. The name of each authorized surety company.

b. The name of each owner attached to each authorized surety company.

c. All final forfeitures and bail bond posting fees owed to the court by each surety company which are more than 30 days past due.

(2) The circuit clerk shall submit the list of authorized surety companies to the presiding judge of the circuit and the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board.

(c) A professional surety bondsman may not own a professional surety company until he or she has been licensed as a professional surety bondsman for at least three years. If the owner of a professional surety company dies or becomes completely incapacitated, as determined by the board, his or her professional surety company may be sold to an unlicensed individual. The unlicensed individual shall have 90 calendar days, from date of purchase, to obtain a license and shall employ a minimum of one employee who has been licensed for at least three consecutive years."

"§15-13-160.

(a) No professional bail company shall execute or become surety on any appearance bond in this state, unless the company has an order granting authorization to become professional surety on any bail. The order granting authorization shall be reissued annually prior to January 1 of each year by the presiding circuit judge of the county in which the company desires to execute bail or appearance bonds. Prior to the judge's issuance of the original order and no later than December 1 of each year, thereafter, professional bail companies shall submit annually to the presiding circuit judge the following:

(1)a. An ~~original corporate surety bond or~~ escrow agreement, filed and approved by the presiding circuit judge of the county in which the professional bail company executes or becomes surety on appearance bonds, in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars ($25,000), guaranteeing the payment of all sums of money that may become due by virtue of any judgment absolute that may be rendered against the professional bail company on a forfeiture entered by any court in the county. Corporate surety bonds shall be executed only by a surety company that at the time is operating and authorized to do business in ~~the~~ this state and qualified to write bonds by the Department of Insurance. The corporate surety bond shall provide that it may be cancelled as to any future liability by the corporate surety company or the professional bail company by giving 30 ~~days~~days' prior written notice of the cancellation to the clerk of the circuit court

in which the bond or instrument was filed. A bank in this state shall be a party to all escrow agreements, and those agreements shall provide that the agreement may be cancelled as to any future liability only by the professional bail company and bank by giving 30 ~~days~~days' prior written notice of the cancellation to the clerk of the circuit court in which the escrow agreement or instrument is filed. Once a professional bail company has filed an original continuous corporate surety bond or escrow agreement with the circuit clerk and it has been approved by the presiding circuit judge, then the professional bail company does not have to file any other original continuous corporate surety bond or escrow agreement upon annual recertification. The professional bail company shall submit an original certificate from the insurance company that executed the corporate surety bond reflecting that it is still in force or an original letter from the bank stating the escrow agreement is still effective and the monies are still held in trust. When any professional bail company is annually recertifying, the circuit clerk shall send the original corporate surety bond or original escrow agreement with any cancellations received by the circuit clerk to the presiding circuit judge for review and approval.

b. Any new ~~original corporate surety bond or~~ escrow agreement made on or after ~~September 1, 2023~~October 1, 2026, in a county with a population of 200,000 or more, shall require ~~a surety bond or~~ an escrow agreement in the amount of ~~fifty thousand dollars ($50,000)~~one hundred thousand dollars ($100,000). Any new escrow agreement made on or after October

1, 2026, in a county with a population of less than 200,000, shall require an escrow agreement in the amount of fifty thousand dollars ($50,000). This paragraph does not affect any corporate surety bond or escrow agreement made before ~~September 1, 2023~~October 1, 2026. Current escrow agreements and corporate surety bonds shall remain at twenty-five thousand dollars ($25,000) for any renewal thereafter. If a professional bail company transfers its escrow agreement to a different bank with the court's approval, the escrow rate shall remain the same.

(2) An original qualifying power of attorney, letter, or other document issued by the professional bail company specifying any applicable limitations and specifying the agents who are authorized to execute and bind the professional bail company to a bail undertaking or to appearance bonds. The qualifying power of attorney, letter, or other document may only name persons as agents.

(3) An original affidavit or certificate in writing, under oath, executed by an owner or officer of a professional bail company, to the clerk of the circuit court of the county in which the professional bail company shall execute or become surety on appearance bonds which contains all of the following:

a. That all appearance bonds shall be executed in the name of the professional bail company as surety by the agents listed or appointed in the qualifying power of attorney, letter, or other document presented to the court or any other person so named in any future qualifying powers of attorney,

letters, or documents filed with the circuit clerk of the county.

b. That the professional bail company is qualified to do business in this state and its resident address.

c. That the professional bail company has sufficient financial net worth to satisfy its obligations as a surety.

d. That no person having a direct or indirect financial interest in the professional bail company has been convicted of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if any person having a direct or indirect financial interest in the bonding business has been convicted of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude, then the person making the certification shall certify that there has been a conviction, provide the name of the person convicted, and certify that the person convicted has been pardoned or has had a restoration of civil rights.

e. That the professional bail company has no knowledge of any forfeiture or delinquent bail bond posting fees that ~~has~~have been made final for more than 30 days and that ~~has~~have not been paid arising out of surety undertakings and as to which the professional bail company has no petitions, motions, or other litigation matters pending.

f. That there are no persons, including employees, agents, or persons with a financial interest in the professional bail company, who, within a period of two years, violated this chapter, or any rules adopted by the Supreme Court governing the qualifications of professional surety or bail companies.

g. That no employee, agent, or any other person having a direct or indirect financial interest in the professional bail company is an attorney, a judicial official, a person authorized to accept an appearance bond, or an agent of an attorney, judicial official, or person authorized to accept an appearance bond.

h. The names and addresses of all officers, employees, and agents of the professional bail company who have a direct or indirect financial interest in the professional bail company and the nature and extent of each interest.

(b) (1) Not more than 30 days after the presiding circuit court judge of the county issues the order granting authorization to professional bail companies, the circuit clerk shall prepare a list of authorized bail bond companies. The list shall include all of the following information:

a. The name of each authorized bail bond company.

b. The name of each owner attached to each authorized bail bond company.

c. All final forfeitures and bail bond posting fees owed to the court by each company which are more than 30 days past due.

(2) The circuit clerk shall also submit the list of authorized bail bond companies to the presiding judge of the circuit and the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board.

(c) A professional bondsman may not own a professional bail company until he or she has been licensed as a professional bondsman for at least three years. If the owner of a professional bail company dies or becomes completely

incapacitated, as determined by the board, his or her professional bail bond company may be sold to an unlicensed individual. The unlicensed individual shall have 90 calendar days, from date of purchase, to obtain a license and shall employ a minimum of one employee who has been licensed for at least three consecutive years."

"§15-13-201

For the purposes of this article, the following terms ~~shall~~ have the following meanings:

(1) APPRENTICE. Any individual working directly for and under the direct supervision of a fully-licensed professional bail bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent, who is engaged in the bail bond or professional surety business, and who has been granted an apprentice license by the board.

~~(1)~~ (2) BOARD. Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board.

(3) EMPLOYEE. a. Any individual who engages in the performance of any of the duties of or for a professional bail company or professional surety company, including, but not limited to, clerical, stenographic, investigative, or administrative duties, or any other work or responsibilities under the contract of hire, express or implied, oral or written, where the employer has the authority or right to control or direct the employee in how the duties, work, or responsibilities are carried out or performed.

b. The term includes any individual who has communication or interaction with potential or actual customers and any individual who is working as an apprentice.

c. The term does not include any person whose bail bondsman license has been revoked.

~~(2)~~ (4) PROFESSIONAL BAIL COMPANY. A person, individual proprietor, partnership corporation, or other entity, other than a professional surety company, that furnishes bail or becomes surety for a person on an appearance bond and does so for a valuable consideration.

~~(3)~~ (5) PROFESSIONAL BONDSMAN. Any individual or agent who is employed by a professional bail company or professional surety company to solicit and execute appearance bonds or actively seek bail bond business for or on behalf of a professional bail company, including any individual who has a direct or indirect ownership interest in a professional bail company.

~~(4)~~ (6) PROFESSIONAL SURETY BONDSMAN. Any individual who is employed by a professional surety company to solicit and execute appearance bonds or actively seek bail bond business for or on behalf of a professional surety company, including any individual who has a direct or indirect ownership interest in a professional surety company.

~~(5)~~ (7) PROFESSIONAL SURETY COMPANY. An insurance company, domestic or foreign corporation, or association engaged in the business of insurance, or a surety with a bail line of insurance to which has been issued a certificate of authority or certificate of compliance by the Department of Insurance to execute appearance bonds or bail bonds in criminal cases in the state.

~~(6)~~ (8) RECOVERY AGENT. Any individual, other than an

attorney or law enforcement officer, utilized by a professional surety company, professional bail company, or professional bondsman to apprehend a defendant who was released on bail and who violated the terms of his or her bail."

"§15-13-202

(a) An individual may not hold himself or herself out to the public as a professional bondsman or a professional surety bondsman, operate as a recovery agent, or use any term, title, or abbreviation that expresses, infers, or implies that the individual is licensed as a professional bondsman unless the individual at the time holds a valid license as a professional bondsman as provided in this article.

(b) All applicants shall pass an examination, unless exempted by this article, based on criteria established by the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board and established under Section 15-13-203 and shall comply with the continuing education requirements established by this article.

(c) The board may issue an apprentice license, which expires ~~120~~180 days after issuance, to any applicant who satisfies all criteria for licensure except passing the examination. The board may require an applicant for ~~licensure~~a license as an apprentice to sign an affidavit, on a form provided by the board, attesting that the applicant has no felony convictions. An apprentice license shall only be issued once, and a licensee who has previously possessed a professional license may not receive a subsequent apprentice license. The board, by rule, may also provide an age exception

to allow any applicant who is 19 or 20 years of age to work as an apprentice until he or she reaches ~~the age of~~ 21 years of age. Before the expiration of his or her apprentice license, an apprentice who is 19 or 20 years of age shall complete an eight-hour continuing education instructional course conducted by an educational provider approved by the Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board, at no cost to the apprentice. The board may charge a fee, not exceeding fifty dollars ($50), for an apprentice license.

(d) An apprentice may perform all duties without direct supervision, except for the apprehension of a fugitive. An apprentice shall have his or her license available at all times."

"§15-13-203

(a) The Alabama Professional Bail Bonding Board is created to administer and enforce this article. The board shall consist of all of the following members:

(1) Seven professional bondsmen, one from each of the seven congressional districts of the state, nominated by the Alabama Bail Bond Association and appointed by the Governor from a list of not more than four nominees for each position on the board. For the initial terms of office, the President of the Alabama Bail Bond Association shall be the professional bondsman member of the board who represents the congressional district in which he or she resides. Each professional bondsman member appointed to the board shall be the owner of a professional bail bond company with at least five years of experience. Except as otherwise provided, no two professional

bondsman members shall reside in the same congressional district. If no professional bondsman is available for nomination by the Alabama Bail Bond Association for a congressional district, the Alabama Bail Bond Association shall provide a list of four professional bondsman nominees from the state ~~at large~~at-large to the Governor for that congressional district, and the Governor shall appoint one of those nominees to fill that position on the board.

(2) One ~~serving~~ circuit, district, or municipal court judge, who is presently serving, supernumerary, or retired, nominated by the Alabama Bail Bond Association and appointed by the Governor from a list of four nominees.

(3) One ~~serving~~ circuit or municipal court clerk, who is presently serving, supernumerary, or retired, nominated by the ~~Alabama Bail Bond Association~~Alabama Circuit Clerks Association and appointed by the Governor from a list of four nominees.

(4) One serving sheriff, nominated by the Alabama Sheriff's Association and appointed by the Governor from a list of four nominees.

(5) One lay person, nominated by the Alabama Bail Bond Association and appointed by the Governor from a list of four nominees.

(b) The appointments to the board shall be for terms of four years. The nominating and appointing authorities shall coordinate their nominations and appointments ~~so that diversity of gender, race, and geographical areas is reflective~~to assure the membership is inclusive and reflects

the racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and economic diversity of the ~~makeup of this~~ state. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the Governor for the unexpired portion of the term.

(c) The board, pursuant to the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act, Chapter 22 of Title 41, shall adopt and enforce reasonable rules as the board determines necessary to effectively and efficiently carry out its official duty of licensing and regulating professional bail bond companies and professional bondsmen.

(d) Each member of the board shall receive travel and per diem compensation for expenses incurred in the conduct of official duties while attending meetings and transacting the business of the board, in accordance with applicable state travel and per diem paid to state employees. The compensation of members shall be paid from funds available to the board in the same manner as other expenses are paid."

"§15-13-205

At the initial meeting of the board ~~and each time a new member is appointed to the board~~, the members of the board shall select from among their members a ~~president~~chair to preside over meetings of the board, a vice ~~president~~chair to preside in the absence of the ~~president~~chair, and a secretary."

"§15-13-210

(a) An application and all information on an application for ~~licensure~~a license pursuant to this article shall be treated as confidential and shall be filed with the

board on forms prescribed by the board. The application shall include all of the following information of the applicant:

(1) His or her full name.

(2) His or her date of birth.

(3) All residences during the immediate past five years.

(4) All employment or occupations engaged in during the immediate past five years.

(5) A list of convictions and pending charges involving a felony or misdemeanor in any jurisdiction.

(b)(1) On or before September 1 each year, the board shall send an email reminder to each licensee stating that the last day for submitting an application for a license renewal is September 30 of that year.

(2) Failure to submit a renewal application by September 30 shall result in a late application fee of one hundred twenty-five dollars ($125)."

"§15-13-211

Each individual applicant shall meet all of the following criteria, demonstrating that he or she:

(1) Is at least 21 years of age.

(2) Has not been declared by any court of competent jurisdiction as incompetent by reason of mental defect or disease unless a court of competent jurisdiction has subsequently declared the applicant competent.

(3) Has not been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude, with the board having the final determination on the interpretation of moral turpitude.

(4) Has not been convicted of a felony.

(5) Has successfully completed ~~pre-licensure~~pre-license education administered by an educational provider approved by the board.

(6) Has been a resident of this state for at least one year, as demonstrated by the applicant's Alabama driver license or Alabama nondriver identification card."

"§15-13-217

(a) A professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent commencing business in any judicial circuit in this state on and after June 1, 2020, shall attend a 16-hour instructional course conducted by an educational provider approved by the board and pass an examination approved by the board and administered by an educational provider approved by the board. Upon completion of the course and passage of the examination, the individual shall be awarded a ~~pre-licensure~~pre-license examination certificate by the board, copies of which may be submitted to the presiding circuit judge, or other judicial authority, along with the other requirements set forth in Section 15-13-159 or Section 15-13-160. Those professional bondsmen, professional surety bondsmen, and recovery agents doing business immediately prior to June 1, 2020, are exempt from the initial instructional course and examination.

(b) Unless exempted pursuant to subsection (i), a professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent making an annual filing in any circuit in this state pursuant to Section 15-13-159 or Section 15-13-160 on

and after March 1, 2020, shall first complete eight hours of continuing education conducted by an educational provider approved by the board. A professional bail company owner, who is at least 55 years of age and has five years of experience in the profession, shall only be required to complete four hours of continuing education. The educational provider approved by the board shall provide the board with the name of all professional bondsmen, professional surety bondsmen, or recovery agents completing eight hours of continuing education. Upon completion of the eight hours of continuing education, the individual shall request issuance of an annual continuing education certificate from the board, copies of which may be submitted to the presiding circuit judge along with the other requirements set forth in Section 15-13-159 or Section 15-13-160.

(c) The instructional course, examination, or continuing education courses shall be taught or sponsored by an educational provider approved by the board, which must apply annually for authority to offer such examination or courses.

(d) A list of approved course providers shall be published on the website of the board.

(e) The cost of the instructional course shall be set by the approved course provider but shall not exceed five hundred dollars ($500) per course. Upon completion of the instructional course, the approved course provider shall issue an instructional course completion certificate in a form approved by the board. This completion certificate, along with

the application fee, must be presented to the board in order to take the ~~pre-licensure~~pre-license examination. An instructional course completion certificate shall be valid for a period of 12 months.

(f) The cost of continuing education courses shall be set by the approved course provider but shall not exceed seventy-five dollars ($75) per hour. Any fee required to be paid by a course provider for reporting continuing education course completion to the board may be added to the maximum charges provided in this subsection.

(g) Each professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, and recovery agent must renew his or her certification with the board by completing eight hours of approved continuing education prior to September 30 each year. Late renewal within the next 12 months may be had by completing the eight hours of continuing education and paying a renewal license fee of twice the amount otherwise required. If a professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent fails to renew a certification for a 12-month period, the professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent will be required to take the instructional course and examination to again become certified.

(h) The board, by rule, shall set the fees to be paid to the board in the administration of this section, not to exceed the maximum amounts set forth below:

(1)a. Application fee for a professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or a recovery agent, a

nonrefundable fee to be paid to take the examination and for the issuance of the ~~pre-licensure~~pre-license examination certificate, per examination attempt: Up to five hundred dollars ($500).

b. Application fee for a professional bail company or a professional surety company, a nonrefundable fee to be paid for the issuance of an initial license: Up to five hundred dollars ($500). Payment of this fee does not alleviate the requirement that each individual professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, and recovery agent be licensed under this chapter.

(2)a. Annual license renewal fee for a professional bondsman, professional surety bondsman, or recovery agent, to be paid to receive the annual continuing education certificate: From fifty dollars ($50) up to five hundred dollars ($500).

b. Annual license renewal fee for a professional bail company or a professional surety company, to be paid to receive the renewal license: Up to one hundred dollars ($100).

(3) A late fee to be charged for any late license renewal. The late fee shall be equal to the amount of the license renewal fee.

(4) Renewal of an inactive license: Up to one hundred dollars ($100). The renewal is subject to the following requirements:

a. A licensee may place their license into inactive status at anytime and renew the inactive license during the renewal period.

b. Failure to renew an inactive license will result in a late fee added to the license renewal fee equal to the amount of the license renewal fee.

c. The licensee may revert to active status once they pay for an active license, pass a background check, and complete the continuing education requirements.

(i) Any professional bondsman or professional bail company owner who, on August 1, 2021, is at least 65 years of age and has 15 years of experience in the profession, shall be exempt from the continuing education requirements of this article.

(j) The board shall adopt rules necessary to carry out this section."

Section 2. This act shall become effective on October 1, 2026.

Speaker of the House of Representatives

President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

House of Representatives

I hereby certify that the within Act originated in and was passed by the House 26-Feb-26, as amended.

John Treadwell
Clerk

Senate	08-Apr-26	Amended and Passed
House	09-Apr-26	Concurred in Senate Amendment

APPROVED 4-15-2026

TIME 2:20 pm

Kay Ivey
GOVERNOR

Alabama Secretary Of State

Act Num....: 2026-542
Bill Num...: H-302

Recv'd 04/15/26 03:15pmKCW

ENGROSSED

SPONSOR

Brown

CO-SPONSORS

HOUSE ACTION

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE RESOLUTION AS REQUIRED IN SECTION C OF ACT NO. 81-889 WAS ADOPTED AND IS ATTACHED TO THE BILL, H.B. 302

YEAS 81 NAYS 5

JOHN TREADWELL, Clerk

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE NOTICE & PROOF IS ATTACHED TO THE BILL, H.B. _____ AS REQUIRED IN THE GENERAL ACTS OF ALABAMA, 1975 ACT NO. 919.

JOHN TREADWELL, Clerk

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

House Conferees _____

_____

_____

SENATE ACTION

DATE: 2/26 2026

RD 1 RFD Judy

This Bill was referred to the Standing Committe of the Senate on Judy and was acted upon by such Committee i session and is by order of the Committe returned therefrom with a favorable repor w/amend(s) 1 w/sub _____ by a vote of yeas 13 nays 0 abstain 0 this 11th day of March 20 26 Will Barfield, Chair

DATE: 3-11 20 2(

RF (AS AMD) RD 2 CAL

DATE: 20___

RE-REFERRED ☐ RE-COMMITTED ☐

Committee _____

I hereby certify that the Resolution as required in Section C of Act No. 81-889 was adopted and is attached to the Bill, HB _____.

YEAS _____ NAYS _____

PATRICK HARRIS, Secretary

FURTHER SENATE ACTION (OVER)

Appendix III: Professional Services by Vendor

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Administrative Services				
Accounting and Auditing Services				
Smith Warren Management Services	$ 33,750.00	$ 55,000.00	$ 27,500.00	$
The Austin Group, LLC	17,151.05			
Advertising Services				
Legislative Services Agency	1,000.00	$	1,700.00	100.00
Personnel Department Services				
State Personnel Department	408.00	418.00	443.00	450.00
Collection Services				
Alabama Interactive LLC			3,000.00	27,000.00
Information & Research Services				
AL State Law Enforcement Agency			11,697.50	375.00
Mailing Services				
Department of Finance	18.80	24.55	2.24	0.72
Managerial Services				
Smith Warren Management Services			56,000.00	75,580.70
Inter-Departmental Professional Services				
AL State Law Enforcement Agency				25.00
Legislative Services Agency		100.00	100.00	100.00
Office of Information Technology				112.88
Total Administrative Services	**52,327.85**	**55,542.55**	**100,442.74**	**103,744.30**
Data Processing Services				
Data Processing				
Alabama Interactive		11,580.00	23,320.00	25,500.00
Office of Information Technology	590.51	759.47	1,413.01	1,153.98
SBS Billing				
Department of Finance	1,518.51	2,122.55	3,098.23	2,155.80
Finance & IT Planning/Oversight				
Office of Information Technology	15.73	15.73	18.59	17.74
Comptroller Services				
Department of Finance	154.00	487.00	967.00	1,569.00
Total Data Processing Services	**2,278.75**	**14,964.75**	**28,816.83**	**30,396.52**

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Legal Services				
Court Reporter Services				
Boggs Reporting & Video LLC		1,667.00		
Huseby, LLC				745.60
Jennifer L Kissic			243.00	
Total Legal Services		**1,667.00**	**243.00**	**745.60**
Total Professional Services	**$ 54,606.60**	**$ 72,174.30**	**$ 129,502.57**	**$ 134,886.42**

Appendix IV: Board Members

ALABAMA PROFESSIONAL BAIL BONDING BOARD
400 South Union Street, Suite 340
Email : apbb.brenda@gmail.com
Website: www.apbb.alabama.gov
Telephone (334) 781-4942

July 27, 2026

Mr. Rodney Wagstaff
Examiners of Public Accounts
401 Adams Avenue, Suite 280
Montgomery, Alabama 36104-4338

Dear Mr. Wagstaff,

Please find below the members appointed to the Board during the audit period. Let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick D. McWhorter
Executive Director

Board Member	Appointment	Expiration	Position
Jimmie Lay Fultondale, Alabama 35068 Representing 6th Congressional District	October 9, 2019	October 8, 2027	Chair
Jennifer Collard Foster, Alabama 35463 Representing 7th Congressional District	January 6, 2022	October 8, 2027	
Carla H. Woodall Dothan, Alabama 36303 Representing Circuit Clerks	January 6, 2022	October 8, 2027	Secretary
Gustavius Maxie Prattville, Alabama 36067 Representing 2nd Congressional District	October 9, 2019	October 8, 2027	
Barry Johnson Roanoke, Alabama 36274 Representing 3rd Congressional District	October 9, 2019	October 8, 2027	
Alexis L. Wooden Decatur, Alabama 35603 Representing 5th Congressional District	October 9, 2023	October 8, 2027	
John W. Vaughn Anniston, Alabama 36206 State-At-Large	October 9, 2023	October 8, 2027	
Chris McNeill Semmes, Alabama 36575 Representing 1st Congressional District	October 9, 2019	October 8, 2027	
Honorable Charles Zack Moore Mobile, Alabama Representing District or Municipal Court Judges	September 26, 2025	October 8, 2027	

Appendix V: Board's Response

ALABAMA PROFESSIONAL BAIL BONDING BOARD
400 South Union Street, Suite 340
Telephone (334) 578-8315
Fax : (334) 694-8451
www.apbb.alabama.gov

October 9, 2026

Ms. Dixie Broadwater Thomas, CFE
Director of Operational Audits
Examiners of Public Accounts
401 Adams Avenue, Suite 280
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

Dear Dixie:

Here are our responses to the significant issue and matters of concern raised in your recent audit of the Professional Bail Bonding Board.

Significant Issue 2026-001: Prior to our firm assuming the contract for management services of this Board on July 21, 2026, we understand that there were various problems with contracts allowed to expire, etc. Those issues have been corrected, and we now have in place a permanent contract, procured through the RFP process and signed by Governor Ivey October 8, 2026.

Matter of Concern 2026-002: I suspect this is an issue for many occupational licensing boards. Members are chosen because they are leaders in their respective industries, and would naturally be involved in various trade associations. In such a competitive environment, I would be surprised if there was not feelings such as these. However, in my time working with this Board, I can say that I have not seen any indication of selective enforcement or the shaping of decisions to benefit a Board member.

Matter of Concern 2026-003: I cannot speak to previous experiences, but it will be our policy and practice to ensure that all licensees are fully informed of actions and changes in regs and laws that will affect them.

Matter of Concern 2026-004: This is another major emphasis for us. It is our aim to process all licenses and renewals in the timeliest manner possible. The only issues which typically hold up the processing of requests pertain to qualifications, which generally must be determined by our Investigative Committee.

Matter of Concern 2026-005: I would respond to this by saying that most business people feel government regulations are unnecessary restrictions. I believe there is a great need for regulation of this industry. We will have to prove that we are enforcing the laws in a fair and equitable fashion.

Matter of Concern 2026-006: I cannot speak to past practices, but we have redundant systems in place to ensure that every call is handled by an experienced licensing professional. The complaint of not receiving timely responses to inquiries should be resolved.

Matter of Concern 2026-007: I believe that the new staff we have in place will resolve this issue as well. We will take special care to notify licensees of complaints and resolution of those complaints. We will take all steps necessary to resolve complaints in the proper manner.

Please let us know if you require further information.

Sincerely,

Patrick D. McWhorter, Sr.
Executive Director