

Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services

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DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIAL PROCESSING

PRIVATE DETECTIVE FAQ'S

Q: Do I have to be employed by a Wisconsin licensed private detective agency in order to be licensed as a private detective in Wisconsin?

A: Yes, this is required by RL 31.01(2) (b). We do not license independent contractors in the state of Wisconsin.

Q: Do I need to obtain a \$2,000 bond?

A: Only if your employing agency is also covered by a bond. Most agencies are covered by liability insurance and this policy must cover all of the private detectives they employ. A bond is not required if you are covered by your employing agency's liability insurance policy.

Q: What if I just want to work for myself?

A: Then you must also apply for a private detective agency license. You can find information on this process on the website under private detective agency.

Q: On what information is the private detective exam based?

A: The exam is based on the Wisconsin statutes and regulation pertaining to private detectives. This information is contained in the Private Detective Code Book. You may download the code book from our website <http://dsps.wi.gov>, click on Professions, click on Private Detective. You may also purchase the code book from the Department of Administration (DOA) in CD form. Please contact DOA at (800) 362-7253 to order.

Q: How do I schedule the exam?

A: The exam is administered by the Department. Submit the Application for Private Detective License (Form #469) with fee and all supporting documents.

Q: How long are my exam results good for and how many times can I take the exam?

A: Exam results are good for one year. You must be licensed within a year from the date you passed the exam or you will have to retake and pass the exam before you can be licensed. You may take the exam as many times as you want.

Q: Should I turn in my application before or after I pass the exam?

A: You must submit your application before you will be given authorization to test.

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Q: I am licensed as a private detective in another state. Does Wisconsin have reciprocity with other states for this profession?

A: No, Wisconsin does not have reciprocity with any other states for the licensure of private detectives. The requirements for licensure are the same regardless of whether or not you have been licensed in another state.

Q: I was licensed previously in Wisconsin as a private detective but my license expired. What do I need to do to reinstate my license?

A: If your license expired less than 5 years ago, you can simply submit your renewal form with the late renewal fee along with a completed transfer form #1329 (can be downloaded from the website) and the \$10 transfer fee. If it has been over 5 years you will need to go through the entire process again (pass the exam, submit print and photo with application, etc.) but you will submit the reinstatement fee.

Q: I was recently licensed for another profession where the Department of Safety and Professional Services required an FBI background report. Do I need to go through the digital fingerprint process again?

A: If you were licensed in the other profession within the last 6 months, you do not need to submit digital fingerprints. If this is the case, please note on your application so that we are aware of it. If it has been more than 6 months since you were licensed, you will need to have digital fingerprints taken.

Q: I am a police officer. Do I need to submit digital fingerprints?

A: Yes, on 7/1/04 a federal law went into effect. This law supercedes the state exemption therefore the peace officer exception no longer exists.

Q: My fingerprints are already on file with the FBI, do I still need to have the digital fingerprints?

A: Yes, the Department does not have access to any previously collected prints.

Q: What do I have to list on the (Form #2252) "Conviction and Pending Charges" page?

A: You must list everything of which you have been convicted or any charges that are still pending. If anything is omitted that we subsequently find out about, it could be grounds for denial or revocation of the license. We cannot tell you whether a conviction(s) will cause denial prior to submission of your application.