

RULES AND REGULATIONS
OF THE
HUNT COUNTY BAIL BOND BOARD

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SECTION 1
DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 “Bail Bond” means a cash deposit, or similar deposit or written undertaking, or a bond or other security, given to guarantee the appearance of a defendant in a criminal case.
- 1.2 “Bail Bond Surety” or “Surety” means any person who for hire or for any compensation deposits any cash or bonds or other securities or executes as surety or co-surety any bond for other persons.
- 1.3 “Board” means the Hunt County Bail Bond Board.
- 1.4 “Bonding Business” or “Bail Bond Business” means solicitation, negotiation or execution of a bail bond by a bail bond surety.
- 1.5 “Code” refers to Title 10, Chapter 1704 of Vernon’s Texas Statutes and Codes Annotated Occupations Code [§1704.001 *et seq.* Texas Occupations Code].
- 1.6 “Company” includes corporations and other business entities.
- 1.7 “License holder” means a person licensed as a surety by the Hunt County Bail Bond Board.
- 1.8 “Person” means an individual or corporation.
- 1.9 “Rules” means the Rules and Regulations as adopted by the Hunt County Bail Bond Board, as amended from time to time.
- 1.10 “Solicitation” means a direct or an indirect conversation, contract, request, invitation or suggestion to any prisoner, family member of any prisoner, or co-signer for any prisoner, while such prisoner is in official custody, official confinement or official processing, that such prisoner, family member of such prisoner, or co-signer for such prisoner should use any particular bonding license holder. Solicitation includes the requesting, inviting, asking or suggestion that any other person solicit bail bond business from a family member of a prisoner, co-signer for a prisoner, or prisoner in official custody, official confinement or official processing for a bonding license holder, whether or not it involves employment, payment, promise to pay, or any inducement of value whatsoever, to be provided by the bonding license holder or agent to such person. Each solicitation is a separate offense.

SECTION 2
THE BOARD

2.1 Name.

The name of the Board is the Hunt County Bail Bond Board.

2.2 Address.

The mailing address of the Hunt County Bail Bond Board is: HUNT COUNTY BAIL BOND BOARD, c/o HUNT COUNTY CLERK, 2507 Lee Street, Greenville, Texas 75401.

2.3 Members of the Board.

a. The board consists of:

1. The sheriff or a designee from the sheriff's office who must be the administrator or a deputy sheriff of the rank at least sergeant;
2. A district judge of Hunt County having jurisdiction over criminal matters and designated by the presiding judge of the administrative judicial district, or a designee of the district judge who is approved by the presiding judge;
3. The county judge, a member of the commissioners court designated by the county judge, or a designee approved by the commissioners court;
4. A judge of a county court at law in Hunt County having jurisdiction over criminal matters and designated by the commissioners court, or a designee of the judge who is approved by the commissioners court;
5. The district attorney or an assistant district attorney designated by the district attorney;
6. A licensed bail bond surety or agent for a corporate surety in Hunt County elected under Section 1704.0535, or a bail bond surety or agent for a corporate surety licensed in Hunt County who is designated by the elected surety or agent;
7. A justice of the peace;
8. The district clerk or the clerk's designee;
9. The county clerk or the clerk's designee;
10. A presiding judge of a municipal court located within Hunt County;
11. The county treasurer or the treasurer's designee; and
12. A criminal defense attorney practicing in the county and elected by other attorneys whose principal places of business are located in the county and

who are not legally prohibited from representing criminal defendants, or the designee of the criminal defense attorney.

- b. Persons authorized to designate the member of the board in a particular category named above shall make such designation in writing.
- c. The board shall annually conduct a secret ballot election to elect the member of the board who serves as the representative of licensed bail bond sureties by electing a licensed bail bond surety or agent for a corporate surety board member. Each individual licensed in the county as a bail bond surety or agent for a corporate surety is entitled to cast one vote for each license held. If no bondsman receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off election will be immediately conducted. The two (2) bondsmen that receive the most votes cast in the first election will be the only two (2) candidates on the ballot in the run-off election. The bondsman receiving the most votes in the run-off election will be certified the elected representative for the HCBBB. If three (3) or more bondsmen receive the same number of votes in the first election, and more than any other bondsman, then all such bondsmen will be included in the run-off election ballot.

2.4 Organization of the Board.

- a. The board, at each August meeting, shall elect a presiding officer ("chair"), vice-chair and secretary and shall recognize the members for the coming year.
- b. The chair shall preside at all meetings. The chair may vote on board matters.
- c. The vice-chair shall act in the temporary absence of the chair. The vice-chair shall automatically become chair if the chair fails attend three (3) consecutive meetings for any reason. The board shall then elect a new vice-chair at its next regular meeting.
- d. In the absence of the chair or vice-chair at a regular or special meeting of the board, any other member may preside as acting chair.
- e. The secretary shall keep the minutes of meetings and shall have the responsibility of preserving records of the board except as specifically provided in these rules. If the secretary fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings for any reason, the board shall elect a new secretary at the next regular meeting;
- f. A license holder who is a member of the board is disqualified to vote in any matter directly concerning issuance, suspension or revocation of the license holder's license;

2.5 Meetings and Agenda.

- a. The board shall meet on the third calendar Thursday of each month or as determined by the board.

- b. Meetings shall be held in the Hunt County Commissioner's Auxiliary Courtroom, located at 2700 Johnson Street, Greenville, Texas 75401 unless otherwise determined by the Board.
- c. The board may meet at such other times and places specified in the Notice of Meeting at the call of the chair or vice-chair.
- d. Four members shall constitute a quorum.
- e. The board may take action only on a majority vote of the Board members present.
- f. The agenda shall be prepared and posted by the chair or secretary. All required notices shall be sent or e-mailed by the chair or secretary to all board members.
- g. Meetings are subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act and notice shall be posted as required in that Act by posting a copy of the agenda at the entrance of the Hunt County Courthouse at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of any regular or special meeting, with a copy thereof delivered to or e-mailed to each member at the address supplied by each member to the secretary.
- h. Matters to be considered at the next regularly scheduled HCBBB meeting must be submitted to the Board Chairman as early as possible, but at least 7 business days prior to the meeting. Failure to timely submit all necessary documents will result in the matter not being placed on the agenda to be heard by the HCBBB until such time as the item has been submitted timely and in complete form. If a matter has been placed on the HCBBB agenda, and later is requested to be withdrawn from the agenda prior to the hearing (due to a reason that is not the fault of the HCBBB), the request to have the matter withdrawn must be in writing and the matter shall not be heard during a sixty (60) day period from the date of the request to withdraw; however, the HCBBB, in its sole discretion, may continue the item until the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting.
- i. If a matter has been placed on the HCBBB agenda to be heard, and due to a circumstance caused by the HCBBB, it is not heard, the matter will be continued until the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting.
- j. No item will be placed on an agenda until all relevant information is delivered to the secretary of the board. This specifically includes, but is not limited to, original or renewal applications and requests to increase collateral by putting additional property in trust.
- k. Any requests for special or emergency meetings shall be by written request to the chair of the Hunt County Bail Bond Board and shall be accompanied by all pertinent data including a written statement of why a special or emergency meeting should be called. The request for an emergency meeting must comply

with the Texas Open Meetings Act. The determination of the need for a special or emergency meeting shall be made at the sole discretion of the chair.

SECTION 3 RULES AND REGULATIONS

3.1 Adoption, Amendment and Repeal.

The Rules and Regulations of the board may be adopted, altered, amended or repealed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of all the members present at a regularly scheduled meeting of the board, provided that at least 14 days written notice is given of the proposed adoption, alteration, amendment or repeal, by posting the proposed rules in the same manner as posting notice of meetings of the board.

3.2 State Law Controls.

These regulations are intended to comply with applicable state statutes relative to bail bonds, particularly Chapter 1704 of the Code. In the event of any conflict between these regulations and any Texas law, the latter shall govern. A provision found to violate state law will be considered void and severed from the regulations, and the balance of the regulations shall remain in full force and effect.

3.3 Responsibility of License Holders.

These rules and regulations are not duplicative of the provisions of Texas law governing the making of bail bonds or the regulations governing bail bond sureties. It is the responsibility of all license holders to read, be familiar with and follow the requirements of Texas Occupations Code Chapter 1704 and the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure provisions regarding bail bonds.

SECTION 4 LICENSING

4.1 License Required.

- a. No person may act as a bail bond surety in Hunt County, Texas without first obtaining a license from the Hunt County Bail Bond Board, except as otherwise provided by law.
- b. A person licensed to practice law in the State of Texas may execute a bail bond or

act as a surety for persons the attorney actually represents in criminal cases as provided by the Code.

- c. A separate license is required for each agent operating under a corporate power of attorney.
- d. An individual may hold one license as an individual and an unlimited number of licenses as an agent for a corporate surety.

4.2 Application.

- a. A person seeking a license shall submit an original and ten (10) copies of a sworn application for license to the Hunt County Clerk together with the required filing fee.
- b. The filing fee for an application is \$500.00 and is not refundable.
- c. An application shall be made on the form promulgated by the board and be completed in full.
- d. All applications must include:

- 1. **Private Surety:** A current, sworn financial statement that includes all assets and liabilities. The statement shall be made on a form prescribed by the board and dated within 90 days of the application. Only the original financial statement is required to contain account numbers, social security number and date of birth, and this information may be redacted from the copies.

Insurance Surety: Financial statements for insurance companies are issued as laid out by the State Board of Insurance. The financial statement included in a new / renewal application shall be dated closet to one of the dates listed:

- a. Annual statements are due by March 1st of each year.

- b. Quarterly statements are due by:

- May 15 – August 15 and November 15 during each year.

- 2. An Authorization of Release form allowing the HCBBB or its designee to investigate the information contained in the financial statement.
- 3. A set of fingerprints of the applicant. If the applicant is a corporation, a set of the fingerprints of the person who will be the agent of the corporation for the business. In a renewal application, a copy of the fingerprints filed with the original application.
- 4. If the applicant is a corporation, the name and address of the corporation's agent for service of process and a statement that the

corporation will notify the board's secretary of any change in this designation.

- e. Applicants pledging real property as security must include the following items in the application, in addition to the items required by Section 1704.155 of the Code:
1. A current statement indicating the net value of the property according to the appropriate Tax Appraisal District or, at the discretion of the applicant, a current appraisal indicating the net value of the property made by a real estate appraiser who is a member in good standing of a nationally recognized professional appraiser society or trade organization that has an established code of ethics, educational program and professional certification program. A "current appraisal" is one made within twelve (12) months immediately preceding the date the application is submitted to the board.
 2. An agreement to keep current the insurance on any improvements on the property against any damage or destruction while the property remains in trust, in the full amount of the value claimed for improvements, showing the board as the first mortgagee and any loss payable to the benefit of the board. The applicant shall provide the board with a copy of the policy and a copy of any insurance renewal policy on or before each annual license anniversary date. The applicant shall notify the board in writing of any cancellation, termination or lapse in the policy required herein.
 3. A proposed Deed of Trust which the applicant plans to execute to the Board on the property. If the applicant is married, the applicant's spouse must also execute the Deed of Trust or provide a sworn affidavit to be filed in the Deed Records that the spouse agrees to the transfer to the board, any right, title, or interest that the spouse may have in the property. The board shall be listed as first lien holder on any real property placed with the board for security.
 4. A current photo of the property.
 5. A form prescribed by the board affirming that the applicant will not designate the property as a homestead.
 6. A statement that the property is "non-exempt" property as defined by Texas law. The Applicant shall further provide the board with a statement from the relevant tax appraisal district which indicates the non-exempt status of the property

- f. An application for renewal of a license shall include a list of all the license holder's active bonds, pending judgments nisi and final judgments pending payment.
- g. It is the responsibility of the applicant to insure that all of these requirements are followed and that all necessary information is provided to the board prior to consideration of any original or renewal application.

4.3 Consideration by the Board.

After an application has been properly submitted and the fee has been paid, the following procedure shall be followed:

- a. The application shall be placed on the agenda for initial consideration at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the board.
- b. Unless otherwise directed by the board at the meeting where initial consideration is given to the application, a designee of the HCBBB shall cause an investigation to be made to determine whether or not the applicant possesses sufficient financial resources to comply with the Code and satisfies all other requirements of the Code and these regulations, and shall cause those findings to be submitted to the board in an oral or written report at the next meeting. If any person or entity contacted in the course of the investigation requires a release before divulging information that is different than the release form provided by the board, the designee of the HCBBB shall contact the applicant and request completion of the required release. If the applicant refuses to complete the release, the designee of the HCBBB shall notify the board, and the board may consider the applicant's refusal to complete the required release in its decision to grant or deny the license.
- c. The application for a new or renewal license will not be considered for approval at the first meeting during which the application is initially presented.
- d. The applicant shall be notified of the date of final hearing on the application by mail, fax or e-mail, which includes a copy of the agenda and notice of the meeting, to the address contained in the application.
- e. If, after hearing, the board is satisfied that no ground exists on which to deny the application, the board shall enter an order conditionally approving the application subject to the application being perfected by the filing of the security deposits required of the license holder. At the end of ninety (90) days, if the required security deposits have not been made as required to the treasurer, conditional approval shall expire without notice and the applicant will have to reapply.

- f. If the board determines that a ground exists to deny the application, the board shall enter an order to that effect.
- g. An order conditionally approving or denying an application for a new license, shall be sent to the applicant by the board secretary and a copy retained for the records. When all application requirements are met and the required collateral has been filed with the Treasurer, the secretary shall mail a License Certificate to the applicant. The renewal date on the certificate will be as required in the Occupations Code, from the day the proper collateral was filed with the Treasurer.
- h. An order approving or denying an application for an existing license to be renewed will be mailed to the applicant by the board secretary and a copy retained for the records. A new License Certificate, if granted a renewal, will be mailed to the applicant and a copy will be retained for the record.

4.4 License Expiration and Renewal.

- a. The filing fee for a renewal application is Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00). The fee is not refundable and shall accompany the application.
- b. The application for renewal shall have the same form and content as an application for the original license. The applicant shall include a copy of any certificate of deposit and a copy of a properly filed C.D. assignment. If real property is pledged the applicant shall include a copy of the recorded deed of trust and all other documents pertaining to real property that are required in an original application.
- c. It is the responsibility of the license holder to apply for renewal. If a renewal application is not timely filed and the current license expires, the license holder shall not execute bail bonds until a new license is issued.
- d. If a renewal application is not timely filed, an original application is required.

4.5 Revocation and Suspension of License.

- a. A Notice of Hearing to suspend or revoke a license shall be sent by regular mail, hand-delivery or e-mail to each member of the board, and shall be posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act at the entrance of the Hunt County Courthouse.
- b. The license holder shall have the right to be represented by an attorney at a hearing to suspend or revoke a license.
- c. If a suspension or revocation is imposed, no probation of the suspension or revocation shall be allowed.

- d. If a license is suspended under Section 1704.253 of the Code for failure to maintain required security, that suspension shall be reported by the treasurer to the board and included in the minutes of the board at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- e. The district or county clerk shall immediately notify the sheriff if a bail bond surety fails to pay a final judgment as provided by Section 1704.204(a) of the Code. After receiving a notification, the sheriff shall not accept any further bonds from the bail bond surety until the surety pays the judgment. The bail bond surety's privilege to post bonds is reinstated when the bail bond surety pays the judgment.

SECTION 5

SECURITY

5.1 Deposit of Security.

Upon notice that an application for license has been conditionally approved, every applicant shall within ninety (90) days:

- a. Deposit with the treasurer a cashier's check, a copy of the certificate of deposit and a CD assignment from the bank where the CD is held showing the board as lien holder, in the form prescribed by the HCBBB, and a financial institution acknowledgment of said assignment, in the form prescribed by the HCBBB, or cash in the amount indicated in the application, but not less than \$50,000.00, which shall be held in a special fund to be called the Bail Bond Security Fund; or
- b. If real property is to be used as security by the applicant, the applicant shall, together with the applicant's spouse (if the applicant is married), execute a Deed of Trust, in the form prescribed by the HCBBB, to the real property listed in the application, with the chair as trustee, conveying said property in trust to the board and, an affidavit stating that the real property is not a homestead property nor will the property be used or designated as a homestead, in a form prescribed by the HCBBB.
 - 1. The property shall be valued in the amount indicated on the appraisal presented to the board and in the event of more than one appraisal being presented to the board, the appraisal accepted by the board during the application process. The value of the property may not be less than \$50,000.
 - 2. The Deed of Trust shall be delivered to the chair for approval. The

applicant shall then record the deed of trust, pay all filing fees and deliver the deed to the treasurer.

3. The applicant shall provide a binder from an insurance company showing the board as mortgagor or primary loss payee on any improvements on the property.

5.2 Additional Security.

- a. The treasurer may accept cash, certificates of deposit, or cashiers checks for additional security without further board action. Once deposited, such additional security will effect an increase in the license holder's security limit within two business days.
- b. The treasurer may receive additional security in the form of real property but such additional security is not effective until approved by the board at a next regularly scheduled meeting.
- c. A bail bond surety may, at any time, by posting additional security, increase the bail bond surety's limit pursuant to 5.2a.

5.3 Records.

The treasurer shall keep all original applications and records regarding real estate placed in trust with the board, which records shall include insurance and tax payments.

5.4 Cash Deposits.

- a. The treasurer may purchase Certificates of Deposit with cash deposited as security, if deemed advisable by the treasurer, and the interest thus accruing shall remain on deposit and accrue to the account of the license holder.
- b. The treasurer shall make periodic reports to the license holder of the amount of interest accrued.
- c. Funds withdrawn to pay final judgments of forfeiture shall be paid by check signed by the treasurer.
- d. The Bail Bond Security Fund shall be subject to audit by the county auditor.

5.5 Withdrawal of Security.

- a. A license holder may withdraw or substitute security only as provided by Section 1704.210 of the Code or by these rules no more than two times during a calendar year.