

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 827

BY REPRESENTATIVE JORDAN

PLUMBERS: Creates the Plumbing Workforce Access Act

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Part II of Chapter 16 of Title 37 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be  
3 comprised of R.S. 37:1381 through 37:1391, relative to plumbing workforce  
4 development; to create the Louisiana Plumbing Workforce Access Act; to establish  
5 an institution-based pathway to plumbing licensure; to provide for curriculum  
6 standards; to authorize competency-based assessment; to create an industry rotation  
7 program; to provide for employer incentives; to establish a returning citizen  
8 pathway; to provide for reciprocity by examination; to provide for rules and  
9 regulations; and to provide for related matters.

10 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

11 Section 1. Part II of Chapter 16 of Title 37 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950,  
12 comprised of R.S. 37:1381 through 37:1391, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

13 PART II. LOUISIANA PLUMBING WORKFORCE ACCESS ACT

14 §1381. Short title

15 This Part shall be known and may be cited as the "Louisiana Plumbing  
16 Workforce Access Act".

17 §1382. Legislative findings and purpose

18 A. The legislature finds and declares all of the following:

1           (1) A critical shortage of licensed plumbers exists in this state, threatening  
2           public health infrastructure, slowing construction and economic development, and  
3           increasing costs for families and businesses in this state.

4           (2) The current employer-sponsorship model for plumbing apprenticeship  
5           creates systemic inequities, conditioning access to a public credential upon private  
6           relationships and disproportionately excluding residents of low-income communities,  
7           rural areas, and communities of color.

8           (3) This state's community colleges and vocational-technical schools are  
9           well-positioned to provide structured, standardized training that maintains the rigor  
10          of plumbing licensure while expanding access to the pathway.

11          (4) This state incarcerates its citizens at one of the highest rates in the nation,  
12          and providing returning citizens with viable, licensed trade pathways reduces  
13          recidivism and strengthens the workforce.

14          (5) Maintaining rigorous licensing standards while expanding access to the  
15          licensing pathway serves the dual public interest of protecting public health and  
16          promoting economic mobility.

17          B. The purpose of this Part is to establish an institution-based pathway to  
18          plumbing licensure that eliminates the barrier of employer sponsorship, maintains  
19          existing examination and competency standards, and expands the licensed plumbing  
20          workforce in this state.

21          §1383. Definitions

22                 As used in this Part, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

23                 (1) "Approved institution" means a community college, vocational-technical  
24                 school, or correctional facility training program that has received board approval to  
25                 offer the Institutional Plumbing Pathway program pursuant to this Part.

26                 (2) "Board" means the State Plumbing Board established in R.S. 37:1361 et  
27                 seq.

1           (3) "Competency checkpoint" means a standardized practical skills  
2           assessment administered or certified by the board at defined stages of the  
3           institutional pathway.

4           (4) "Industry rotation" means a structured period of supervised hands-on  
5           work experience completed by an Institutional Plumbing Pathway student at a  
6           participating licensed plumbing contractor's worksite.

7           (5) "Institutional Plumbing Pathway student" means a person enrolled in an  
8           approved institution's program established pursuant to this Part.

9           (6) "LCTCS" means the Louisiana Community and Technical College  
10          System.

11          (7) "Participating employer" means a licensed plumbing contractor  
12          that has registered with the Board to accept Institutional Plumbing Pathway students  
13          for industry rotation as provided in this Part.

14          (8) "Returning citizen" means a person who has been released from a state  
15          or federal correctional facility within the preceding five years.

16          §1384. Institutional Plumbing Pathway established

17           A. The board, in coordination with LCTCS, shall establish the Institutional  
18           Plumbing Pathway as an alternative route to qualify for the journeyman plumber  
19           examination. The Institutional Plumbing Pathway consists of three components:

20           (1) Classroom and laboratory instruction at an approved institution as  
21           provided in R.S. 37:1368.5.

22           (2) Competency checkpoints as provided in R.S. 37:1368.6.

23           (3) Industry rotation as provided in R.S. 37:1368.7.

24           B. Completion of the Institutional Plumbing Pathway satisfies the experience  
25           and training requirements for application to sit for the journeyman plumber  
26           examination in lieu of the employer-sponsored apprenticeship requirements provided  
27           in R.S. 37:1367.

1           C. All other requirements for journeyman licensure, including passage of the  
2           journeyman plumber examination administered by the board, remain in full force and  
3           effect. Nothing in this Part shall be construed to alter examination content, passing  
4           standards, or the board's authority over licensure decisions.

5           §1385. Curriculum and laboratory standards

6           A. The board shall promulgate rules establishing minimum curriculum  
7           standards for approved institutions. Such standards shall include, at a minimum, all  
8           of the following:

9                   (1) The Louisiana Plumbing Code, including all applicable state amendments  
10           to the International Plumbing Code.

11                   (2) Pipe systems, materials, and installation techniques for residential,  
12           commercial, and industrial applications.

13                   (3) Blueprint reading and plumbing system design.

14                   (4) Workplace safety, including Occupational Safety and Health  
15           Administration standards applicable to plumbing work.

16                   (5) Applied mathematics for the trades.

17                   (6) Water supply, drainage, waste, and venting systems.

18                   (7) Medical gas systems and specialty installations, at the board's discretion.

19           B. An approved institution shall maintain laboratory facilities sufficient to  
20           allow students to develop hands-on competency in pipe fitting, fixture installation,  
21           and system assembly under the supervision of a licensed master plumber or licensed  
22           journeyman plumber employed by the institution.

23           C. An institution seeking approval shall submit its proposed curriculum to the  
24           board for review. The board shall approve, conditionally approve, or deny the  
25           application within ninety days of receipt and shall provide written findings  
26           supporting its decision.

1           D. Approved institutions shall be subject to periodic review by the board no  
2           less frequently than every three years. The board may revoke or suspend approval  
3           for material deficiencies in curriculum, facilities, or instructional quality.

4           §1386. Competency checkpoints

5           A. The board shall establish a series of not fewer than three competency  
6           checkpoints to be completed by Institutional Plumbing Pathway students at defined  
7           stages of the program. Competency checkpoints shall assess practical skills in  
8           accordance with standards promulgated by the board.

9           B. Competency checkpoints shall be administered by board-certified  
10          assessors and shall be independent of the approved institution. No approved  
11          institution employee shall serve as the sole assessor for its own students.

12          C. A student who fails a competency checkpoint may remediate and retake  
13          the assessment in accordance with rules promulgated by the board. An approved  
14          institution shall provide remediation support for a student who does not pass.

15          D. Successful completion of all required competency checkpoints shall be  
16          documented by the board and constitutes official verification of the student's  
17          practical competency for purposes of qualification to sit for the journeyman plumber  
18          examination.

19          §1387. Industry rotation program

20          A. As a component of the Institutional Plumbing Pathway, a student shall  
21          complete a minimum of two thousand hours of industry rotation across at least three  
22          participating employers, with no single employer providing more than one thousand  
23          of the required rotation hours.

24          B. Industry rotation shall expose the student to a range of plumbing  
25          applications. An approved institution shall endeavor to ensure that each student  
26          completes rotation hours in at least two of the following categories:

27                 (1) Residential new construction.

1                   (2) Residential service and repair.

2                   (3) Commercial construction.

3                   (4) Industrial or institutional applications.

4                   C. A participating employer shall do all of the following:

5                   (1) Register with the board and maintain a current registration in good  
6 standing.

7                   (2) Assign a licensed journeyman or master plumber to directly supervise  
8 each institutional pathway student at all times during industry rotation.

9                   (3) Submit quarterly hour verification reports to the board in a form  
10 prescribed by the board.

11                   (4) Certify that the student's work during rotation meets applicable safety and  
12 workmanship standards.

13                   D. Rotation hours are portable. If a student's rotation with one participating  
14 employer is interrupted for any reason, documented hours shall be credited toward  
15 the student's total and shall not be forfeited upon transfer to another participating  
16 employer.

17                   §1388. Returning citizen pathway

18                   A. The board shall authorize approved institutions to include correctional  
19 facilities operating under the jurisdiction of the Louisiana Department of Public  
20 Safety and Corrections as delivery sites for the pre-apprenticeship and classroom  
21 components of the Institutional Plumbing Pathway.

22                   B. A person incarcerated in a Louisiana correctional facility who completes  
23 a board-approved pre-apprenticeship plumbing program while incarcerated shall  
24 receive all of the following:

25                   (1) Credit toward the classroom and laboratory instruction component of the  
26 Institutional Plumbing Pathway upon release.

1           (2) Automatic registration as an Institutional Plumbing Pathway student upon  
2           release, subject to any applicable licensing restrictions imposed by the board related  
3           to the nature of prior convictions.

4           (3) Eligibility to complete the industry rotation component through  
5           participating employers at no additional registration fee for a period of two years  
6           following release.

7           C. The board shall not deny licensure to a returning citizen solely on the basis  
8           of a prior conviction unless the conviction is directly and substantially related to the  
9           duties and responsibilities of a licensed plumber, as determined by the board in  
10          accordance with R.S. 37:2950.

11          D. Louisiana Works and the Reentry Advisory Council shall collaborate with  
12          the board to develop outreach, support services, and employer recruitment specific  
13          to the returning citizen pathway established by this Section.

14          §1389. Louisiana equivalency examination for out-of-state licensees

15          A. A person who holds a current and valid journeyman or master plumber  
16          license in good standing in another state may apply for licensure in this state by  
17          equivalency examination, in lieu of completing the Institutional Plumbing Pathway  
18          or an employer-sponsored apprenticeship.

19          B. The equivalency examination shall test the applicant's knowledge of all  
20          of the following:

21                  (1) Amendments to the International Plumbing Code specific to this state.

22                  (2) Administrative licensing requirements and board rules applicable to this  
23                  state.

24                  (3) Any specific construction or environmental conditions relevant to  
25                  plumbing practice in this state.

26          C. An applicant who passes the equivalency examination and satisfies all  
27          other board requirements, including applicable background checks and fees, shall be

1 issued a journeyman or master plumber license at the level commensurate with the  
2 applicant's out-of-state license.

3 D. The board shall promulgate rules establishing the content, passing score,  
4 and administration of the equivalency examination within one hundred eighty days  
5 of the effective date of this Part.

6 §1390. Financial assistance

7 A. Louisiana Works, in coordination with LCTCS and the board, shall  
8 develop a financial assistance program for Institutional Plumbing Pathway students  
9 who demonstrate financial need. The program may include any of the following:

10 (1) Stipends for students during the industry rotation component.

11 (2) Reimbursement of examination fees for students who pass the  
12 journeyman or master plumber examination on the first attempt.

13 (3) Low-interest loans for tools, equipment, and program-related expenses.

14 B. A student who receives financial assistance under this Section and  
15 becomes licensed in Louisiana shall commit to working as a licensed plumber in this  
16 state for not fewer than two years following licensure as a condition of assistance.  
17 Louisiana Works shall promulgate rules governing repayment obligations for a  
18 student who does not satisfy this commitment.

19 C. Financial assistance under this Section shall be funded through  
20 appropriations made by the legislature. Louisiana Works shall report annually to the  
21 legislature on the number of students assisted, pass rates, and licensure outcomes.

22 §1391. Rulemaking; implementation

23 A. The board shall promulgate all rules necessary to implement this Part in  
24 accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950 et seq. Initial rules  
25 shall be promulgated within one hundred eighty days of the effective date of this  
26 Part.

1           B. The board shall submit an annual report to the legislature, the governor,  
2           and the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus not later than February first of each year,  
3           beginning in the year following the first full year of program operation, which shall  
4           include all of the following:

5                     (1) The number of approved institutions and their locations.

6                     (2) Enrollment and completion rates, disaggregated by race, gender,  
7                     geographic region, veteran status, and returning citizen status.

8                     (3) Journeyman examination pass rates for Institutional Plumbing Pathway  
9                     graduates compared to traditional apprentices.

10                    (4) The number of participating employers and employer tax credits claimed.

11                    (5) Recommendations for program improvements.

12            C. The board may enter into interagency agreements with LCTCS, the  
13            Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, Louisiana Works, and the  
14            Louisiana Department of Revenue as necessary to implement this Part.

15           Section 2. The Louisiana State Law Institute is hereby authorized and directed to  
16 designate R.S. 37:1381 through 1392 as "Part I. General Provisions" of Chapter 16 of Title  
17 37 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950 and to change all references within such Part  
18 from "this Chapter" to "this Part".

19           Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
20 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
21 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
22 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
23 effective on the day following such approval.

## DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 827 Original

2026 Regular Session

Jordan

**Abstract:** Creates the Plumbing Workforce Access Act, providing an alternative educational pathway to plumbing licensure in partnership with LCTCS.

Proposed law shall be known and may be cited as the "Louisiana Plumbing Workforce Access Act".

Proposed law provides legislative findings and purpose.

Proposed law defines "approved institution", "board", "competency checkpoint", industry rotation", "Institutional Plumbing Pathway student", "LCTCS", "participating employer", and "returning citizen".

Proposed law provides the Institutional Plumbing Pathway as an alternative route to qualify for the journeyman plumber examination and provides components.

Proposed law provides for rulemaking authority with respect to minimum curriculum standards and provides for laboratory standards and periodic review by the State Plumbing Board.

Proposed law provides for required competency checkpoints which shall assess practical skills in accordance with standards promulgated by the board.

Proposed law requires a student to complete a minimum of 2,000 hours of industry rotation covering a range of plumbing applications across at least three participating employers, with no single employer providing more than 1,000 of the required rotation hours.

Proposed law provides that a participating employer shall do all of the following:

- (1) Register with the board and maintain a current registration in good standing.
- (2) Assign a licensed journeyman or master plumber to directly supervise each institutional pathway student at all times during industry rotation.
- (3) Submit quarterly hour verification reports to the board in a form prescribed by the board.
- (4) Certify that the student's work during rotation meets applicable safety and workmanship standards.

Proposed law provides for program participation by correctional facilities, and a person incarcerated in a correctional facility in this state who completes a board-approved pre-apprenticeship plumbing program while incarcerated shall receive all of the following:

- (1) Credit toward the classroom and laboratory instruction component of the Institutional Plumbing Pathway upon release.
- (2) Automatic registration as an Institutional Plumbing Pathway student upon release, subject to any applicable licensing restrictions imposed by the board related to the nature of prior convictions.
- (3) Eligibility to complete the industry rotation component through participating employers at no additional registration fee for a period of two years following release.

Proposed law provides that Louisiana Works and the Reentry Advisory Council shall collaborate with the board to develop the correctional program in accordance with proposed law.

Proposed law provides that a person who holds a current and valid journeyman or master plumber license in good standing in another state may apply for licensure in this state by equivalency examination.

Proposed law provides for the content of the equivalency examination.

Proposed law provides that Louisiana Works, in coordination with LCTCS and the board, shall develop a financial assistance program funded through appropriations made by the legislature for Institutional Plumbing Pathway students who demonstrate financial need, and that qualifying students shall commit to working as a licensed plumber in this state for no fewer than two years.

Proposed law provides for rulemaking authority and that initial rules shall be promulgated within 180 days.

Proposed law requires an annual report on program operation to the legislature, the governor, and the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus.

(Adds R.S. 37:1381-1391)