
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS.

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

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



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



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

3 The purpose of this Act is to:

4 (1) Extend until June 30, 2033, the limited exemption from
5 licensing requirements for qualified electricians that
6 was originally enacted by Act 65, Session Laws of
7 Hawaii 2013, and extended pursuant to Act 60, Session
8 Laws of Hawaii 2018; and

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

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

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

17 this chapter:

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

19 (2) An assessment of the availability of continuing
20 education, training, or both, necessary for licensed



1 electricians to acquire or keep current those skills
 2 related to performing high voltage work;
 3 (3) The number of licensed electricians in the State who
 4 are qualified to perform high voltage electrical work;
 5 and
 6 (4) Recommendations on opportunities for growth in the
 7 high voltage work subspecialty.
 8 (d) For purposes of this section, "high voltage" means six
 9 hundred volts or higher."

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

13 "SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;
 14 provided that on June 30, [~~2023~~,] 2033, this Act shall be
 15 repealed and section 448E-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes, shall be
 16 reenacted in the form in which it read on the day before the
 17 effective date of this Act."

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

20 "SECTION 3. The board of electricians and plumbers shall
 21 submit reports to the legislature no later than twenty days



1 prior to the convening of the regular sessions of 2019, 2020,
2 2021, and 2022~~[, and 2023]~~. The reports shall include but not
3 be limited to the following:

- 4 (1) Any programs in the State that offer vocational
5 training for licensed electricians to perform high
6 voltage electrical work;
- 7 (2) Availability of continuing education, training, or
8 both, necessary for licensed electricians to acquire
9 or keep current those skills related to performing
10 high voltage work;
- 11 (3) The number of licensed electricians in the State
12 qualified to perform high voltage electrical work; and
- 13 (4) Opportunities for growth in the high voltage work
14 subspecialty."

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

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



1 Statutes, as added by section 2 of this Act, shall not be
2 repealed when that section is reenacted on June 30, 2033,
3 pursuant to section 4 of Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, as
4 amended by this Act.



Report Title:

Electrical Contractors; Licensing; Exemptions; High Voltage; Reports

Description:

Extends until 6/30/2033 Act 65, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, as extended by Act 60, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, which provides a limited exemption to the licensing requirements for certain individuals in situations when an electric utility must retain qualified individuals to work with high voltage (six hundred volts or higher) who are not licensed in the State but are otherwise deemed qualified by the electric utility, provided that the public utility certifies to the board of electricians and plumbers that, after a hiring call, no electrician sufficiently qualified and licensed in the State to perform high voltage electrical work applied to timely perform or complete the necessary job or task before the public utility recruited outside the State. Makes permanent the requirement for the board of electricians and plumbers to submit to the legislature annual reports relating to high voltage electrical work. Effective 7/1/2030. (HD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

