

Fire Alarm, Burglar Alarm and Locksmith Advisory Committee



consumer *brief*

THE HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

The Fire Alarm, Burglar Alarm and Locksmith Advisory Committee, a unit within the New Jersey Board of Examiners of Electrical Contractors, was established in 1997 through amendments to the Electrical Contractors' Licensing Act of 1962.

The Advisory Committee issues licenses to qualified individuals who seek to install, service or monitor burglar alarm and fire alarm systems and to qualified individuals who seek to be employed as locksmiths.

The Advisory Committee also issues licenses to alarm and locksmith businesses. The Advisory Committee enforces the highest standards of practice and has the authority to discipline licensees when necessary.

Fifteen residents of New Jersey, all of whom are appointed for a three-year term, comprise the Advisory Committee.

REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE

The requirements for a license to work as a burglar alarm or fire alarm technician are as follows:

- The applicant must be at least 18 years old;
- He/she must be of good moral character;
- He/she must not have been convicted of a crime of the first, second or third degree within 10 years prior to filing of the application for licensure;
- He/she must not have been convicted of a crime of the fourth degree offense of engaging in the unlicensed practice of electrical engineering;
- The applicant must have earned a high school diploma or equivalency certificate;
- He/she must have successfully completed either the burglar alarm or fire alarm examination, whichever applies to the field in which the applicant is seeking licensure;

- The applicant must have at least four years of experience in the burglar alarm or fire alarm business, and those four years of experience must immediately precede the submission of the application. This experience requirement may be satisfied by one of the following:

- (1) Proof that the applicant has completed four years of practical hands-on experience, including 6,720 hours working with tools in the installation, alteration or repair of wiring for fire alarms, burglar alarms and/or electronic security systems, and proof that he/she has completed 80 hours of technical courses applicable to the field in which he/she is seeking licensure.

The 80 hours of technical courses shall include two hours of training in the Barrier-Free Subcode; two hours of training in the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code; exclusive of the Barrier-Free Subcode; two hours of training in the Americans with Disabilities Act Code; two hours of training in industrial safety; and 72 hours of training in trade-related subjects.

"Practical hands on experience" shall not include time spent supervising, engaging in the practice of engineering, estimating and performing other managerial tasks relevant to the alarm business. The applicant shall submit a certification by an employer(s) verifying his/her hands-on experience;

- (2) Proof of having earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and having completed one year of practical hands-on experience, as defined in item (1) above, which shall include a minimum of 1,680 hours; OR

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(3) Proof of having completed a minimum of a one-year course in the study of trade-related electronics at a technical school and having completed three years of practical hands-on experience as defined in item (1) above, which shall include a minimum of 5,040 hours. The applicant shall submit a certification from an employer(s) verifying his/her hands-on experience.

- The applicant must obtain a passing score on the burglar alarm exam or the fire alarm exam, respectively, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 13:31A-3.1*.

For a detailed description of the requirements to run a burglar alarm or fire alarm business, please go to the Committee's Web site, www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/fbl, go to the link for Laws and Regulations and then go to *N.J.A.C. 13:31A-3.5*.

LOCKSMITHING: DEFINITION AND REQUIREMENTS

Locksmithing services means the modification, recombination, repair or installation of mechanical locking devices and electronic security systems for any type of compensation. These services include repairing, rebuilding, recoding, servicing, adjusting, installing, manipulating or bypassing of a mechanical or electronic locking device, for controlled access or egress to premises, vehicles, safes, vaults, safe doors, lock boxes, A.T.M.'s, or other devices for safeguarding areas where access is meant to be limited.

"Locksmithing services" does not include the installation of a prefabricated lock set and door knob into a door for a resident.

The requirements to be licensed as a locksmith in New Jersey are as follows:

- The applicant must be at least 18 years old;
- He/she must be of good moral character pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 45:5A-27*;
- He/she must not have been convicted of a crime of the first, second or third degree within 10 years prior to the filing of the application for licensure;
- He/she must hold a high school diploma or equivalency certificate;
- He/she must have successfully completed the locksmithing examination set forth in *N.J.A.C. 13:31A-2.3*; and
- The applicant must have completed at least three years of practical hands-on experience in the provision of locksmithing services. "Three years" means a 36-month period, with at least 20 working days per month, during which he/she has been engaged in the full-time provision of locksmithing services equal to a minimum of 5,040 hours; OR

- The applicant must have successfully completed a two-year apprenticeship program in the provision of locksmithing services approved by the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training of the United States Department of Labor.

For a detailed description of the requirements to engage in a business offering locksmithing services, go to the Committee's Web site and click on the link for Laws and Regulations (or Applications) and then go to *N.J.A.C. 13:31A-2.6*.

IN CONCLUSION

The Advisory Committee works diligently to ensure that licensed individuals and businesses always act to protect the safety, health and welfare of the public, and by ensuring that they function effectively and efficiently and do so with the highest ethical standards.

The Advisory Committee's Web site is a great place to visit to learn more about the Advisory Committee's duties, standards and licensees. Once you are there you can go to the Licensee Information link to find out if the licensee you are considering hiring has a license that is current and in good standing, and whether any disciplinary action has been taken against that person.

The Advisory Committee recommends that consumers only hire *LICENSED* locksmiths and burglar alarm and fire alarm technicians and properly licensed businesses that offer locksmithing and burglar and fire alarm services. It is a very good idea to ask to see an individual's State-issued identification license card which includes a photograph. This is the best way to protect yourself against unscrupulous individuals who operate without a license.

The Committee never waives from its responsibility to protect the safety, health and welfare of the people of New Jersey and to maintain and enforce the highest standards of performance and conduct through its activities. The Committee has the power to suspend or revoke any license it issues if it is deemed appropriate to do so.

Consumers who have a complaint about one of the Committee's licensees may go to the Consumer Information link on the Web site and then go to the Complaint Form link. That form must be downloaded, printed out, and then filled out by hand. It should then be mailed to the Committee along with photocopies of any relevant documents. The investigation and review of the matter may take several months and, of course, the licensee will have an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

