

**Sixty-first Legislative Assembly of North Dakota
In Regular Session Commencing Tuesday, January 6, 2009**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1038
(Legislative Council)
(Judicial Process Committee)

AN ACT to amend and reenact section 50-09-08.6 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to restrictions on an individual's operator's license for nonpayment of child support or failure to obey a subpoena.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT. Section 50-09-08.6 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

50-09-08.6. Suspension of occupational, professional, recreational, motor vehicle operator, and vehicle licenses and registrations for nonpayment of child support or failure to obey subpoena.

1. As used in this section:
 - a. "License" means:
 - (1) Any certificate, permit, or license issued by an agency of the state or a political subdivision of the state which the obligor is required to obtain prior to engaging in the obligor's occupation or profession;
 - (2) Any certificate, permit, or license issued by an agency of the state which the obligor is required to obtain prior to engaging in a recreational activity; and
 - (3) Any operator's license or vehicle license or registration which the obligor is required to obtain prior to operating or owning a vehicle in this state. As used in this section, "vehicle" includes any motor vehicle as defined in section 39-01-01, aircraft, snowmobile, motorboat, or personal watercraft.
 - b. "Licensee" means a person who has applied for or currently possesses a license.
 - c. "Licensing authority" means an agency of the state or a political subdivision of the state that issues a license, including occupational or professional boards, the game and fish department, and the department of transportation.
 - d. "Restrict", as it relates to the operator's license of an obligor or a person who fails to comply with a subpoena, includes the authority of the state agency to authorize the issuance, upon request for good cause, of a restricted operator's license that is solely for the use of a motor vehicle during the licensee's normal working hours.
2. The state agency, directly or through agents and child support agencies, may withhold, restrict, or suspend one or more licenses issued to:
 - a. A person who has failed, after receiving proper notice, to comply with a subpoena relating to a paternity or child support matter;
 - b. An obligor who is listed on the arrears registry; or
 - c. An obligor who is not in compliance with an existing payment plan that has been negotiated between the obligor and the state agency under this section or in

exchange for the state agency refraining from taking an enforcement action against the obligor.

3. Before withholding, restricting, or suspending a license under subdivision a or b of subsection 2, the state agency shall send a notice to the licensee by first-class mail to the licensee's last-known address stating that the licensee has thirty days after the date of the notice to comply with the subpoena, satisfy the arrearage in full, or negotiate a payment plan with the state agency under this section. The notice must further state that the licensee may contest the action of the state agency by making a written request for a court hearing under subsection 5 within ten days of the date of the notice.
4. Upon notice to the licensee, the state agency may withhold, restrict, or suspend a license under subdivision c of subsection 2 at any time if the licensee fails to comply with a payment plan negotiated under this section. A copy of the state agency's order to withhold, restrict, or suspend a license must be sent to the licensee by first-class mail to the licensee's last-known address. The order must state that the licensee may contest the action of the state agency by making a written request for a court hearing under subsection 5 within ten days of the date of the order.
5. A request for a hearing under this section must be made to the court that issued or considered the child support order. If a child support order was issued by a court or administrative tribunal in another jurisdiction, the request may be made to any court of this state which has jurisdiction to enforce that order or, if no court of this state has jurisdiction to enforce that order, in any court of this state with jurisdiction over the licensee.
6. In a contest under this section, the court must affirm the action of the state agency to withhold, restrict, or suspend a license unless it finds that the licensee's delinquency or failure to comply with a subpoena, or an existing payment plan was not willful. Upon a showing by the state agency that the licensee has failed to comply with a subpoena, is listed on the arrears registry, or is not in compliance with an existing payment plan between the licensee and the state agency under this section, the licensee has the burden of proving that the delinquency or failure to comply was not willful.
7. The state agency shall notify the appropriate licensing authority that the state agency has withheld, restricted, or suspended a license under this section. A license that is withheld, restricted, or suspended by the state agency under this section may be reinstated only by the state agency after the licensee complies with the subpoena, satisfies the arrearage in full, or enters into a payment plan with the state agency under this section.
8. An obligor and the state agency may enter into a payment plan under which the obligor agrees to satisfy the obligor's total child support obligation, including arrears, within a period not to exceed ten years. A payment plan under this section must require the obligor to make an immediate payment to the state disbursement unit in an amount equal to five percent of the total arrears owed by the obligor or five hundred dollars, whichever is greater. The state agency may waive or reduce the immediate payment that is due under a payment plan if the obligor's current or most recent monthly support obligation is less than five hundred dollars. The state agency may require that a payment plan under this section include satisfaction of all court-ordered child support obligations of the obligor. The obligor's current or most recent monthly support obligation under section 14-09-09.30 must be considered when determining the duration of a payment plan under this section and the payments due under the agreement. A payment plan under this section is not a modification of any child support obligation of the obligor and does not bar judicial review of a child support order under section 14-09-08.4 or other enforcement actions by the obligee or the state agency.
9. An action of the state agency to withhold, restrict, or suspend a license under this section may not be appealed to the state agency or to the licensing authority, including an appeal

under chapter 28-32. Section 50-09-14 does not apply to actions taken by the state agency under this section.

10. Except for statistical purposes, an entry on the driving record or abstract of a restriction or suspension under this section after the restriction or suspension ceases may not be available to the public other than by order of a court of competent jurisdiction.
11. A licensing authority and any person acting on its behalf is not liable for any actions taken to withhold, restrict, or suspend a license under this section. This section does not limit the ability of a licensing authority to withhold, restrict, or suspend a license on any other grounds authorized by law.

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

Secretary of the Senate

This certifies that the within bill originated in the House of Representatives of the Sixty-first Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as House Bill No. 1038.

House Vote: Yeas 92 Nays 0 Absent 2

Senate Vote: Yeas 46 Nays 0 Absent 1

Chief Clerk of the House

Received by the Governor at _____ M. on _____, 2009.

Approved at _____ M. on _____, 2009.

Governor

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 2009,

at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State