

Missouri Recently Adopted More Licensure Rules For Electricians! Why?

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For most electricians, the thought of having to get yet another license is a nightmare. Now don't freak out, but Missouri's legislature has created one more license for electricians. This new license, however, may not be the nightmare you expect. In fact, many are calling this new license the relief Missouri has desperately needed.

Up until now, Missouri was one of only six states to have a chaotic patchwork of local licensure rules for electrical contractors. Thus, if an electrician did a job in St. Louis one week and then traveled to Springfield the following week, he or she would need two different licenses. Under Missouri's new rules, this may no longer be the case. Governor Greitens signed a bill into law back in July creating a state licensure program.

You are probably thinking, "Do I really have to take the time and go get this new license?" The answer is *NO!* Under Missouri's new rules, no individual electrician is required to obtain a state license. But, if you so choose, you may obtain a state license and then never have to worry about local licensing requirements again. Missouri's cities and towns are obligated to accept a state license in lieu of any local license requirements. Therefore, if you work in only one town and already have your license, no worries. Keep doing what you do. If, however, you are tired of obtaining and maintaining licenses in various towns across the state, a statewide license may be a good idea for you.

So, how do you qualify for a state electrician license? There are five requirements: (1) be at least 21 years old; (2) provide proof of liability insurance in the amount of \$500,000 and post a bond with each political subdivision where work will be performed (as required by each town); (3) pass a standardized and nationally accredited electrical assessment exam; (4) pay the costs of the exam; and (5) meet the necessary education or experience levels. The statute contains a long list of education and experience levels that may qualify, but it essentially requires education or experience ranging from two years of work and a four-year electrical engineering degree, to six years of on-the-job experience with no education. If you want to see the specifics on this fifth requirement, simply run a Google search for "RSMo 324.920."

If you meet the above five requirements, you are eligible for obtaining a state license. Nonetheless, the statute does allow some individuals to automatically receive a state license (no additional work on your part!). If you already have a license from a Missouri city or town that required you to pass a standardized and nationally-accredited exam based upon the National Electrical Code and you also have 12,000 hours (about six years) of verifiable experience, you will automatically be issued a statewide license.

Again, no individual is required to obtain this statewide license. If you work in a town that has no license requirements, or you already have a local license for each town you work in, you are completely fine and need to do nothing. Missouri's new state license simply provides electricians an option to obtain a license that is valid across the entire state (allowing you to forget those local requirements).

There is one situation, however, in which a statewide license is necessary. If you are in an electrical contracting corporation, firm, institution, organization, or company, you are required to employ at a supervisory level at least one electrical contractor who possesses a statewide license. No person with a statewide license can be a representative for more than one company at a time. Therefore, find someone within the company who can get this license and then you should be in the clear.

The Takeaway: No individual is required to possess a new statewide license. But for some, a state license may be handy. Companies, on the other hand, are required to employ at least one supervisory-level employee with a statewide license.

Have questions? Did you find this information helpful and want to ask us about something else? Give any of our attorneys a call! We'll help you out or find someone who can. 1.800.225.5529.