

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do I need a license to operate private investigative, private security or bail enforcement business in Iowa?

Yes, a person shall not operate a bail enforcement business, private investigative business, or private security business, or otherwise employ person in the operation of such a business located within this state unless the person is licensed by the commissioner in accordance with this chapter. Persons exempt from licensing are found in Iowa Code Chapter 80A.2. with further explanation in 661 Iowa Administrative Code 2.3(80A).

2. Where and how can I obtain an application packet for a private investigative, private security or bail enforcement license?

License application packets are available at a cost of \$15.00 by mail or \$10.00 if obtained at the Iowa Department of Public Safety, Department of Safety Building, 215 East 7th Street, 4th Floor, Des Moines, Iowa 50319. If you wish a packet sent to you, send a check or money order payable to the Iowa Department of Public Safety.

3. What requirements must I meet to qualify for a private investigative, private security or bail enforcement license?

License requirements can be found in 661 Iowa Administrative Code 2.5(80A) and Iowa Code 80A.4.

4. Do employees of licensed agencies also need to be licensed?

Each person employed by and engaged in the business of a licensed bail enforcement, private investigative or private security agency must obtain an employee ID card from the department and must meet the standards established in 661 Iowa Administrative Code 2.5(80A).

5. Are there any education or experience requirements to become licensed?

No; however if you have obtained a license as a Private Investigator you and your employees are required to obtain 12 hours of continuing education in the two years prior to renewal of the license.

6. Do I need to be an Iowa resident to obtain a private investigative, private security or bail enforcement license?

No

7. Do I need to take an examination to get a private investigative, private security or bail enforcement license license?

No

8. Where may I obtain fingerprints?

Most law enforcement agencies will roll finger prints. Call ahead for an appointment. You may expect to pay a processing fee.

9. What are the fees for obtaining a private investigative, private security or bail enforcement license license?

A two year license is \$100.00, an ID card is \$10.00 and the fingerprint background check is \$30.00.

10. I am a sworn Iowa law enforcement officer. Can I be licensed as a private investigative, private security or bail enforcement agency?

No. Refer to: Iowa Code 80A.2 Persons Exempt and 661 Iowa Administrative Code 2.5 (2) License Requirements.

11. Can I use my ID card to work for more than one licensed agency?

No. your ID card is issued under the name of a particular agency. Therefore, it is only valid while working for the agency that is named on the card.

12. Can I work for more than one licensed agency at the same time?

Yes. The Iowa Code and the Iowa Administrative Code do not prohibit this; however, some agencies do have rules that address working for more than one licensed agency. You must obtain an ID card from each agency from whom you are employed.

13. How do I find out if someone is licensed as a private investigative, private security or bail enforcement agency?

Contact Iowa Department of Public Safety Program Services Bureau to have an email list sent to you. Email address: piinfo@dps.state.ia.us

14. What is the procedure if I want to register a complaint against someone who is a licensed agency?

All complaints must be submitted in writing to the Iowa Department of Public Safety, Program Services Bureau, Wallace State Office Bldg., Des Moines, IA 50319. State the nature of the complaint, the party against whom the complaint is filed, and information so that we can contact you.

15. May I obtain a license thru reciprocity?

A temporary permit to conduct business in Iowa may be issued to a private investigator or private security agency licensed in another state provided that the requirements and qualifications in the licensing state are similar to those in Iowa and that the licensing state allows similar privileges by receipt. A temporary permit may be issued for a period not to exceed 9- days and is not renewable. Requirements for obtaining a temporary permit through reciprocity may be found at: Iowa Code 80A.18 Reciprocity and 661 Iowa Administrative Code 2.23(2) Requirements. It should be noted that if a license is needed, you may obtain a two year license for the same cost and standards as for a 90 day reciprocity license.