

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 60th Legislature (2026)

SENATE BILL 1538

By: Pugh

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to driver licenses; requiring Service Oklahoma to deny certain licenses to certain persons who do not provide certain documentation; providing for certain written statement by parent or legal guardian; providing for certain written statement by employer; requiring certain school officers to provide certain documentation; requiring Service Oklahoma to create certain documentation forms and certificates; requiring persons under certain age to demonstrate certain reading proficiency to apply for certain license; establishing criteria to establish certain reading proficiency; allowing for verification for certain reading proficiency test taken in another state; providing for codification; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 6-107.8 of Title 47, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. Service Oklahoma shall deny a license, restricted license, or instruction permit for the operation of a motor vehicle to any person under eighteen (18) years of age who does not, at the time of application, present documentation:

1 1. That such person:

- 2 a. is a student enrolled in a public or private secondary
3 school, including any technology center school, of
4 this state or any other state,
5 b. has received a diploma or certificate of completion
6 from a secondary school of this state or any other
7 state,
8 c. is enrolled and making satisfactory progress in a
9 program leading to a certificate of high school
10 equivalency issued by the State Department of
11 Education, or has obtained such certificate,
12 d. is excused from such requirement pursuant to an excuse
13 provided in Section 10-105 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma
14 Statutes or due to circumstances beyond the control of
15 such person, or
16 e. is excused from such requirement pursuant to
17 subsection C of this section; and

18 2. That such person has successfully passed the criterion-
19 referenced reading test required for all eighth-grade students or an
20 alternative reading proficiency test approved by the State
21 Department of Education, pursuant to the provisions of Section 2 of
22 this act, demonstrating reading proficiency at the eighth-grade
23 reading level, unless such student is excused from such requirement
24 pursuant to the provisions of Section 2 of this act.

1 When school is not in regular session, as established by the
2 school district pursuant to Section 1-109 of Title 70 of the
3 Oklahoma Statutes, a person under eighteen (18) years of age may
4 satisfy the documentation requirement of this subsection by
5 providing a notarized written statement from and signed by the legal
6 custodial parent or legal guardian of such person to Service
7 Oklahoma stating that such person completed the immediately previous
8 school year and is enrolled or intends to enroll for the immediately
9 subsequent school year.

10 B. 1. A person under eighteen (18) years of age who is
11 receiving education by other means, including education at home
12 pursuant to Section 4 of Article XIII of the Oklahoma Constitution,
13 shall satisfy the documentation requirement of paragraph 1 of
14 subsection A of this section by providing a written statement from
15 and signed by the legal custodial parent or legal guardian of such
16 person to Service Oklahoma stating that such person is receiving
17 instruction by other means pursuant to Section 4 of Article XIII of
18 the Oklahoma Constitution.

19 2. Any person who falsifies the information required in such
20 documentation shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a misdemeanor.

21 C. 1. A person under eighteen (18) years of age who does not
22 meet the requirements of subparagraphs a through c of paragraph 1 of
23 subsection A of this section or the requirements of subsection B of
24 this section may retain or be issued a driver license if:

- a. the person is employed at least twenty-four (24) hours per week, and
- b. the employer of such person verifies the employment on a form prescribed by Service Oklahoma.

2. Any person who has retained or been issued a driver license pursuant to this subsection who leaves such employment shall have fifteen (15) days from the date of termination of employment to provide verification of employment from a new employer.

3. Any person who falsifies the information required in such documentation shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a misdemeanor.

D. 1. School district attendance officers, upon request, shall provide a documentation of enrollment status form, established and approved by Service Oklahoma, to any person under eighteen (18) years of age who is properly enrolled in a school for which the attendance officer is responsible, for presentation to Service Oklahoma upon application for or reinstatement of an instruction permit, restricted license, or license to operate a motor vehicle.

2. Except as provided in subsection E of this section, whenever a person over fourteen (14) years of age and under eighteen (18) years of age, who has a driver license or permit issued by Service Oklahoma, withdraws from school, the attendance officer shall notify Service Oklahoma of such withdrawal through a documentation of enrollment status form.

1 3. Within fifteen (15) business days of the receipt of such
2 notice, Service Oklahoma shall provide written notice to such person
3 that his or her license will be canceled thirty (30) days following
4 the date such notice to the person was sent, unless documentation of
5 compliance with the provisions of this section is received by
6 Service Oklahoma before such time has elapsed. If such person does
7 not submit documentation demonstrating compliance with the
8 provisions of this section, Service Oklahoma shall cancel the
9 driving privileges of such person.

10 E. When the withdrawal from school of a person under eighteen
11 (18) years of age is:

12 1. Due to circumstances beyond the control of such person;

13 2. Pursuant to any lawful excuse; or

14 3. For the purpose of transfer to another school, including
15 education at home pursuant to Section 4 of Article XIII of the
16 Oklahoma Constitution, as confirmed in writing by the legal
17 custodial parent or legal guardian of such person,
18 no notice, as required by subsection D of this section, shall be
19 sent to Service Oklahoma or, if sent, such notice shall be
20 disregarded by Service Oklahoma. If such person is applying for a
21 license, restricted license, or instruction permit, the attendance
22 officer shall provide the person with documentation to present to
23 Service Oklahoma to excuse the person from the requirements of this
24 section.

1 F. Every school district shall, upon request, provide
2 documentation of reading proficiency for any person under eighteen
3 (18) years of age enrolled in such school district by certifying
4 passage of a reading examination pursuant to the provisions of
5 Section 2 of this act.

6 G. The provisions of this section shall be inapplicable with
7 respect to any person under eighteen (18) years of age upon whom
8 rights of majority have been conferred pursuant to Sections 91
9 through 94 of Title 10 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

10 H. Service Oklahoma shall establish and approve documentation
11 forms and certificates required by this section for use by school
12 districts to comply with the provisions of this section.

13 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
14 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1210.518 of Title 70, unless
15 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

16 A. Pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 2 of subsection A of
17 Section 1 of this act, any person under eighteen (18) years of age
18 wishing to apply for a driver license or permit shall successfully
19 demonstrate a satisfactory reading ability at the eighth-grade
20 reading level by meeting the following criteria:

21 1. A student enrolled in a public school shall successfully
22 complete the reading portion of the statewide assessment
23 administered pursuant to Section 1210.508 of Title 70 of the
24 Oklahoma Statutes and that is offered in the eighth grade.

1 Following the administration of this assessment in the eighth grade,
2 any student not successfully completing the reading portion shall be
3 assigned a plan of remedial reading;

4 2. Any student not successful in completing the reading portion
5 of the state assessment may take a comparable alternative reading
6 proficiency test, approved by the State Department of Education, in
7 order to satisfy the criteria for a driver license or permit.

8 Subsequent successful completion of an alternative reading
9 proficiency test shall serve to satisfy any retake requirement for
10 the reading portion of the state assessment in the eighth grade in
11 the Oklahoma School Testing Program;

12 3. School districts shall notify, in writing, each student who
13 takes the reading portion of the state assessment for the eighth
14 grade or who takes an alternative reading proficiency test and the
15 student's legal custodial parent or legal guardian of the results.
16 If the student fails to perform satisfactorily on the test, the
17 notice shall inform the student of the reading proficiency driver
18 license requirement and the school's remediation plan for the
19 student. Upon the student's successful completion of the test, the
20 school shall furnish the student with the documentation needed for
21 the driver license application in this state; and

22 4. Unless alternatively documented according to the provisions
23 of subsection C of this section, students under eighteen (18) years
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1 of age shall successfully complete a reading proficiency test
2 approved by the State Department of Education.

3 B. Alternative reading proficiency tests shall be offered by
4 testing sites, which shall include the public schools at least four
5 times per calendar year, and may include any of the following that
6 choose to participate:

- 7 1. Technology center school districts;
- 8 2. Regional education service centers;
- 9 3. Colleges;
- 10 4. Accredited private schools; and
- 11 5. Other sites approved by the State Department of Education.

12 A student may take the test as often as wished, subject to the
13 provisions of this section. Testing sites shall provide the first
14 alternative reading proficiency test for each student at no cost to
15 the student. Students may be assessed a fee not to exceed Twenty-
16 five Dollars (\$25.00) by the testing site for each subsequent
17 alternative reading proficiency test taken.

18 C. A school district shall provide for alternative
19 documentation of reading proficiency for the purposes of paragraph 2
20 of subsection A of Section 1 of this act for any student with an
21 individualized education program that, at a minimum, is in an area
22 related to reading. The alternative documentation shall be
23 furnished to such student who is performing satisfactorily in
24 reading pursuant to the individualized education program of the

1 student. Parents of disabled students educated pursuant to the
2 provisions of Section 4 of Article XIII of the Oklahoma Constitution
3 may satisfy the requirement of paragraph 2 of subsection A of
4 Section 1 of this act by signing an affidavit that, based upon their
5 best information and belief, if their child was enrolled in public
6 school the child would qualify for an individualized education
7 program in an area related to reading and that, in their judgment,
8 their child is performing satisfactorily in reading and is therefore
9 academically qualified to satisfy the requirement of paragraph 2 of
10 subsection A of Section 1 of this act.

11 D. Any person under eighteen (18) years of age who has
12 previously successfully passed a reading proficiency test from
13 another state may submit the results of such test to the State
14 Department of Education for verification and approval. The State
15 Department of Education shall have thirty (30) days from the receipt
16 of such submitted results to verify that the reading proficiency
17 requirements from the other state are equivalent or comparable to
18 the reading proficiency requirements established for Oklahoma
19 students pursuant to this section. Upon verification and approval
20 by the State Department of Education, the Department shall furnish
21 such person with the documentation needed for the driver license
22 application in this state. If the reading proficiency documentation
23 submitted by the person is disapproved by the Department, the person
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1 may take an alterative reading proficiency test as provided for in
2 subsection B of this section.

3 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 2026.

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