OKLAHOMA BOARD OF PRIVATE VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

ENABLING STATUTE

Title 70 O.S. §21-101, et seq.

** Effective August 22, 2014 **

Form 1330CM, to isolate the Enabling Statute from prior Form 1265CM (Statute and related Rules).
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Section 21-101 - Definitions
As used in Sections 21-101 through 21-203 of this title:

1. "Act" means Sections 21-201\(^1\) through 21-203 of this title that enables the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools to approve licenses for state authorization of postsecondary education or certain other forms of vocational-technical training and education;

2. "Private school" means any privately owned, nonpublic entity that receives remuneration that is approved for a state authorization license and provides postsecondary education, or provides vocational-technical education prior to the person obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalency;

3. "Board" means the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools;

4. "Approval by the State Regents for Higher Education" means approval:
   a. for a postsecondary institution to offer one or more associate, bachelor, master, or doctoral degrees in a specific degree program,
   b. of an entity to offer distance education for a degree(s) that is granted by means of applying an interstate reciprocity agreement to which the State Regents for Higher Education is a party, or
   c. of an entity by way of the provision of documentation of independent accreditation by one or more regional or national accrediting organizations which are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education;

5. "Branch" means an additional location, separate facility, or satellite to a main school that is defined by the organizational, geographic, or legal characteristics of the entities;

6. "Business" means skills including but not limited to administration, customer relations, finance, human resources, leadership, management, marketing or strategic planning used to run a for-profit or not-for-profit entity;

7. "Combines" means offering within the same catalog, website or other form of publication or advertisement in such a way to convey that the entity makes available more than one type or level of training or education;

8. "Contact hour" means a period of time defined by a school, seminar or workshop such as fifty (50) minutes which may differ from a clock hour that will always be sixty (60) minutes in length;

9. "Correspondence course" means a form of instruction for which a student receives lessons or assignments from a private school by means of postal or other couriers;

\(^1\) A scrivener error occurred in S.B. 1460. The reference should be to 21-101 in order for the Act to encompass, as intended, all Statutory provisions about private vocational schools. Correction of the inadvertent scrivener error is under consideration in the 2017 Legislative Session.
10. "Distance education" means education or training provided outside the traditional classroom by use of electronic mediums, including but not limited to online or virtual education, e-learning or computer-based, -aided or -assisted instruction;

11. "General education" means education to complete a student's secondary education recognition providing instruction not specific to any single occupation or vocation;

12. "Industrial" means related to manufacturing or other labor which may or may not require skilled trade licensing;

13. "Occupation" or "vocation" means employment, either full-time, part-time, by contract or on a consulting basis, for which a person earns remuneration;

14. "Postgraduate certificate" means an advanced certification earned following a student's receipt of an associate, bachelor, master or doctorate degree that qualifies the individual for specialized career advancement or job assignments;

15. "Postsecondary education" means a program that requires a student to have a high school diploma, high school equivalency certificate or requires that the person be beyond the age of compulsory education;

16. "Primarily in the business of" means that an entity earns twenty percent (20%) or more of its gross revenue from providing a program(s) of instruction, as documented by certified public-accountant-prepared financial statements that are attested to as a true and correct statement of financial condition by an entity owner(s);

17. "Profession" or "professional" means those occupations or vocations relating to such fields of employment that generally require an advanced degree or for which an individual must pass extensive prelicensing testing. Examples include but are not limited to attorneys and certified professional accountants. Professions may or may not require ongoing continuing education that may be subject to the authority or jurisdiction of an alternate state agency;

18. "Program", "program of study" or "program of instruction" means a body of organized instruction that leads to a degree, certificate, diploma or other recognized educational credential, or provides transferable skills applicable to a business, professional, trade or vocational-technical or industrial occupation or vocation;

19. "Public" means an entity that is established as a governmental entity;

20. "Seminar" or "workshop" means a program of instruction that results in business, professional, or vocational-technical knowledge that applies to one or more occupations or vocations but will not provide degree credit hours, a certificate or a diploma;

21. "Solicitor" means a representative of a private school that leaves the physical facility of the school to attend job fairs, career days or other activities to market to new students or to attempt to secure new student enrollments;
22. "Technical" means those skills that are unique to certain occupations or vocations;

23. "Trade" means a skilled trade including but not limited to electrical, plumbing, and heating and air conditioning (HVAC), that requires an individual to maintain a state or municipal license; and

24. "Tuition" means a financial charge made for the provision of education or training, regardless of the term assigned to the monetary or other exchange.

**Historical Data**  

**Section 21-101.1 - Title 70. Schools**  
The term "private school" shall not include the following which are exempt from licensing by the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools:

1. Barber schools, beauty schools or other schools which are exclusively regulated or licensed pursuant to the provisions of any school-licensing law of this state, although such school may choose to apply to secure a license for state authorization from the Board;

2. Any form of flight instruction subject to regulations promulgated by the Federal Aviation Administration;

3. Parochial, private or other nonpublic schools offering programs of general education accredited or approved by the State Board of Education, the State Board of Career and Technology Education or the State Regents for Higher Education;

4. Education or training, as approved by the Board, provided and paid for by:
   a. an employer for its own employees,
   b. a professional organization, as approved by the Board, for its members,
   c. a parochial, denominational, eleemosynary school or institution, which is sectarian in nature and uniquely useful for and intrinsic to the propagation of a faith or the pursuit of the mission of the school or institution as approved by the Board, or
   d. an entity supported by taxation of a local or state source;

5. Education or training, as approved by the Board, which offers instruction solely in the field of an avocation, hobby, recreation or entertainment, as approved by the Board;

6. Professional prelicensing programs or continuing education programs when an alternate state agency maintains complete authority or jurisdiction over the right to offer or certify such a program, regardless if the other agency mandates the subject matter of the program;
7. Postgraduate certificates offered or provided by a school that has approval for that specific program issued by another state agency or an accrediting agency approved by the Board;

8. If a private school combines training or education that is both licensed and not licensed by another state agency, licensing by the Board will be required for the entity's combined programs. However, the Board will defer to the other state agency on matters contained in the other agency's regulations and will refrain from establishing conflicting requirements. Matters to be governed by the other state agency may include but are not limited to curriculum, testing or certification completion. The Board may require a private school to document its approval by any other state agency or an accrediting organization; and

9. Seminars or workshops offered by an entity that:
   a. is not primarily in the business of providing programs of instruction,
   b. provides instruction to advance the personal development or general, transferable skills of a participant, and
   c. offers aggregate clock or contact hours of no more than twenty-four (24) clock or defined contact hours per calendar quarter of the calendar year.

_Historical Data_  Laws 2014, SB 1460, c. 276, § 2.

**Section 21-102 - Title 70. Schools**

There is hereby re-created the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools which shall consist of nine (9) members of whom three shall be the Director of the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, the Chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction or their designated representatives and of whom six shall be appointed by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. Four persons shall qualify to serve on the Board provided they occupy and have occupied for the past three (3) years executive or managerial positions in private schools located in this state of the type regulated under this act. Two persons shall qualify to serve on the Board provided they occupy and have occupied for the past three (3) years executive or managerial positions in business or industry, not connected with private schools. Each of the six persons shall be appointed for a term of six (6) years, unless such term may be carried over by the Governor.


**Section 21-102.1 - Title 70. Schools**

The Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools is authorized to:

1. Appoint and fix the compensation of a director who:
   a. shall employ and fix the duties and compensation of such clerical or other assistants as are reasonably necessary to effectuate the provisions of this act, and
   b. may execute contracts on behalf of the Board;
2. Promulgate rules to include but not be limited to the implementation of minimum standards for the operation of private schools and the application of a school, seminar or workshop for a license of state authorization;

3. Approve or disapprove:
   a. applications for state authorization,
   b. other applications for licensing,
   c. requests for exemption, and
   d. requests for a definition exception;

4. Issue a private school license to document state authorization or other licensing upon determination that such school meets the standards fixed by the Board;

5. Prescribe, except as is otherwise provided by law and subject to the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act, such penalties as it may deem proper for the enforcement of this act, not to exceed One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00);

6. Fix minimum standards for private schools, which shall include standards for courses of instruction and training, qualifications of instructors, financial stability, advertising practices, and refund of tuition and fees paid by students for courses of instruction or training not completed, and shall promulgate and adopt reasonable rules and regulations for the implementation of such minimum standards for the operation of private schools;

7. Where possible, to regulate degrees offered by distance education, make use of the State Regents for Higher Education's interstate reciprocity agreements to create a more efficient and cost-effective means of the regulation of private schools;

8. Make use of interstate reciprocity agreements that reasonably satisfy the Board's minimum standards to approve state authorization or other license application, if such agreements become available for other programs the Board approves for state authorization or other license;

9. Require an entity to repay any fees charged to the Board by a financial institution or the State Treasurer for a returned check or other failed form of payment;

10. Develop annual compliance training to emphasize standards relating to the operation of a school and relicensing processes, and require attendance by a representative of each school, seminar, or workshop;

11. Provide all licensing forms free of charge via one or more electronic means, but shall charge for the pick up or mailing of a hard-copy licensing application packet to a person requesting information about private school licensing requirements;

12. Certify an electronic record or the printing of an electronically stored record as an original, subject to approval by the Oklahoma Archives and Records Commission and when in accordance with the record retention and destruction policy of the Board;
13. Collect or require the submission of data, including but not limited to:
   a. admissions,
   b. certification scores or passage rates,
   c. complaints or grievances,
   d. enrollment,
   e. funding,
   f. graduation,
   g. job longevity or retention,
   h. job placement, and
   i. other data, as necessary, to carry on the mission or duties of the Board,
   or to assist in the state's workforce development initiatives; and

14. Carry out such other duties as necessary to provide state authorization for private vocational schools, seminars, and workshops and such other schools that make offerings of courses or programs as permitted by this act.


Section 21-103 - Title 70. Schools
A. It shall be unlawful to establish, conduct, operate or maintain a private school, to solicit or canvass for scholarships or tuition to a private school, or to offer a program of education or training unless a license granting state authorization to operate such school has been issued by the Board and is in effect. A private school shall be issued only one license, regardless of the number of locations operated by such school.

B. Upon application for a license or renewal of a license, each private school shall designate a main school location. Designation of a main school and one or more branches should mirror the designations used for federal funding or accreditation.


Section 21-104 - Title 70. Schools
It shall be unlawful for any person, acting as an agent or representative of a private school giving classroom, correspondence, or distance education instruction, whether such private school be located inside or outside the State of Oklahoma, to canvass or solicit prospective students in the State of Oklahoma, except on the established and legal premises of the school, for the purpose of selling to such student any scholarship or tuition in the private school, or to take payment for the same in money, notes or other evidence of indebtedness, unless the private school has been licensed under this act, and unless a private school solicitor's license for such purpose has been issued to such person.

Section 21-105 - Title 70. Schools
A. Applications for a private school license or a private school solicitor's license shall:

1. Be filed with the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools in the manner and upon forms from the Board or substantially similar to forms implemented by the Board; and

2. Include but not be limited to the following disclosures:
   a. the name, mailing address and telephone number of the Board for the purposes of directing student complaints to the Board, and
   b. documentation of whether the proposed school will provide only postsecondary education and training or if a person who has not yet achieved a high school diploma or its equivalency will be admitted and under what specific circumstances.

B. Submissions to the Board shall be date-stamped as of the date of the physical receipt when the office is open for business.


Section 21-105.1 - Title 70. Schools
A. The existence of a private school, for the purpose of requiring a state authorization license to be obtained, shall be determined by the education or training program that is offered or proposed to be offered and such other school attributes as enumerated by the Legislature or the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools.

B. Training and education programs to be considered for state authorization licensure include:

1. Training or education that pertains to a business, professional, trade or industrial occupation or vocational-technical field that may result in the receipt of a degree, diploma or certificate;

2. Improvement or enhancement of specific or general business skills that may be used in one or more occupations;

3. Preparing a person to instruct subject matter that might otherwise not require private school licensing, such as a recreational, avocational or hobby activity, if the future instructor's training may result in the future teacher receiving remuneration for the training he or she will offer; and

4. Providing a program of prelicensing or exam preparation when not licensed or approved by another state agency.

C. Training or education to be licensed for state authorization by the Board may include a program that is offered through:

1. Traditional classrooms;
2. Short-term programs such as a seminar or workshop that does not qualify for an exemption from licensing and offers to improve or enhance specific or general business skills that may be used in one or more occupations;

3. Correspondence; and

4. Distance education.

D. An entity shall be treated as a school for purposes of licensing regardless of whether the entity:

1. Identifies itself as a school or other similar term;

2. Owns, rents or leases a physical facility or has physical space donated to conduct classes or to host a correspondence or distance education program;

3. Possesses any specific tax status granted by the Internal Revenue Service or a state's taxation authority; or

4. Proposes funding that may or may not be limited to receiving monies or other consideration through the U.S. Department of Education's Title IV or other federal mechanisms, privately paid tuition, student loans, grants, scholarships or receipt of other consideration.

_Historical Data_ Laws 2014, SB 1460, c. 276, § 8.

Section 21-105.2 - Title 70. Schools

After a school, seminar or workshop either voluntarily decides to cease offering all programs of instruction or is required to do so through proper enforcement of this act or the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools' minimum standards, the entity shall, before closure is complete, provide the Board with its appropriate arrangement for the permanent retention of students’ records.

_Historical Data_ Laws 2014, SB 1460, c. 276, § 9.

Section 21-106 - Title 70. Schools

A. A license issued pursuant to this act shall expire annually on June 30. Such license shall be renewed annually with the complete renewal application and any and all appropriate fees due prior to expiration annually on or before June 1. Licenses shall be renewed by the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools if the Board determines that such school remains in compliance with the standards or other requirements set by the Board. The license of any school licensed by the Board to provide postsecondary education or other limited offering may be revoked if the school is found to be in violation of the Oklahoma Statutes, the minimum standards established by the Board, or if an accreditation or other governmental entity's approval, material to the continuity of the school, is revoked.

B. A license of a school shall not be effective unless the private school has filed with the Board a corporate surety bond or a certificate of deposit in a manner and in an amount as is required by the Board.
C. Private schools or applicants shall pay the following base fees:

   1. One Thousand Two Hundred Dollars ($1,200.00) per license shall be paid to the Board for the issuance of an initial license for a school, seminar, or workshop to provide postsecondary education or other vocational-technical education or training pursuant to the provisions of this act;

   2. Three Hundred Dollars ($300.00) shall be paid for the initial license of each new branch. A branch's renewal fee shall be based on the tuition it collected;

   3. For each renewal of a license, a fee based on the tuition collected by a school, workshop or seminar from residents of Oklahoma or other persons present in Oklahoma, as shown in the current financial statement of the school, shall be paid to the Board. If a school, workshop or seminar does not provide adequate details of its Oklahoma tuition, then the renewal fee shall be based on the nationwide tuition reported. For each main and branch school, seminar, or workshop, the renewal fees shall be calculated based upon the level of net tuition in the immediate prior calendar year as follows:

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<tr>
<th>OKLAHOMA OR NATIONWIDE TUITION INCOME</th>
<th>RENEWAL FEE</th>
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<tr>
<td>$50,000.00 or less</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>$50,000.01 to $250,000.00</td>
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<td>$250,000.01 to $500,000.00</td>
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<td>$500,000.01 to $1,000,000.00</td>
<td>$1,100.00</td>
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<td>$1,000,000.01 to $3,000,000.00</td>
<td>$1,300.00</td>
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<td>$3,000,000.01 and above</td>
<td>$1,500.00;</td>
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   4. Solicitor license:

      a. Two Hundred Dollars ($200.00) during the first licensing period of a school, seminar or workshop, for each license,
      b. One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) for the second and consecutive licensing periods of the school, seminar or workshop, for each license applied for or renewed;

   5. Fifty Dollars ($50.00) for the review of a new catalog or changes to an approved catalog;

   6. In addition to the appropriate catalog change fee, a fee of Twenty-five Dollars ($25.00) shall be paid whenever a main or branch private school changes location; and

   7. One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) shall be paid by each school to the Board for attendance at a school workshop or webinar by the school's required personnel, although one person may attend to represent multiple, related schools.

D. If the annual licensing renewal application is not complete on or before the first day of June each year, the fee for license renewal shall become delinquent and the license shall not be renewed except upon payment of an additional late fee. Late fees shall be determined based
upon the school's past history of submitting late filings. The appropriate late fees shall be paid in full prior to the Board's issuance of a renewal license in the following amounts:

1. Two Hundred Fifty Dollars ($250.00) for a first violation;

2. Five Hundred Dollars ($500.00) for a second violation within ten (10) years of the first late filing, whether consecutive or not; and

3. One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00) for a third violation within ten (10) years of the first late filing, whether consecutive or not.

Each violation beyond the third shall result in the school, seminar or workshop being required to seek new or initial licensure and only after payment of the full fee for a new license.

E. Twenty-five Dollars ($25.00) for each license application packet, although packets provided by one or more electronic means shall be free of charge.

F. The Board shall be authorized to require reimbursement for any fees charged by a financial institution or the State Treasurer for a returned check or other failed form of payment. The amount to be reimbursed shall be invoiced to an entity within forty-five (45) days after the Board's first knowledge of the fee.

G. All fees, penalties and fines collected by the Board pursuant to the provisions of this act shall be deposited with the State Treasurer for credit to the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools Revolving Fund.

**Historical Data**

**Section 21-107 - Title 70. Schools**
Repealed by Laws 2014, SB 1460, c. 276, § 13

**Historical Data**

**Section 21-108 - Title 70. Schools**
A license or permit issued or renewed under the provisions of this act may, after reasonable notice to the private school and an opportunity to be heard, be revoked by the Board for a failure of the private school to maintain the accreditation or the minimum standards fixed by the Board by which such private school obtained its license, or to maintain the bond required by Section 6 of this act, or for a violation of any of the rules and regulations pertaining to
minimum standards of the Board. No license or permit issued under this act shall be transferable.

**Historical Data**  

**Section 21-109 - Title 70. Schools**  
The Attorney General or any local prosecuting officer, at the request of the Board or on his own motion, may bring any appropriate action or proceeding in any court of competent jurisdiction for the enforcement of this act.

**Historical Data**  

**Section 21-110 - Title 70. Schools**  
Any action of the Board respecting the issuance, denial, or revocation of a permit pursuant to Sections 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 of this act shall be subject to judicial review by the district court having jurisdiction.

**Historical Data**  

**Section 21-111 - Title 70. Schools**  
Any person violating any of the provisions of this act shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be punished by a fine of not less than One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) nor more than Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars ($2,500.00), or by imprisonment for a period of time not to exceed thirty (30) days.

**Historical Data**  

**Section 21-112 - Title 70. Schools**  
Nothing in this act shall be intended to give private schools tax exemption status except as provided by law. This act shall apply to an entity defined as a private school regardless of that entity's federal or state tax classification.

**Historical Data**  

**Section 21-116 - Title 70. Schools**  
There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund for the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools to be designated the "Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of all monies received by the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools from all fees and penalties collected by the Board pursuant to this act or rules promulgated and any other funds obtained or received by the Board. All monies in the fund shall be used exclusively for the purpose of operations and functions of the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools. All monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools. Expenditures from the fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against claims filed as
prescribed by law with the Director of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services for approval and payment.

**Historical Data**  
Laws 2004, HB 2400, c. 172, § 4, emerg. eff. July 1, 2004; Amended by Laws 2004, SB 917, c. 399, § 4; Amended by Laws 2012, HB 3079, c. 304, § 612 [repealed by Laws 2013, SB 977, c. 15, § 99, emerg. eff. April 8, 2013]); Amended by Laws 2012, SB 1865, c. 277, § 1, eff. November 1, 2012); Amended by Laws 2013, SB 977, c. 15, § 98, emerg. eff. April 8, 2013); Amended by Laws 2014, SB 1460, c. 276, § 12

[END OF THE ENABLING STATUTE, EFF. AUGUST 22, 2014.]