



Ohio Revised Code

Section 1321.53 General loan certificate of registration application, approval, fee; assets; additional certificates; change in place of business; exceptions to General Loan Law.

Effective: December 29, 2023

Legislation: Senate Bill 131 (GA 134), House Bill 33 (GA 135)

(A)(1) An application for a certificate of registration under sections 1321.51 to 1321.60 of the Revised Code shall contain an undertaking by the applicant to abide by those sections. The application shall be in writing, under oath, and in the form prescribed by the division of financial institutions, and shall contain any information that the division may require. Applicants that are foreign corporations shall obtain and maintain a license pursuant to Chapter 1703. of the Revised Code before a certificate is issued or renewed.

(2) Upon the filing of the application and the payment by the applicant of a nonrefundable two-hundred-dollar investigation fee and a nonrefundable three-hundred-dollar annual registration fee, the division shall investigate the relevant facts. If the application involves investigation outside this state, the applicant may be required by the division to advance sufficient funds to pay any of the actual expenses of such investigation, when it appears that these expenses will exceed two hundred dollars. An itemized statement of any of these expenses which the applicant is required to pay shall be furnished to the applicant by the division. No certificate shall be issued unless all the required fees have been submitted to the division.

(3) The investigation undertaken upon application shall include both a civil and criminal records check of the applicant including any individual whose identity is required to be disclosed in the application. Where the applicant is a business entity the superintendent shall have the authority to require a civil and criminal background check of those persons that in the determination of the superintendent have the authority to direct and control the operations of the applicant.

(4)(a) Notwithstanding division (L) of section 121.08 of the Revised Code, the superintendent of financial institutions shall obtain a criminal history records check and, as part of that records check, request that criminal record information from the federal bureau of investigation be obtained. To fulfill this requirement, the superintendent shall request the superintendent of the bureau of criminal



identification and investigation, or a vendor approved by the bureau, to conduct a criminal records check based on the applicant's fingerprints or, if the fingerprints are unreadable, based on the applicant's social security number, in accordance with section 109.572 of the Revised Code.

(b) Any fee required under division (C)(3) of section 109.572 of the Revised Code shall be paid by the applicant.

(5) If an application for a certificate of registration does not contain all of the information required under division (A) of this section, and if such information is not submitted to the division within ninety days after the superintendent requests the information in writing, including by electronic transmission or facsimile, the superintendent may consider the application withdrawn.

(6) If the division finds that the financial responsibility, experience, and general fitness of the applicant command the confidence of the public and warrant the belief that the business will be operated honestly and fairly in compliance with the purposes of sections 1321.51 to 1321.60 of the Revised Code and the rules adopted thereunder, and that the applicant has the applicable net worth and assets required by division (C) of this section, the division shall thereupon issue a certificate of registration to the applicant. The superintendent shall not use a credit score as the sole basis for a registration denial.

(a)(i) Certificates of registration issued on or after July 1, 2010, shall annually expire on the thirty-first day of December, unless renewed by the filing of a renewal application and payment of a three-hundred-dollar nonrefundable annual registration fee and any assessment as determined by the superintendent pursuant to division (A)(6)(a)(ii) of this section on or before the last day of December of each year. No other fee or assessment shall be required of a registrant by the state or any political subdivision of this state.

(ii) If the renewal fees billed by the superintendent pursuant to division (A)(6)(a)(i) of this section are less than the estimated expenditures of the consumer finance section of the division of financial institutions, as determined by the superintendent, for the following fiscal year, the superintendent may assess each registrant at a rate sufficient to equal in the aggregate the difference between the renewal fees billed and the estimated expenditures. Each registrant shall pay the assessed amount to the superintendent prior to the last day of June. In no case shall the assessment exceed ten cents per



each one hundred dollars of interest (excluding charge-off recoveries), points, loan origination charges, and credit line charges collected by that registrant during the previous calendar year. If such an assessment is imposed, it shall not be less than two hundred fifty dollars per registrant and shall not exceed thirty thousand dollars less the total renewal fees paid pursuant to division (A)(6)(a)(i) of this section by each registrant.

(b) Registrants shall timely file renewal applications on forms prescribed by the division and provide any further information that the division may require. If a renewal application does not contain all of the information required under this section, and if that information is not submitted to the division within ninety days after the superintendent requests the information in writing, including by electronic transmission or facsimile, the superintendent may consider the application withdrawn.

(c) Renewal shall not be granted if the applicant's certificate of registration is subject to an order of suspension, revocation, or an unpaid and past due fine imposed by the superintendent.

(d) If the division finds the applicant does not meet the conditions set forth in this section, it shall issue a notice of intent to deny the application, and forthwith notify the applicant of the denial, the grounds for the denial, and the applicant's reasonable opportunity to be heard on the action in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code.

(7) If there is a change of five per cent or more in the ownership of a registrant, the division may make any investigation necessary to determine whether any fact or condition exists that, if it had existed at the time of the original application for a certificate of registration, the fact or condition would have warranted the division to deny the application under division (A)(6) of this section. If such a fact or condition is found, the division may, in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, revoke the registrant's certificate.

(B) Notwithstanding division (A) of this section, the division shall issue a certificate of registration in accordance with Chapter 4796. of the Revised Code to an applicant if either of the following applies:

(1) The applicant holds a license or certificate in another state.



(2) The applicant has satisfactory work experience, a government certification, or a private certification as described in that chapter as a general loan lender in a state that does not issue that license.

(C) Each registrant that engages in lending under sections 1321.51 to 1321.60 of the Revised Code shall maintain both of the following:

(1) A net worth of at least fifty thousand dollars;

(2) For each certificate of registration, assets of at least fifty thousand dollars either in use or readily available for use in the conduct of the business.

(D) Not more than one place of business shall be maintained under the same certificate, but the division may issue additional certificates to the same registrant upon compliance with sections 1321.51 to 1321.60 of the Revised Code, governing the issuance of a single certificate. No change in the place of business of a registrant to a location outside the original municipal corporation shall be permitted under the same certificate without the approval of a new application, the payment of the registration fee and, if required by the superintendent, the payment of an investigation fee of two hundred dollars. When a registrant wishes to change its place of business within the same municipal corporation, it shall give written notice of the change in advance to the division, which shall provide a certificate for the new address without cost. If a registrant changes its name, prior to making loans under the new name it shall give written notice of the change to the division, which shall provide a certificate in the new name without cost. Sections 1321.51 to 1321.60 of the Revised Code do not limit the loans of any registrant to residents of the community in which the registrant's place of business is situated. Each certificate shall be kept conspicuously posted in the place of business of the registrant and is not transferable or assignable.

(E) Sections 1321.51 to 1321.60 of the Revised Code do not apply to any of the following:

(1) Entities chartered and lawfully doing business under the authority of any law of this state, another state, or the United States as a bank, savings bank, trust company, savings and loan association, or credit union, or a subsidiary of any such entity, which subsidiary is regulated by a federal banking agency and is owned and controlled by such a depository institution;



- (2) Life, property, or casualty insurance companies licensed to do business in this state;
- (3) Any person that is a lender making a loan pursuant to sections 1321.01 to 1321.19 or sections 1321.62 to 1321.701 of the Revised Code or a business loan as described in division (B)(6) of section 1343.01 of the Revised Code;
- (4) Any political subdivision, or any governmental or other public entity, corporation, instrumentality, or agency, in or of the United States or any state of the United States, or any entity described in division (B)(3) of section 1343.01 of the Revised Code;
- (5) A college or university, or controlled entity of a college or university, as those terms are defined in section 1713.05 of the Revised Code.
- (F) No person engaged in the business of selling tangible goods or services related to tangible goods may receive or retain a certificate under sections 1321.51 to 1321.60 of the Revised Code for such place of business.

The Legislative Service Commission presents the text of this section as a composite of the section as amended by multiple acts of the General Assembly. This presentation recognizes the principle stated in R.C. 1.52(B) that amendments are to be harmonized if reasonably capable of simultaneous operation.