

SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN CHAPTER 120

CHAPTER 95-147

Senate Bill 596 Amends Paragraphs 120.53(5)(b), F.S., 120.54(4)(c), (11)(b), (17), F.S., 120.56(2), (3), (4), F.S., 120.565, F.S., 120.59(4), F.S., 120.60(2), (3), (5)(b), F.S., 120.62, F.S., 120.65(4), F.S., 120.66(1)(b), (2), (3), F.S., 120.69(4)(c), F.S., and 120.71(1), F.S, as follows:

Section 757. Paragraph (b) of subsection (5) of section 120.53, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

120.53 Adoption of rules of procedure and public inspection.--

(5) An agency which enters into a contract pursuant to the provisions of ss. 282.303-282.313, chapter 255, chapter 287, or chapters 334-349 shall adopt rules specifying procedures for the resolution of protests arising from the contract bidding process. Such rules shall at least provide that:

(b) Any person who is affected adversely by the agency decision or intended decision shall file with the agency a notice of protest in writing within 72 hours after the posting of the bid tabulation or after receipt of the notice of the agency decision or intended decision and shall file a formal written protest within 10 days after the date he or she filed the notice of protest. With respect to a protest of the specifications contained in an invitation to bid or in a request for proposals, the notice of protest shall be filed in writing within 72 hours after the receipt of notice of the project plans and

specifications or intended project plans and specifications in an invitation to bid or request for proposals, and the formal written protest shall be filed within 10 days after the date the notice of protest is filed. Failure to file a notice of protest or failure to file a formal written protest shall constitute a waiver of proceedings under this chapter. The formal written protest shall state with particularity the facts and law upon which the protest is based.

Section 758. Paragraph (c) of subsection (4), paragraph (b) of subsection (11), and subsection (17) of section 120.54, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

120.54 Rulemaking; adoption procedures.--

(4)

(c) Immediately upon receipt of the petition, the division shall forward copies of the petition to the agency whose rule is challenged, the Department of State, and the committee. Within 10 days after receiving the petition, the division director, if he or she determines that the petition complies with the above requirements, shall assign a hearing officer who shall conduct a hearing within 30 days thereafter, unless the petition is withdrawn. Within 30 days after conclusion of the hearing, the hearing officer shall render a ~~his~~ decision and state the reasons therefor in writing. The division shall forthwith transmit copies of the hearing officer's decision to the Department of State and to the committee. The hearing officer may declare the proposed rule wholly or partly invalid. The proposed rule or provision of a proposed rule declared invalid shall be withdrawn from the committee by the adopting agency and shall not be adopted. No rule shall be filed for adoption until 28 days after the

notice required by subsection (1) or until the hearing officer has rendered a ~~his~~ decision, as the case may be. However, the agency may proceed with all other steps in the rulemaking process, including the holding of a fact-finding hearing pursuant to subsection (3). In the event part of a proposed rule is declared invalid, the adopting agency may, in its sole discretion, withdraw the proposed rule in its entirety. The agency whose proposed rule has been declared invalid in whole or part shall give notice of the decision in the first available issue of the Florida Administrative Weekly.

(11)

(b) If the adopting agency is required to publish its rules in the Florida Administrative Code, it shall file with the Department of State three certified copies of the rule it proposes to adopt, a summary of the rule, a summary of any hearings held on the rule, and a detailed written statement of the facts and circumstances justifying the rule. Agencies not required to publish their rules in the Florida Administrative Code shall file one certified copy of the proposed rule, and the other material required above, in the office of the agency head; and such rules shall be open to the public pursuant to s. 120.53(2). Filings shall be made no less than 28 days or more than 90 days after the notice required by subsection (1). If a public hearing is held, the 90-day limit is extended to 21 days after adjournment of the final hearing on the rule, 21 days after receipt of all material authorized to be submitted at the hearing, or 21 days after receipt of the transcript, if one is made, whichever is latest. For purposes of this paragraph, the term “public hearing” includes any public meeting held by any agency at which the rule is considered. The filing of a petition for an administrative

determination under the provisions of subsection (4) will toll the 90-day period during which a rule must be filed for adoption until the hearing officer has filed the ~~his~~ order with the clerk. At the time a rule is filed, the agency shall certify that the time limitations prescribed by this subsection have been complied with and that there is no administrative determination pending on the rule. The department shall reject any rule not filed within the prescribed time limits or upon which an administrative determination is pending. If a rule has not been adopted within the time limits imposed by this section, the agency proposing the rule shall withdraw the rule and give notice of its action in the same manner as is prescribed in paragraphs (1)(a) and (b).

(17) Rulemaking proceedings shall be governed solely by the provisions of this section unless a person timely asserts that his or her substantial interests will be affected in the proceeding and affirmatively demonstrates to the agency that the proceeding does not provide adequate opportunity to protect those interests. If the agency determines that the rulemaking proceeding is not adequate to protect the person's ~~his~~ interests, it shall suspend the rulemaking proceeding and convene a separate proceeding under the provisions of s. 120.57. Similarly situated persons may be requested to join and participate in the separate proceeding. Upon conclusion of the separate proceeding, the rulemaking proceeding shall be resumed.

Section 759. Subsections (2), (3), and (4) of section 120.56, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

120.56 Administrative determination of rule by hearing officer .--

(2) The petition seeking an administrative determination under

this section shall be in writing and shall state with particularity facts sufficient to show the person seeking relief is substantially affected by the rule and facts sufficient to show the invalidity of the rule. The petition shall be filed with the division which shall, immediately upon filing, forward copies of the petition to the agency whose rule is challenged, the Department of State, and the committee. Within 10 days after receiving the petition, the division director shall, if he or she determines that the petition complies with the above requirements, assign a hearing officer who shall conduct a hearing within 30 days thereafter, unless the petition is withdrawn.

(3) Within 30 days after the hearing, the hearing officer shall render a ~~his~~ decision and state the reasons therefor in writing. The division shall forthwith transmit copies of the hearing officer's decision to the Department of State and to the committee. The hearing officer may declare all or part of a rule invalid. The rule or part thereof declared invalid shall become void when the time for filing an appeal expires or at a later date specified in the decision. The agency whose rule has been declared invalid in whole or part shall give notice of the decision in the Florida Administrative Weekly in the first available issue after the rule has become void.

(4) Challenges to the validity of an emergency rule shall be subject to the following time schedules. Within 7 days after receiving the petition, the division director shall, if he or she determines that the petition complies with subsection (2), assign a hearing officer who shall conduct a hearing within 14 days thereafter, unless the petition is withdrawn. Within 14 days after the hearing, the hearing officer shall render a ~~his~~ decision and otherwise comply with the provisions of subsection (3) not inconsistent herewith.

Section 760. Section 120.565, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

120.565 Declaratory statement by agencies.--Each agency shall provide by rule the procedure for the filing and prompt disposition of petitions for declaratory statements. A declaratory statement shall set out the agency's opinion as to the applicability of a specified statutory provision or of any rule or order of the agency as it applies to the petitioner in his or her particular set of circumstances only. The agency shall give notice of each petition and its disposition in the Florida Administrative Weekly, except that educational units shall give notice in the same manner as provided for rules in s. 120.54(1)(a), and transmit copies of each petition and its disposition to the committee. Agency disposition of petitions shall be final agency action.

Section 761. Subsection (4) of section 120.59, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

120.59 Orders.--

(4) Parties shall be notified either personally or by mail of any order; and, unless waived, a copy of the final order shall be delivered or mailed to each party or to each party's ~~his~~ attorney of record. Each notice shall inform the recipient of any administrative hearing or judicial review that is available under s. 120.57 or s. 120.68, shall indicate the procedure which must be followed to obtain the hearing or judicial review, and shall state the time limits which apply.

Section 762. Subsections (2) and (3) and paragraph (b) of

subsection (5) of section 120.60, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

120.60 Licensing.—

(2) When an application for a license is made as required by law, the agency shall conduct the proceedings required with reasonable dispatch and with due regard to the rights and privileges of all affected parties or aggrieved persons. Within 30 days after receipt of an application for a license, the agency shall examine the application, notify the applicant of any apparent errors or omissions, and request any additional information the agency is permitted by law to require. Failure to correct an error or omission or to supply additional information shall not be grounds for denial of the license unless the agency timely notified the applicant within this 30-day period. The agency shall notify the applicant if the activity for which ~~he seeks~~ a license is sought is exempt from the licensing requirement and return any tendered application fee within 30 days after receipt of the original application or within 10 days after receipt of the timely requested additional information or correction of errors or omissions. Every application for license shall be approved or denied within 90 days after receipt of the original application or receipt of the timely requested additional information or correction of errors or omissions unless a shorter period of time for agency action is provided by law. The 90-day or shorter time period will be tolled by the initiation of a proceeding under s. 120.57 and will resume 10 days after the recommended order is submitted to the agency and the parties. Any application for a license which is not approved or denied within the 90-day or shorter time period, within 15 days after conclusion of a public hearing held on the application, or within 45 days after the recommended order is

submitted to the agency and the parties, whichever is latest, shall be deemed approved; and, subject to the satisfactory completion of an examination, if required as a prerequisite to licensure, the license shall be issued. The Public Service Commission, when issuing a license, and any other agency, if specifically exempted by law, shall be exempt from the time limitations within this subsection. Each agency, upon issuing or denying a license, shall state with particularity the grounds or basis for the issuance or denial of the license, except when issuance is a ministerial act. On denial of a license application on which there has been no hearing, the denying agency shall inform the applicant of any right to a hearing pursuant to s. 120.57.

(3) Each applicant shall be given written notice either personally or by mail that the agency intends to grant or deny, or has granted or denied, the application for license. Unless waived, a copy of the notice shall be delivered or mailed to each party's attorney of record and to each person who has requested notice of agency action. Each notice shall inform the recipient of any administrative hearing or judicial review which may be available to ~~him~~, shall indicate the procedure which must be followed, and shall state the applicable time limits. The issuing agency shall certify that the notice was given. The certification shall show the time and date the notice was mailed or delivered and shall be filed with the agency clerk.

(5) In proceedings for the issuance, denial, renewal, or amendment of a license or approval of a merger pursuant to title XXXVIII:

(b) Should a hearing be requested pursuant to subparagraph (a)2., the applicant or licensee shall publish at his or her own cost a

notice of the hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the area affected by the application. The Department of Banking and Finance may by rule specify the format and size of such notice.

Section 763. Section 120.62, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

120.62 Agency investigations.--

(1) No process, requirement of a report, inspection, or other investigative act or demand shall be issued, made, or enforced in any manner or for any purpose except as authorized by law. Every person who responds to a request or demand by any agency or representative thereof for written data or an oral statement shall be entitled to a transcript of his or her oral statement at no more than cost.

(2) Any person compelled to appear, or who appears voluntarily, before any hearing officer or agency in an investigation or in any agency proceeding has the right, at his or her own expense, to be accompanied, represented, and advised by counsel or by other qualified representatives.

Section 764. Subsection (4) of section 120.65, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

120.65 Hearing officers.--

(4) The division shall employ full-time hearing officers to conduct hearings required by this chapter or other law. No person may be employed by the division as a full-time hearing officer unless he or

she has been a member of The Florida Bar in good standing for the preceding 5 years.

Section 765. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) and subsections (2) and (3) of section 120.66, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

120.66 Ex parte communications.—

(1) In any proceeding under s. 120.57, no ex parte communication relative to the merits, threat, or offer of reward shall be made to the agency head, after the agency head has received a recommended order, or to the hearing officer by:

(b) A party to the proceeding or any person who, directly or indirectly, would have a substantial interest in the proposed agency action, or his or her authorized representative or counsel.

Nothing in this subsection shall apply to advisory staff members who do not testify on behalf of the agency in the proceeding or to any rulemaking proceedings under s. 120.54.

(2) A hearing officer who is involved in the decisional process and who receives an ex parte communication in violation of subsection (1) shall place on the record of the pending matter all written communications received, all written responses to such communications, and a memorandum stating the substance of all oral communications received and all oral responses made, and shall also advise all parties that such matters have been placed on the record. Any party desiring to rebut the ex parte communication shall be allowed to do so, if such party requests the opportunity for rebuttal within 10 days after notice of such communication. The

hearing officer may, if the officer ~~he~~ deems it necessary to eliminate the effect of an ex parte communication received by him or her, withdraw from the proceeding, in which case the division shall assign a successor.

(3) Any person who makes an ex parte communication prohibited by subsection (1), and any hearing officer who fails to place in the record any such communication, is in violation of this act and may be assessed a civil penalty not to exceed \$500 or be subjected to such other disciplinary action as his or her superiors may determine.

Section 766. Paragraph (c) of subsection (4) of section 120.69, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

120.69 Enforcement of agency action. --

(4) In all enforcement proceedings:

(c) Should any party willfully fail to comply with an order of the court, the court shall punish that party ~~him~~ in accordance with the law applicable to contempt committed by a person in the trial of any other action.

Section 767. Subsection (1) of section 120.71, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

120.71 Disqualification of agency personnel.--

(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 112.3143, any individual serving alone or with others as an agency head may be disqualified from serving in an agency proceeding for bias, prejudice, or interest

when any party to the agency proceeding shows just cause by a suggestion filed within a reasonable period of time prior to the agency proceeding. If the disqualified individual holds the ~~his~~ position by appointment, the appointing power may appoint a substitute to serve in the matter from which the individual is disqualified. If the individual is an elected official, the Governor may appoint a substitute to serve in the matter from which the individual is disqualified. However, if a quorum remains after the individual is disqualified, it shall not be necessary to appoint a substitute to serve in the matter from which the individual is disqualified.

CHAPTER 95-280

Senate Bill 580 Amends Paragraph 120.545(1), F.S., as follows:

Section 20. Subsection (1) of section 120.545, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

120.545 Committee review of agency rules.--

(1) As a legislative check on legislatively created authority, the committee shall examine each proposed rule, except for those proposed rules exempted by s. 120.54(11)(a), and its accompanying material, and each emergency rule, and may examine any existing rule, for the purpose of determining whether:

(a) The rule is an invalid exercise of delegated legislative authority.

- (b) The statutory authority for the rule has been repealed.
- (c) The rule reiterates or paraphrases statutory material.
- (d) The rule is in proper form.
- (e) The notice given prior to its adoption was sufficient to give adequate notice of the purpose and effect of the rule.
- (f) An economic impact statement was prepared that informs the public of the economic effect of the rule, if such statement is required pursuant to paragraph (2)(b) or is requested by the committee.
- (g) The rule is consistent with expressed legislative intent pertaining to the specific provisions of law which the rule implements.
- (h) The rule is necessary to accomplish the apparent or expressed objectives of the specific provision of law which the rule implements.
- (i) The rule is a reasonable implementation of the law as it affects the convenience of the general public or persons particularly affected by the rule.
- (j) The rule could be made less complex or more easily comprehensible to the general public.
- (k) The rule reflects the approach to the regulatory objective involving the lowest net cost to society to the degree consistent with

the provisions of law which the rule implements.

(l) The rule will require additional appropriations.

(m) If the rule is an emergency rule, there exists an emergency justifying the promulgation of such rule, whether the agency has exceeded the scope of its statutory authority, and whether the rule was promulgated in compliance with the requirements and limitations of s. 120.54(9).

The committee may request from an agency such information as is reasonably necessary for examination of a rule as required by this subsection. The committee shall consult with legislative standing committees with jurisdiction over the subject areas pertinent to any rule examined regarding legislative authority for the rule. If the committee objects to an emergency rule or, a proposed or existing rule, it shall, within 5 days of the objection, certify that fact to the agency whose rule has been examined and include with the certification a statement detailing its objections with particularity.

The committee shall notify the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate of any objection to an agency rule concurrent with certification of that fact to the agency. Such notice shall include a copy of the rule and the statement detailing the committee's objections to the rule.

CHAPTER 95-295

Committee Substitute for House Bill 855 Adds Paragraph
120.54(18), F.S., as follows:

Section 6. Subsection (18) is added to section 120.54, Florida
Statutes, to read:

120.54 Rulemaking; adoption procedures.--

(18) Effective October 1, 1995, the Department of Environmental Protection shall prepare a risk impact statement for any rule that is proposed for approval by the Environmental Regulation Commission and that establishes or changes standards or criteria based on impacts to or effects upon human health. Effective October 1, 1996, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall prepare a risk impact statement for any rule that is proposed for adoption that establishes standards or criteria based on impacts to or effects upon human health.

(a) This subsection does not apply to rules adopted pursuant to federally delegated or mandated programs where such rules are identical or substantially identical to the federal regulations or laws being adopted or implemented by the Department of Environmental Protection or Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, as applicable. However, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall

identify any risk analysis information available to them from the federal government that has formed the basis of such rule.

(b) This subsection does not apply to emergency rules adopted pursuant to this chapter.

(c) The Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall prepare and publish notice of the availability of a clear and concise risk impact statement for all applicable rules. The risk impact statement must explain the risk to the public health addressed by the rule and shall identify and summarize the source of the scientific information used in evaluating that risk.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a new cause of action or basis for challenging a rule nor diminish any existing cause of action or basis for challenging a rule.

CHAPTER 95-328

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 2826 Amends Paragraph 120.57(5), F.S., 1994 Supplement, as follows:

Section 1. Subsection (5) of section 120.57, Florida Statutes, 1994 Supplement, is amended to read:

120.57 Decisions which affect substantial interests.-- The provisions of this section apply in all proceedings in which the

substantial interests of a party are determined by an agency, unless such proceedings are exempt pursuant to subsection (5). Unless waived by all parties, subsection (1) applies whenever the proceeding involves a disputed issue of material fact. Unless otherwise agreed, subsection (2) applies in all other cases.

(5)(a) This section does not apply to any proceeding in which the substantial interests of a student are determined by the State University System. The Board of Regents shall establish a committee, at least half of whom shall be appointed by the Council of Student Body Presidents, which shall establish by January 1, 1985, rules and guidelines ensuring fairness and due process in judicial proceedings involving students in the State University System. This section shall not become effective until January 1, 1985.

(b) A hearing on an objection to proposed action of the Florida Public Service Commission may only address the issues in dispute. Issues in the proposed action which are not in dispute are deemed stipulated.

CHAPTER 95-402

Senate Bill 1390 Creates Section 120.695, F.S., as follows:

Section 1. Section 120.695, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

120.695 Notice of noncompliance.--

(1) It is the policy of the state that the purpose of regulation is to protect the public by attaining compliance with the policies established by the Legislature. Fines and other penalties may be provided in order to assure compliance; however, the collection of fines and the imposition of penalties are intended to be secondary to the primary goal of attaining compliance with an agency's rules. It is the intent of the Legislature that an agency charged with enforcing rules shall issue a notice of noncompliance as its first response to a minor violation of a rule in any instance in which it is reasonable to assume that the violator was unaware of the rule or unclear as to how to comply with it.

(2)

(a) Each agency shall issue a notice of noncompliance as a first response to a minor violation of a rule. A "notice of noncompliance" is a notification by the agency charged with enforcing the rule issued to the person or business subject to the rule. A notice of noncompliance may not be accompanied with a fine or other disciplinary penalty. It must identify the specific rule that is being violated, provide information on how to comply with the rule, and specify a reasonable time for the violator to comply with the rule. A rule is agency action that regulates a business, occupation, or profession, or regulates a person operating a business, occupation, or profession, and that, if not complied with, may result in a disciplinary penalty.

(b) Each agency shall review all of its rules and designate those for which a violation would be a minor violation and for which a notice of noncompliance must be the first enforcement action taken against a person or business subject to regulation. A violation of a

rule is a minor violation if it does not result in economic or physical harm to a person or adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare or create a significant threat of such harm. If an agency under the direction of a cabinet officer mails to each licensee a notice of the designated rules at the time of licensure and at least annually thereafter, the provisions of paragraph (a) may be exercised at the discretion of the agency. Such notice shall include a subject-matter index of the rules and information on how the rules may be obtained.

(c) The agency's review and designation must be completed by December 1, 1995; each agency under the direction of the Governor shall make a report to the Governor, and each agency under the joint direction of the Governor and Cabinet shall report to the Governor and Cabinet by January 1, 1996, on which of its rules have been designated as rules the violation of which would be a minor violation.

(d) The Governor or the Governor and Cabinet, as appropriate pursuant to paragraph (c), may evaluate the review and designation effects of each agency and may apply a different designation than that applied by the agency.

(e) This section does not apply to the regulation of law enforcement personnel or teachers.

(f) Designation pursuant to this section is not subject to challenge under this chapter.