
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2652 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY MURT AND JAMES, JULY 1, 2020

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, JULY 1, 2020

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in employees, providing for basic
3 education and continuing education programs for municipal
4 secretaries.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Chapter 21 of Title 53 of the Pennsylvania
8 Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a subchapter to read:

9 SUBCHAPTER F

10 BASIC AND CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

11 FOR MUNICIPAL SECRETARIES

12 Sec.

13 2191. Short title of subchapter.

14 2192. Nonapplicability.

15 2193. Definitions.

16 2194. Basic and continuing education programs for municipal
17 secretaries.

18 2195. Construction.

19 § 2191. Short title of subchapter.

1 This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the
2 Municipal Secretary Education Act.

3 § 2192. Nonapplicability.

4 This subchapter does not apply to cities of the first class,
5 second class or second class A.

6 § 2193. Definitions.

7 The following words and phrases when used in this subchapter
8 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
9 context clearly indicates otherwise:

10 "Association." The Pennsylvania Local Governmental
11 Secretaries Association.

12 "Department." The Department of Community and Economic
13 Development of the Commonwealth.

14 "IIMC." The International Institute of Municipal Clerks.

15 "Municipal secretary." Any of the following:

16 (1) The appointed municipal secretary of a borough,
17 incorporated town, township of the first class or township of
18 the second class, including any municipal corporation as
19 described in this paragraph which has adopted a home rule
20 charter or optional plan.

21 (2) The appointed city clerk in a city of the third
22 class, including any city of the third class which has
23 adopted a home rule charter, optional plan or optional
24 charter.

25 § 2194. Basic and continuing education programs for municipal
26 secretaries.

27 (a) Establishment and implementation.--The department, in
28 consultation with the association, shall establish and implement
29 programs of basic training, examination and qualification of
30 municipal secretaries and of continuing education to be met by

1 persons qualified as municipal secretaries as a condition for
2 renewal. The department may contract with a third party to
3 provide the basic training, examination, qualification and
4 continuing education.

5 (b) Contents of basic training program.--

6 (1) The basic training program shall include, but not be
7 limited to, the following courses:

8 (i) Structure and function of Pennsylvania local
9 government.

10 (ii) Municipal administration/personnel management.

11 (iii) Basic budgeting.

12 (iv) Accounting and financial control.

13 (v) Community development/municipal services.

14 (vi) Meeting management.

15 (vii) Bidding and contracting.

16 (viii) Records management.

17 (ix) Management theory and practice.

18 (x) Intergovernmental cooperation.

19 (xi) Public relations.

20 (xii) Working with emergency service organizations.

21 (xiii) Municipal minutes and records and the act of
22 February 14, 2008 (P.L.6, No.3), known as the Right-to-
23 Know Law.

24 (xiv) Public notice and advertising requirements and
25 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to open meetings).

26 (xv) Other laws and recent court decisions affecting
27 the duties of municipal secretaries.

28 (xvi) Ethics.

29 (xvii) Computers and technology.

30 (2) As a prerequisite to taking the qualification

1 examination, the individual shall complete the basic training
2 program authorized by the department.

3 (3) (i) An individual shall have the option to sit for
4 the qualification examination relating to the basic
5 education program.

6 (ii) No individual shall obtain qualification unless
7 that individual has passed the basic qualification
8 examination.

9 (iii) An individual who passes the basic
10 qualification examination shall be known as a qualified
11 municipal secretary.

12 (c) Duties of department.--The department shall:

13 (1) Make certain a qualified municipal secretary
14 certificate is issued to an individual who passes the basic
15 qualification examination. The certificate shall expire one
16 year from the date of issuance, but may be renewed.

17 (2) Maintain a register that lists all qualified
18 municipal secretaries. The register shall be open to public
19 inspection and copying upon payment of a nominal fee.

20 (3) Publish, once each year, a list of all qualified
21 municipal secretaries on the department's Internet website.

22 (4) Determine and approve reasonable fees for the
23 training program and for testing and qualification. The
24 municipal secretary shall be personally liable for the cost
25 of the program, testing and qualification unless the
26 governing body that appointed the municipal secretary agrees
27 to pay for the cost in whole or in part.

28 (d) Prohibition.--It shall be unlawful on or after the
29 effective date of this subchapter for any individual to hold
30 himself out as being qualified in training under this section

1 unless the individual holds a current, valid certificate.

2 (e) Construction.--Nothing in this section shall be
3 construed to prevent any individual from participating in the
4 department's basic training program and obtaining qualification.

5 (f) Hours required.--Each qualified municipal secretary
6 shall be required to obtain eight hours of mandatory continuing
7 education during each year.

8 (g) Updates.--The department, in consultation with the
9 association, shall devise the continuing education program to
10 include, but not be limited to, updates for basic training
11 course topics and other contemporary issues.

12 (h) Notification of requirements.--The department shall
13 inform qualified municipal secretaries of the continuing
14 education requirement when it issues the certificates.

15 (i) Renewals.--Renewal of qualification shall be on an
16 annual basis upon completion of continuing education
17 requirements as provided in this subchapter. The municipal
18 secretary shall be personally liable for the cost of the program
19 and qualification unless the governing body that appointed the
20 municipal secretary agrees to pay for the cost in whole or in
21 part.

22 (j) Criteria for existing education.--The department, in
23 consultation with the association, shall adopt criteria to
24 provide municipal secretaries with existing education the right
25 to receive credit toward the Qualified Municipal Secretary
26 Program, including, but not limited to:

27 (1) Completion of the IIMC programs of Certified
28 Municipal Clerk designation or Advanced Academy for
29 Education.

30 (2) A bachelor of science degree in public

1 administration or a bachelor of arts degree in political
2 science.

3 (3) IIMC certification programs for municipal
4 secretaries not currently holding the Certified Municipal
5 Clerk or Advanced Academy for Education designation.

6 § 2195. Construction.

7 Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to require a
8 municipal secretary to become a qualified municipal secretary or
9 maintain that qualification, unless required by the municipal
10 governing body that appointed the secretary.

11 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.