

By: Huffman, et al.

S.B. No. 1620

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the Texas forensic analyst apprenticeship pilot program.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 72, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter H to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER H. TEXAS FORENSIC ANALYST APPRENTICESHIP PILOT PROGRAM

Sec. 72.201. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Accredited crime laboratory" means a crime laboratory, as that term is defined by Article 38.35, Code of Criminal Procedure, that has been accredited under Article 38.01 of that code.

(2) "Commission" means the Texas Forensic Science Commission.

(3) "Pilot program" means the Texas forensic analyst apprenticeship pilot program established under this subchapter.

Sec. 72.202. TEXAS FORENSIC ANALYST APPRENTICESHIP PILOT PROGRAM. (a) The office shall establish the Texas forensic analyst apprenticeship pilot program to increase the forensic science workforce capacity in this state. The office shall collaborate with the commission as necessary to administer the pilot program.

(b) To implement the pilot program, the office shall enter into contracts with:

(1) general academic teaching institutions or medical

1 and dental units, as those terms are defined by Section 61.003,
2 Education Code, that provide relevant training programs in forensic
3 disciplines; and

4 (2) each publicly funded accredited crime laboratory
5 that is awarded an apprentice position by the commission under
6 Section 72.203.

7 Sec. 72.203. FORENSIC ANALYST APPRENTICE POSITIONS; RULES.

8 (a) In consultation with the office, the commission by rule shall
9 adopt eligibility requirements for:

10 (1) individuals who may apply for an apprentice
11 position under the pilot program; and

12 (2) publicly funded accredited crime laboratories
13 that may apply to sponsor an apprentice under the pilot program.

14 (b) In establishing the eligibility requirements under
15 Subsection (a), the commission shall prioritize the long-term
16 retention of forensic analysts in accredited crime laboratories in
17 this state.

18 (c) The commission shall award apprentice positions to
19 individuals and accredited crime laboratories that meet the
20 eligibility requirements established under Subsection (a). The
21 commission shall enter into contracts with the laboratories
22 selected to sponsor apprentices under the pilot program.

23 (d) The commission shall consult with the Texas Association
24 of Crime Lab Directors to determine the current need for forensic
25 analyst apprentices in each forensic discipline.

26 Sec. 72.204. EXPIRATION. This subchapter expires September
27 1, 2030.

1 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.