
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Senator Jesse Arreguín, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 1203 **Hearing Date:** April 21, 2026
Author: Smallwood-Cuevas
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Consultant: AB

Subject: *Security services*

HISTORY

Source: SEIU California

Prior Legislation: SB 652 (Richardson), Ch. 94, Stats. of 2025
AB 2515 (Holden) Ch. 287, Stats. of 2022
AB 229 (Holden), Ch. 697, Stats. of 2021
SB 609 (Glazer), Ch. 377, Stats. of 2019
AB 2349 (Chen), Ch. 20, Stats of 2018
SB 1196 (Hill), Ch. 800, Stats. of 2016
SB 1362 (Mendoza), not heard in Senate Public Safety, 2016

Support: California Federation of Labor Unions, AFL-CIO

Opposition: Allied Universal; California Association of Licensed Security Agencies, Guards & Associates

PURPOSE

The purpose of this bill is to revise and recast several provisions of existing law related to proprietary security services and private security services and employers, particularly with regard to the training of officers on the exercise of arrest powers and use of force, the imposition of fines by the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), reports to the DCA regarding the discharge of a firearm by a security officer, and the entities that may administer specified trainings.

Existing law establishes the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services (BSIS) within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), which licenses and regulates the private security industry, private investigators, locksmiths, repossessioners, and alarm companies. (Bus. & Prof. Code, §§ 7512 et seq.)

Existing law establishes the Private Security Services Act, which provides for the BSIS's regulation of Private Patrol Operators (PPO) who employ private security guards and security patrolpersons. (Bus. & Prof. Code, §§ 7580 et seq.)

Existing law, the Proprietary Security Services Act, provides for BSIS's regulation of proprietary private security (PPS) employers and officers. (Bus. & Prof. Code, §§ 7574 et seq.)

Existing law defines a “proprietary private security employer” as a person who has one or more employees who provide security services for the employer and only for the employer. A person who employs proprietary private security officers pursuant to this chapter at more than one location shall be considered a single employer. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7574.01, subd. (e))

Existing law defines a “proprietary private security officer (PSO)” as an unarmed individual who is employed exclusively by any one employer whose primary duty is to provide security services for his or her employer, whose services are not contracted to any other entity or person. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7574.01, subd. (f))

Existing law requires PSOs to complete training in security officer skills, which includes Power to Arrest and Appropriate Use of Force, within six months from the date upon which registration is issued, or within six months of their employment with a PPS employer. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 7574.18, subd. (a).)

Existing law requires the Bureau to develop and establish by regulation a standard course and curriculum, which shall include a minimum number of hours of instruction, for the skills training required per the above to promote and protect the safety of persons and the security of property, which may be administered, tested, and certified by any PPS employer, organization, or school approved by the Bureau. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7574.18, subd. (d).)

Existing law authorizes the Bureau to approve any PPS employer, organization, or school to teach the course on the power to arrest and use of force, specified above. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7574.18, subd. (e).)

Existing law requires each PPS employer to annually provide each registered employee with specifically dedicated review or practice of the security officer skills prescribed in 2) above. Requires the Bureau to adopt by regulation the minimum number of hours required for annual review. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7574.18, subd. (f)(1).)

Existing law authorizes the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs (the “Director”) Director to issue a citation, which may include an administrative fine, for specified violations of the Proprietary Security Services Act, in amounts between \$500 and \$2,500 per violation. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7574.30, subds. (a)-(f).)

Existing law prohibits a PPS employer from doing any of the following:

- Failing to properly maintain an accurate and current record of the name, address, commencing date of employment, and position of each PPS officer, and the date of termination of employment when a PPS officer is terminated, as specified.
- Failing to properly maintain an accurate and current record of proof of completion by each PSO of the trainings required in the Proprietary Security Services Act.
- Failing to certify proof of current and valid registration for each employee who is subject to registration.
- Permitting any employee to carry a firearm or other deadly weapon, including any electronic control device, stun gun, baton, or any chemical agent, including pepper spray.
- Failing to administer to each registered employee of the licensee the review or practice training as required. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7574.38.)

Existing law prohibits any PSO from:

- Failing to carry on their person, while on duty, a valid and current PSO registration card, as specified.
- Carrying a firearm or other deadly weapon, including any electronic control device, stun gun, baton, or any chemical agent, including pepper spray.
- Failing to report to their employer any physical altercation with a member of the public while on duty and while acting within the course and scope of their employment. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7574.39.)

Existing law prohibits persons licensed as PPOs from failing to deliver to the Director a written report describing the circumstances surrounding the discharge of any firearm or physical altercation with a member of the public while on duty, by a licensee or any officer, partner, or employee of a licensee while acting within the course and scope of their employment within seven business days after the qualifying incident, and provides that the report shall be required only for physical altercations that result in any of the following:

- The arrest of a security guard.
- The filing of a police report by a member of the public.
- A member of the public requiring any type of first aid or other medical attention.
- The discharge, suspension, or reprimand of a security guard by their employer.
- Any physical use of force or violence on any person while on duty. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583.2, subd. (f)(1)-(2).)

Existing law specifies that the report described above must include, but not be limited to, a description of any injuries or damages incurred, the identity of all participants, and whether a police investigation was conducted. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583.2, subd. (f)(3).)

Existing law requires every PPO licensee and any person employed and compensated by a PPO licensee, other lawful business, or public agency as a security guard or patrolperson, and who in the course of that employment or business carries a firearm, to complete a course of training in the exercise of the power to arrest and the appropriate use of force and a course of training in the carrying and use of firearms, as specified. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583.5, subd. (a).)

Existing law provides that each applicant for a security guard registration shall complete, within 6 months of registration, a course in the exercise of the power to arrest and the appropriate use of force as a condition for the issuance of the registration, and that a course provider authorized to provide the training shall issue a certificate of completion to the person upon satisfactory completion. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583.6, subd. (a).)

Existing law provides that except as specified, a security guard registrant shall complete not less than 32 hours of training in security officer skills within six months from the date an initial registration is issued. A security guard registrant shall complete 16 of the 32 hours within 30 days from the date the registration is issued. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583.6, subd. (b).)

Existing law provides that a registrant must annually complete 8 hours of specifically dedicated review or practice of security officer skills, as specified. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583.6, subd. (e).)

Existing law provides that the course of training in the exercise of the power to arrest and the appropriate use of force may be administered, tested, and certified by any licensee or by any organization or school approved by the DCA, and must be approximately 8 hours in length and cover a range of specified topics, including several subtopics related to the appropriate use of force. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583.7, subd. (a).)

Existing law provides that the majority of the training specified above shall be taught by means of verbal instruction, but that the use of force component must be conducted through traditional classroom instruction, which is defined, in part, as having the instructor physically present with students in the classroom at least 50% of the time. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583.7, subd. (b).)

Existing law requires DCA to make available a guidebook as a standard for teaching the course in the exercise of the power to arrest and the appropriate use of force, which may be known as the Power to Arrest and Appropriate Use of Force Manual (hereinafter, "Use of Force Training Manual"). (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583.7, subd. (c).)

Existing law requires PPO applicants who wish to obtain a firearms qualification card to satisfactorily complete a course of training in the carrying and usage of firearms, which shall be in the format prescribed by the DCA as delineated in BSIS's "Firearms Training Manual." (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7585.)

Existing law requires any institution, firm, participating tribe, or individual wishing the approval of the bureau to offer the firearms course shall complete an application for certification as a firearms training facility, as specified. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7585.3.)

Existing law provides that all firearms course material provided to the certificate holder in the "Firearms Training Manual" issued by the bureau shall be covered in each class session. In no event shall the class instruction total less than eight hours for the initial firearms qualification. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7585.6.)

Existing law provides that if, upon investigation, the Director determines a licensee, including a corporation, or registrant is in violation of specified requirements on PPOs, the Director may issue a citation to the licensee or registrant, and that the amount of the fine shall in no event exceed \$2,500 per violation, as specified. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7585.7.)

This bill provides that each PSO applicant must complete a course in the exercise of the power to arrest and the appropriate use of force as a condition of issuance of the registration, and that course providers authorized to provide training must issue a certificate of completion to the PSO upon completion of the training.

This bill requires a PSO to complete 34 hours of training in security officer skills within 6 months from the date registration is issued, 18 of which must be completed 30 days from the date of registration.

This bill requires the PSO arrest power and use of force training specified above to meet the standards set forth in existing law and this bill pertaining to PPO arrest power and use of force training.

This bill provides that in addition to any annual training required by regulation, each employee registered pursuant to the Proprietary Security Services Act shall annually complete a minimum

of eight hours of training dedicated to practicing deescalation skills through in-person role-play and interactive training methods administered by an organization, or a person certified by an organization, that employs evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies in their training. The training time shall be compensated by the employer.

This bill increases the fine for PPS employer violations related to employee recordkeeping and employee training from \$500 to \$1000 per violation.

This bill prohibits a PPS employer from failing to ensure that the security skills training for PSOs is completed as required and failing to compensate employees for training as provided, violations of which are subject to a fine not to exceed \$10,000 per violation.

This bill adds to the circumstances under which a PPO must submit a report to the Director describing the circumstances surrounding the discharge of any firearm or physical altercation with a member of the public, as specified, incidents where the physical altercation results in a security officer requiring first aid or other medical attention.

This bill provides that the report must also include a description of the apparent race and gender of the member of the public with whom there was an altercation and whether the security officer involved had received all required training at the time of the incident.

This bill requires BSIS to release a report annually containing data, per county, with respect to reports to the Director regarding discharge of a firearm or altercation with a member of the public, as follows:

- Total number of reports.
- Total number of reports involving the discharge of a firearm, including reports based upon apparent race and gender of the member of the public.
- Total number of reports involving other physical use of force or violence on a person, including reports based on apparent race and gender of the member of the public.
- Total number of reports in which a member of the public required first aid or other medical attention.
- Total number of reports in which a security officer required first aid or other medical attention.
- Total number of reports in which a security officer lacked all required training at the time of the incident.
- A comparison of the current year's data with data from the previous two years.

This bill requires that in addition to any other required training, DCA must develop and establish by regulation a standard course and curriculum that must include

This bill prohibits a PPO from failing to ensure that the security guard training occurs as required and failing to compensate employees for said training.

This bill requires DCA to develop and establish by regulation a training course including a minimum number of hours of instruction for training individuals on the role of implicit and explicit bias on racial profiling and the use of firearms in commercial, entertainment, government property, urban street, and residential settings.

This bill increases the total number of hours that a security guard registrant must complete from 32 to 34 and provides that 18 of these hours must be completed within 30 days from the date registration is issued.

This bill requires that all 34 hours shall be conducted through traditional classroom instruction and provides that no part of the training shall be completed while a guard is on duty.

This bill provides that the time spent to attend the training shall be compensated by the licensee if the guard is employed by, or has a pending offer of employment from a licensee, and the cost of the training shall be provided by the registrant's employer.

This bill increases the annual number of hours a registrant shall complete dedicated to review or practice of security officer skills, from 8 to 16, and provides that At least eight of these hours must be dedicated to practicing deescalation skills through in-person role-play and interactive training methods administered by an organization, or a person certified by an organization, that employs evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies in their training.

This bill requires the PPO employer to compensate the employee for this annual training.

This bill prohibits a PPO from failing to ensure that security skills training occurs as required and from failing to compensate employees for said training.

This bill provides that upon request, a labor organization that approved by BSIS, as specified, represents security officers of a licensee shall be entitled to provide a specified two-hour training on labor rights, as provided.

This bill provides that, effective January 1, 2028, the required PPO training course on arrest powers and use of force may not be administered, tested or certified by any organization that is a licensee, and that the DCA may approve any non-licensed person to teach the course.

This bill increases the total duration of the PPO training course on arrest powers and use of force from 8 hours to 16 hours.

This bill modifies the definition of "traditional classroom instruction" for the purposes of the use of force component of the training to require the instructor to be present in the classroom with students for 100% of the course, and specifies that the instructor must be a human being.

This bill provides that de-escalation components of the arrest powers and use of force training shall be dedicated to security guards practicing deescalation skills through in-person role-play and interactive training methods administered by an organization, or a person certified by an organization, that employs evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies in their training, and requires BSIS to determine which organizations are qualified to provide such training.

This bill provides that, notwithstanding the above, a licensee may provide the power to arrest and use of force training if expressly agreed to in a valid collective bargaining agreement that meets specified conditions.

This bill specifies that the portions of the de-escalation training shall be no less than 8 hours in duration, which shall not be considered when determining whether the training as a whole meets the requirements of existing law and this bill, and must be compensated by the trainee's employer, including the cost of the training.

This bill specifies that an organization that employs evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies shall be an organization whose mission or purpose is to provide specialized deescalation training that is based on principles and methods informed by peer-reviewed or clinical research on trauma and includes role-playing and interactive methods.

This bill requires BSIS to develop emergency regulations establishing the criteria that BSIS shall use to evaluate whether any organization is a qualifying organization, and identify qualifying organizations by January 1, 2028.

This bill provides that an organization or natural person shall be ineligible to provide the training prescribed herein if the organization is a licensee, a subsidiary of a licensee, or is a subsidiary of an organization that shares the same parent organization as a licensee, unless expressly agreed to in a valid collective bargaining agreement.

This bill provides that the organization, or person certified by an organization, that employs evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies shall issue a certificate of completion to the trainee and their employer, if any, upon satisfactory completion of the training.

This bill requires the DCA to amend the Use of Force Training Manual to include material on de-escalation skills and techniques utilized by bureau-approved organizations that employ evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies and to consult with such organizations in this amendment and when otherwise developing, adopting, amending, or repealing the manual.

This bill provides that if the BSIS or DCA adopts, modifies, or seeks to rescind a rule or regulation pursuant to specified provisions of existing law regarding PPO training, the BSIS must convene a training advisory committee to recommend requirements and share their experience in the security industry, which must be composed of representatives of the DCA and BSIS, and include representatives from a recognized or certified collective bargaining agent that represents security workers, security employers, labor-management groups in the security industry, security officers, worker centers, and other related subject matter experts.

This bill increases the duration of class instruction for the PPO firearms training from 8 to 16 hours.

This bill increases the maximum fine that may be imposed for the violation of specified requirements by PPO licensees or security guard registrants from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

This bill requires the Labor Commission to take specified actions regarding the property services industry, as defined.

This bill includes various legislative findings and declarations.

COMMENTS

1. Need for This Bill

According to the author:

Security guards are relied upon by communities, local businesses, property managers, nonprofits, and local governments to help keep people safe. They are often the first to respond during emergencies and high-stress situations and must act quickly to protect those around them.

Communities increasingly rely on security guards as essential workers, and the scope of their work has significantly expanded. However, their wages, working conditions, and training standards have not kept pace with the importance of their role or the risks of the profession. SB 1203 improves working conditions for security guards by ensuring they are adequately trained and fairly compensated for their responsibilities.

2. Bureau of Security and Investigative Services

BSIS is a division of the DCA that regulates, licenses and enforces California's private security industry. There are currently over 520,000 BSIS licensees serving in the areas of alarm services, locksmith services, private investigation, private security, repossession, and firearm and baton training.¹ After the Board of Registered Nursing and the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology, BSIS has the most licensees of any DCA subdivision, and regulates licensees under the following statutes:

- Alarm Company Act
- Locksmith Act
- Private Investigator Act
- Private Security Services Act
- Proprietary Security Services Act
- Collateral Recovery Act²

This bill deals with two of these laws, the Proprietary Security Services Act³, which regulates PSEs and PSOs, and the Private Security Services Act⁴, which regulates PPOs and their security guard employees. A PSE is a person or business that employs PSOs and may not employ armed security guards, and PSOs are security officers who hold valid registration if they wear a distinctive uniform and interact with the public when performing security duties. For example, a business that hires its own "in-house" security employees, rather than contract out for security services, must obtain a PSE license. Conversely, a PPO is a person or business that employs security guards and contracts them out to another person or business. PPO security guards may

¹ Department of Consumer Affairs Annual Licensing Statistics: Active Licenses. Data from FY 23/24; https://www.dca.ca.gov/data/annual_license_stats.html

² *Ibid.*

³ Bus. & Prof. Code, §§ 7574 et seq

⁴ Bus. & Prof. Code, §§ 7580 et seq

be armed or unarmed. Unlike a security guard, a PSO may not contract out their security services and may only provide security services to the PSE by whom they are employed.⁵

There are significantly more PPO and PPO security guard licensees than there are PSEs and PSOs – per the licensing numbers from the latest fiscal year available:

- PSE licenses: 655
- PSO licenses: 9,180
- PPO licenses: 2,978
- PPO security guard registrants: 331,437⁶

3. Recent Security Guard Use of Force Updates

California underwent an overhaul on the issue of uses of force, and standards for deadly force in 2019 with the passage of AB 392 (Weber), Chapter 170, Statutes of 2019, and SB 230 (Caballero), Chapter 285, Statutes of 2019. These bills updated California's use of force statutes, and the mandated training of law enforcement in the updated standards. The standard for use of deadly force in California prior to the 2019 amendments was enacted in 1872 and at the time was the single oldest un-amended law enforcement use of force statute in the country. Like the standards for law enforcement, the standards for private armed security were due for an update to reflect the peace officer standards implemented in 2019.

This update was achieved via AB 229 (Holden), Chapter 697, Statutes of 2021, which applied many of the same principles to licensed private security that had been applied to law enforcement agencies by AB 392 and SB 230. Specifically, AB 229, among other changes, added a course of training in the use of force to existing requirements for PPO security guards and PSOs, and required PPOs to report the discharge of a firearm, altercations with a member of the public, and additional new uses of force to BSIS within 7 business days of the incident.⁷ AB 229 also required DCA to make available a guidebook as a standard for teaching the course in the appropriate use of force. In 2022, these standards were further updated by AB 2515 (Holden), Chapter 287, Statutes of 2022, which imposed on PSEs many of the requirements that had previously applied only to PSOs, including the requirement that altercations between a guard and a member of the public be reported to BSIS. AB 2515 also strengthened requirements for PPO security guards to obtain a baton permit.

4. This Bill Significantly Modifies Existing PSO and Security Guard Training Requirements

PSO Training Requirements

Existing law imposes considerably different training requirements on PSOs and PPO security guards. PSOs, who are not authorized to carry firearms, must complete an 8-hour power to arrest and use of force training prior to obtaining their license, and within 6 months of having their registration approved must complete an additional 16 hours. Each year, PSOs must complete 8

⁵ Bus. & Prof. Code, §§ 7574.01, 7582.1

⁶ Department of Consumer Affairs Annual Licensing Statistics: Active License Statistics. Data from FY 23/24; https://www.dca.ca.gov/data/annual_license_stats.html

⁷ Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583.2

hours of continuing education, as specified by BSIS.⁸ PSEs are responsible for annually providing each PSO employee with “specifically dedicated review or practice” of required security officer skills.⁹ Moreover, existing law prohibits PSEs from failing to properly maintain proof of completion records related to PSO training. If PSEs fail to provide annual skills review or maintain training records, they are subject to a mandatory \$500 fine per violation.¹⁰

This bill increases the total number of training hours that PSOs must complete within 6 months of obtaining registration from 24 to 34, and requires that 18 of these hours be completed within 30 days from the date that registration is issued. The bill also mandates that PSOs complete a course in the power to arrest and the appropriate use of force, a provision that seems redundant given that existing regulations already include such a requirement. The arrest powers and use of force training must meet standards identical to those prescribed for the PPO security guard arrest power and use of force training. Moreover, in addition to the 34 hours of required training referenced above, the bill requires each PSO to complete a minimum of eight hours of de-escalation training annually. A separate provision of the bill prohibits PSEs from failing to ensure that all PSO training is completed and failing to compensate employees for time spent completing the required trainings, violations of which are subject to a mandatory fine of \$10,000 per violation.

PPO Security Guard Training Requirements

As mentioned previously, under existing law, PPO security guards are subject to far more rigorous training requirements than PSOs. Specifically, PPO security guards must complete 32 hours of training within 6 months from the date initial registration is issued, 16 of which must be completed within 30 days of registration. In addition to those 32 hours, a security guard registrant must complete an 8-hour training on the power to arrest and appropriate use of force, plus 8 hours of annual continuing education.¹¹ This bill increases the total required hours from 32 to 34 to provide for the addition of a mandatory 2-hour training on specified employee rights.¹² The bill also requires an additional 8 hours of continuing education per year, bringing the annual total to 16 hours. Similar to the provisions related to PSEs and PSOs, this bill prohibits PPOs from failing to ensure that the above training – including the arrest powers/use of force training – occurs as required and from failing to compensate employees for time spent training, and increases the fine for a violation of these – and several other – prohibitions from \$2,500 per violation to \$10,000 per violation. It should be noted that one of these prohibitions, which goes into effect January 1, 2027, references a provision that is not set to take effect until January 1, 2028, effectively prohibiting a PPO from failing to discharge an obligation that it is not legally required to discharge until a year later. The author and Committee may wish to amend the bill to address this incongruity.

This bill makes many changes to existing law regarding the mandatory arrest powers/use of force training for PPO security guards. Critically, whereas existing law provides that the training may be administered and certified by any PPO licensee, this bill inverts that requirement, instead providing that the training may be administered and tested by any organization that is *not* a licensee. However, under the bill, a licensee may provide the training “if expressly agreed to in a

⁸ Bus. & Prof. § 7574.18, subd. (a); 16 CCR §§ 643, 643 App. See also, <https://www.bsis.ca.gov/consumers/faqs/ppso.shtml>

⁹ Bus. & Prof. § 7574.18, subd. (f)

¹⁰ Bus. & Prof. § 7574.30, subd. (c)

¹¹ Bus. & Prof. Code, § 7583, subds. (a), (b), (e).

¹² The rights are those contained in the notice described in Labor Code, § 1553, subd. (a).

valid collective bargaining agreement that [...] provides for the wages, hours of work, and working conditions of employees, final and binding arbitration of disputes concerning any training provisions, premium wage rates for all overtime hours worked, and regular hourly rate of pay of not less than 30 percent more than the state minimum wage rate.”¹³ This shift from a framework under which most training entities are licensees to one precluding licensees from administering the training represents a substantial restructuring of the training regime for PPOs, especially in light of the significant overhaul of PSO and PPO security guard training in AB 2515. It should be noted that this particular provision of the bill has delayed implementation date of January 1, 2028, though given the extent of the bill’s prescriptions regarding the arrest powers/use of force training, a later date may be necessary. Additionally, because the new training entities are not BSIS licensees, it is unclear how BSIS would enforce these entities to comply with the applicable statutory requirements, as they would be unable to impose a fine on a non-licensed entity.

In addition, whereas existing law provides that the use of force component of the training need only be taught via in-person classroom discussion 50% of the time, this bill requires 100% of this component to be taught in-person. Moreover, the bill increases the total length of the arrest powers/use of force training from 8 to 16 hours due to the addition of a separate training focused solely on practicing de-escalation skills, a topic required under existing law but incorporated into the 8-hour curriculum. This distinct de-escalation training must include practice in de-escalation skills through in-person roleplay and interactive training methods, and be taught by a BSIS-approved, non-licensee organization, or person certified by an organization, that employs evidence-based, trauma-informed techniques and strategies in their training.

Firearms Training

Under existing law, PPO security guards are authorized to carry firearms or batons in the course of their employment. In order to carry a firearm, a licensee must obtain a BSIS Firearms Permit by undergoing a background check, completing extensive training, and passing an assessment for the purposes of determining whether they possess the judgment, restraint and self-control to carry a firearm while on duty.¹⁴ Any individual security guard wishing to carry a firearm in the course of their duties must obtain a firearm qualification card, which must be renewed every two years via the completion of a range requalification and the successful passage of a written firearms examination.¹⁵ Licensed firearm training facilities are required to provide no less than 8 hours of classroom instruction for the initial firearms qualification. This bill increases the total classroom instruction for initial firearms qualification to 16 hours.

5. Argument in Support

According to the bill’s sponsor, SEIU California:

Security officers are on the front lines of public safety every day. Across California, they protect people and property in high-rise buildings, hospitals, airports, stadiums, warehouses, and other critical infrastructure. Increasingly,

¹³ This provision, which was recently added to the bill on April 9 falls outside the jurisdiction of this committee but raises a question better suited to the Senate Labor Committee: Is BSIS the appropriate entity to enforce this type of collective bargaining provision? Does it have the authority to do so?

¹⁴ Bus. & Prof Code, §§ 7583.5; 7583.23

¹⁵ Bus. & Prof Code, § 7583.32

they are called upon to respond to complex and high-risk situations, including de-escalating conflicts, addressing behavioral health crises, and serving as the first point of contact in emergencies. Security officer duties often include responding to incidents and critical situations, apprehending or expelling persons engaged in suspicious or criminal acts, restraining or removing trespassers, protecting people from physical attack, preventing inappropriate occurrences, confronting and detaining violators, implementing conflict management techniques to resolve issues, and de-escalating conflicts (Appendix 1, Security Job Descriptions).

However, the reality is that many security officers are being asked to perform these duties without the training, support, or compensation necessary to safely do their jobs. As outlined in SB 1203, current training standards are insufficient to prepare officers for the dangerous and unpredictable situations they routinely face. At the same time, a shortage of law enforcement personnel has increased reliance on security officers to fill critical public safety gaps, often placing them in precarious positions without adequate preparation. This disconnect puts both workers and the public at risk.

Security officers deserve the tools to protect themselves and the communities they serve. SB 1203 takes an important step forward by strengthening training standards, requiring meaningful, in-person de-escalation training, ensuring workers are paid for required training, and improving oversight of wages and working conditions. [...] California law currently requires that security officers be trained on de-escalation. Yet, existing training requirements on de-escalation fail to ensure that officers have practiced and refined de-escalation skills before being placed in dangerous situations.

6. Argument in Opposition

According to Allied Universal, a security services company:

Without any clearly established need, SB 1203 would double the required "Powers to Arrest and Appropriate Use of Force" training from 8 to 16 hours and similarly doubles the mandatory annual refresher training from 8 to 16 hours. Furthermore, the bill disallows licensed security companies from teaching the 16-hour course, instead mandating that employers pay for training conducted by a labor organization. This requirement is costly and unnecessary. These third-party organizations lack expertise in providing security officer training so this requirement will create a massive recruitment and hiring bottleneck. By complicating the hiring process and eliminating on-the-job training, the bill will also drive prospective guards to seek work elsewhere, directly exacerbating the current shortage of security officers.

In addition to the very real operational challenges, this bill will create an excessive financial burden on private security employers, which will inevitably lead to job losses. Our industry trade group has estimated the total financial impact of SB 1203 may exceed one billion dollars annually. When broken down mathematically, the new training requirements alone will cost over \$534 million a year. This includes initial training costs of approximately \$207 million, factoring

in 360,000 guards in California at an average wage of \$20 per hour, 50 hours of training in year one, and a 15% payroll tax markup. Additionally, the 16 hours of annual refresher training,

calculated at an overtime rate of \$30 per hour plus payroll taxes, adds roughly \$198.7 million. Finally, relying on third-party training instructors at a cost of \$300 per employee would contribute another \$108 million in costs. [...]

These financial and operational pressures will result in increased costs, heighten public safety risks and likely give rise to unregulated operators. California currently faces high rates of retail theft and property crime. By making lawful, regulated security services significantly more expensive, struggling retail operators may be forced to forgo professional security services entirely. Furthermore, the intense cost pressures will incentivize unethical, unregulated providers to skip licensing requirements and operate under alternative titles like "Event Staff" or "Ushers". This proliferation of underground, unregulated personnel will jeopardize public safety during a time of heightened risk. This is especially concerning given the additional security needs for upcoming global events in California, including the 2026 FIFA World Cup, Super Bowl LXI, and the LA 2028 Summer Olympics.

-- END --