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AB-1480 Employers: prohibited disclosure of information: arrest or detention. (2021-2022)

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Assembly Bill No. 1480

CHAPTER 158

An act to amend Section 432.7 of the Labor Code, and to amend Section 13203 of the Penal Code, relating to public employment.

[Approved by Governor August 31, 2021. Filed with Secretary of State August 31, 2021.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1480, Rodriguez. Employers: prohibited disclosure of information: arrest or detention.

Existing law prohibits an employer from asking an applicant to disclose, or from utilizing as a factor in determining any condition of employment, information concerning an arrest or detention that did not result in a conviction, or information concerning a referral or participation in, any pretrial or posttrial diversion program, except as specified. Existing law also prohibits an employer, as specified, from asking an applicant to disclose, or from utilizing as a factor in determining any condition of employment, information concerning a conviction that has been judicially dismissed or ordered sealed, except in specified circumstances. Applicants for employment as peace officers, or with the Department of Justice, or with other criminal justice agencies, or persons already employed as peace officers, are an exception to these prohibitions, so that information about applicants for these positions or employees may be disclosed or sought. Existing law makes it a crime to intentionally violate these provisions.

This bill would additionally include persons already employed as nonsworn members of a criminal justice agency, as specified, within the exception to these prohibitions, so that information regarding arrests or detentions regarding specified crimes about these employees may be disclosed or sought.

Existing law authorizes a criminal justice agency to release criminal history information under certain circumstances, including the release of information concerning an arrest or detention of a peace officer, or applicant for a position as a peace officer, that did not result in conviction or information concerning a referral to and participation in any postarrest diversion program or deferred entry of judgment program to a governmental agency employer of that peace officer or applicant.

This bill would also authorize a criminal justice agency to release that information concerning a nonsworn employee of a criminal justice agency, or an applicant for a nonsworn position within a criminal justice agency, to a governmental agency employer of that nonsworn employee or applicant.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 432.7 of the Labor Code is amended to read:

432.7. (a) (1) An employer, whether a public agency or private individual or corporation, shall not ask an applicant for employment to disclose, through any written form or verbally, information concerning an arrest or detention that did not result in conviction, or information concerning a referral to, and participation in, any pretrial or posttrial diversion program, or concerning a conviction that has been judicially dismissed or ordered sealed pursuant to law, including, but not limited to, Sections 1203.4, 1203.4a, 1203.425, 1203.45, and 1210.1 of the Penal Code. An employer also shall not seek from any source whatsoever, or utilize, as a factor in determining any condition of employment including hiring, promotion, termination, or any apprenticeship training program or any other training program leading to employment, any record of arrest or detention that did not result in conviction, or any record regarding a referral to, and participation in, any pretrial or posttrial diversion program, or concerning a conviction that has been judicially dismissed or ordered sealed pursuant to law, including, but not limited to, Sections 1203.4, 1203.4a, 1203.425, 1203.45, and 1210.1 of the Penal Code. This section shall not prevent an employer from asking an employee or applicant for employment about an arrest for which the employee or applicant is out on bail or on their own recognizance pending trial.

(2) An employer, whether a public agency or private individual or corporation, shall not ask an applicant for employment to disclose, through any written form or verbally, information concerning or related to an arrest, detention, processing, diversion, supervision, adjudication, or court disposition that occurred while the person was subject to the process and jurisdiction of the juvenile court. An employer also shall not seek from any source whatsoever, or utilize, as a factor in determining any condition of employment including hiring, promotion, termination, or any apprenticeship training program or any other training program leading to employment, any record concerning or related to an arrest, detention, processing, diversion, supervision, adjudication, or court disposition that occurred while a person was subject to the process and jurisdiction of the juvenile court.

(3) For purposes of this section:

(A) "Conviction" includes a plea, verdict, or finding of guilt, regardless of whether a sentence is imposed by the court.

(B) "Conviction" does not include, and shall not be construed to include, any adjudication by a juvenile court or any other court order or action taken with respect to a person who is under the process and jurisdiction of the juvenile court.

(b) This section does not prohibit the disclosure of the information authorized for release under Sections 13203 and 13300 of the Penal Code, to a government agency employing a peace officer. However, the employer shall not determine any condition of employment other than paid administrative leave based solely on an arrest report. The information contained in an arrest report may be used as the starting point for an independent, internal investigation of a peace officer in accordance with Chapter 9.7 (commencing with Section 3300) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code.

(c) If a person violates this section, or Article 6 (commencing with Section 11140) of Chapter 1 of Title 1 of Part 4 of the Penal Code, the applicant may bring an action to recover from that person actual damages or two hundred dollars (\$200), whichever is greater, plus costs, and reasonable attorney's fees. An intentional violation of this section shall entitle the applicant to treble actual damages, or five hundred dollars (\$500), whichever is greater, plus costs, and reasonable attorney's fees. An intentional violation of this section is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500).

(d) The remedies under this section shall be in addition to and not in derogation of all other rights and remedies that an applicant may have under any other law.

(e) (1) Persons seeking employment or persons already employed as peace officers, or persons seeking employment in positions in the Department of Justice or other criminal justice agencies as defined in Section 13101 of the Penal Code are not covered by this section.

(2) For persons already employed as nonsworn members of a criminal justice agency, as defined in Section 13101 of the Penal Code, but only for those positions for which the specific duties relate to the collection or analysis of evidence or property or directly relate to the activities described in subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 13101 of the Penal Code, the offenses for which arrests or detentions shall be subject to disclosure shall be limited to violent felonies, as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 667.5 of the Penal Code, serious felonies, as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 1192.7 of the Penal Code, and crimes involving dishonesty or obstruction of legal processes, including, but not limited to, theft, embezzlement, fraud, extortion, falsifying evidence, falsifying or forging official documents, perjury, bribery, and influencing, intimidating, or threatening witnesses.

(f) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), this section does not prohibit an employer at a health facility, as defined in Section 1250 of the Health and Safety Code, from asking an applicant for employment either of the following:

(A) With regard to an applicant for a position with regular access to patients, to disclose an arrest under any section specified in Section 290 of the Penal Code.

(B) With regard to an applicant for a position with access to drugs and medication, to disclose an arrest under any section specified in former Section 11590 of the Health and Safety Code, as it read on January 1, 2019.

(2) (A) An employer specified in paragraph (1) shall not inquire into information concerning or related to an applicant's arrest, detention, processing, diversion, supervision, adjudication, or court disposition that occurred while the person was subject to the process and jurisdiction of juvenile court law, unless the information concerns an adjudication by the juvenile court in which the applicant has been found by the court to have committed a felony or misdemeanor offense specified in paragraph (1) that occurred within five years preceding the application for employment.

(B) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subdivision, an employer specified in paragraph (1) shall not inquire into information concerning or related to an applicant's juvenile offense history that has been sealed by the juvenile court.

(3) An employer seeking disclosure of offense history under paragraph (2) shall provide the applicant with a list describing the specific offenses under former Section 11590 of the Health and Safety Code, as it read on January 1, 2019, or Section 290 of the Penal Code for which disclosure is sought.

(g) (1) A peace officer or employee of a law enforcement agency with access to criminal or juvenile offender record information maintained by a local law enforcement criminal or juvenile justice agency shall not knowingly disclose, with intent to affect a person's employment, any information pertaining to an arrest or detention or proceeding that did not result in a conviction, including information pertaining to a referral to, and participation in, any pretrial or posttrial diversion program, to any person not authorized by law to receive that information.

(2) Any other person authorized by law to receive criminal or juvenile offender record information maintained by a local law enforcement criminal or juvenile justice agency shall not knowingly disclose any information received pertaining to an arrest or detention or proceeding that did not result in a conviction, including information pertaining to a referral to, and participation in, any pretrial or posttrial diversion program, to any person not authorized by law to receive that information.

(3) Except for those specifically referred to in Section 1070 of the Evidence Code, a person who is not authorized by law to receive or possess criminal or juvenile justice records information maintained by a local law enforcement criminal or juvenile justice agency, pertaining to an arrest or other proceeding that did not result in a conviction, including information pertaining to a referral to, and participation in, any pretrial or posttrial diversion program, shall not knowingly receive or possess that information.

(h) "A person authorized by law to receive that information," for purposes of this section, means any person or public agency authorized by a court, statute, or decisional law to receive information contained in criminal or juvenile offender records maintained by a local law enforcement criminal or juvenile justice agency, and includes, but is not limited to, those persons set forth in Section 11105 of the Penal Code, and any person employed by a law enforcement criminal or juvenile justice agency who is required by that employment to receive, analyze, or process criminal or juvenile offender record information.

(i) This section does not require the Department of Justice to remove entries relating to an arrest or detention not resulting in conviction from summary criminal history records forwarded to an employer pursuant to law.

(j) As used in this section, "pretrial or posttrial diversion program" means any program under Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 1000) or Chapter 2.7 (commencing with Section 1001) of Title 6 of Part 2 of the Penal Code, Section 13201 or 13352.5 of the Vehicle Code, Sections 626, 626.5, 654, or 725 of, or Article 20.5 (commencing with Section 790) of Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Division 2 of, the Welfare and Institutions Code, or any other program expressly authorized and described by statute as a diversion program.

(k) (1) Subdivision (a) does not apply to any city, city and county, county, or district, or any officer or official thereof, in screening a prospective concessionaire, or the affiliates and associates of a prospective concessionaire for purposes of consenting to, or approving of, the prospective concessionaire's application for, or acquisition of, any beneficial interest in a concession, lease, or other property interest.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision the following terms apply:

(A) "Screening" means a written request for criminal or juvenile history information made to a local law enforcement agency.

(B) "Prospective concessionaire" means any individual, general or limited partnership, corporation, trust, association, or other entity that is applying for, or seeking to obtain, a public agency's consent to, or approval of, the acquisition by that individual or entity of any beneficial ownership interest in any public agency's concession, lease, or other property right whether directly or indirectly held. However, "prospective concessionaire" does not include any of the following:

(i) A lender acquiring an interest solely as security for a bona fide loan made in the ordinary course of the lender's business and not made for the purpose of acquisition.

(ii) A lender upon foreclosure or assignment in lieu of foreclosure of the lender's security.

(C) "Affiliate" means any individual or entity that controls, or is controlled by, the prospective concessionaire, or who is under common control with the prospective concessionaire.

(D) "Associate" means any individual or entity that shares a common business purpose with the prospective concessionaire with respect to the beneficial ownership interest that is subject to the consent or approval of the city, county, city and county, or district.

(E) "Control" means the possession, direct or indirect, of the power to direct, or cause the direction of, the management or policies of the controlled individual or entity.

(l) (1) Subdivision (a) does not prohibit a public agency, or any officer or official thereof, from denying consent to, or approval of, a prospective concessionaire's application for, or acquisition of, any beneficial interest in a concession, lease, or other property interest based on the criminal history information of the prospective concessionaire or the affiliates or associates of the prospective concessionaire that show any criminal conviction for offenses involving moral turpitude. Criminal history information for purposes of this subdivision includes any criminal history information obtained pursuant to Section 11105 or 13300 of the Penal Code.

(2) In considering criminal history information, a public agency shall consider the crime for which the prospective concessionaire or the affiliates or associates of the prospective concessionaire was convicted only if that crime relates to the specific business that is proposed to be conducted by the prospective concessionaire.

(3) Any prospective concessionaire whose application for consent or approval to acquire a beneficial interest in a concession, lease, or other property interest is denied based on criminal history information shall be provided a written statement of the reason for the denial.

(4) (A) If the prospective concessionaire submits a written request to the public agency within 10 days of the date of the notice of denial, the public agency shall review its decision with regard to any corrected record or other evidence presented by the prospective concessionaire as to the accuracy or incompleteness of the criminal history information utilized by the public agency in making its original decision.

(B) The prospective concessionaire shall submit the copy or the corrected record of any other evidence to the public agency within 90 days of a request for review. The public agency shall render its decision within 20 days of the submission of evidence by the prospective concessionaire.

(m) (1) Paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) does not prohibit an employer, whether a public agency or private individual or corporation, from asking an applicant about, or seeking from any source information regarding, a particular conviction of the applicant if, pursuant to Section 1829 of Title 12 of the United States Code or any other federal law, federal regulation, or state law, any of the following apply:

(A) The employer is required by law to obtain information regarding the particular conviction of the applicant, regardless of whether that conviction has been expunged, judicially ordered sealed, statutorily eradicated, or judicially dismissed following probation.

(B) The applicant would be required to possess or use a firearm in the course of their employment.

(C) An individual with that particular conviction is prohibited by law from holding the position sought by the applicant, regardless of whether that conviction has been expunged, judicially ordered sealed, statutorily eradicated, or judicially dismissed following probation.

(D) The employer is prohibited by law from hiring an applicant who has that particular conviction, regardless of whether that conviction has been expunged, judicially ordered sealed, statutorily eradicated, or judicially dismissed following probation.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, "particular conviction" means a conviction for specific criminal conduct or a category of criminal offenses prescribed by any federal law, federal regulation, or state law that contains requirements, exclusions, or both, expressly based on that specific criminal conduct or category of criminal offenses.

(n) This section does not prohibit an employer, whether a public agency or private individual or corporation, required by state, federal, or local law to conduct criminal background checks for employment purposes or to restrict employment based on criminal history from complying with those requirements, or to prohibit the employer from seeking or receiving an applicant's criminal history report that has been obtained pursuant to procedures otherwise provided for under federal, state, or local law. For purposes of this subdivision, federal law shall include rules or regulations promulgated by a self-regulatory organization, as defined in Section 3(a)(26) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, pursuant to the authority in Section 19(b) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended by 124 Stat. 1652 (Public Law 11-203).

SEC. 2. Section 13203 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

13203. (a) A criminal justice agency may release, within five years of the arrest, information concerning an arrest or detention of a peace officer, as defined in Section 830, an applicant for a position as a peace officer, a nonsworn employee of a criminal justice agency, or an applicant for a nonsworn position within a criminal justice agency that did not result in conviction, and for which the person did not complete a postarrest diversion program, to a governmental agency employer of that employee or applicant.

(b) A criminal justice agency may release information concerning an arrest of a peace officer, as defined in Section 830, an applicant for a position as a peace officer, a nonsworn employee of a criminal justice agency, or an applicant for a nonsworn position within a criminal justice agency that did not result in conviction but for which the person completed a postarrest diversion program or a deferred entry of judgment program, or information concerning a referral to and participation in any postarrest diversion program or a deferred entry of judgment program to a governmental agency employer of that employee or applicant.

(c) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) or (b), a criminal justice agency shall not release information under the following circumstances:

(1) Information concerning an arrest for which diversion or deferred entry of judgment has been ordered without attempting to determine whether diversion or a deferred entry of judgment program has been successfully completed.

(2) Information concerning an arrest or detention followed by a dismissal or release without attempting to determine whether the individual was exonerated.

(3) Information concerning an arrest without a disposition without attempting to determine whether diversion or a deferred entry of judgment program has been successfully completed or the individual was exonerated.