

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-second Legislature
Second Regular Session
2016

CHAPTER 97
HOUSE BILL 2198

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 48-803, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO FIRE DISTRICTS.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 48-803, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 48-803. District administered by a district board; report

5 A. In a district that the board of supervisors estimates has a
6 population of fewer than four thousand inhabitants, the district board may
7 consist of three or five members. In a district that the board of
8 supervisors estimates has a population of four thousand or more inhabitants,
9 the district board shall consist of five members, and for a noncontiguous
10 county island fire district formed pursuant to section 48-851, the board
11 shall consist of five members. The estimate of population by the board of
12 supervisors is conclusive and shall be based on available census information,
13 school attendance statistics, election or voter registration statistics,
14 estimates provided by state agencies or the county assessor, or other
15 information as deemed appropriate by the board of supervisors. If the board
16 of supervisors determines, at any time prior to one hundred twenty days
17 before the next regular scheduled election for members of a district board,
18 that the population of a fire district administered by a district board
19 consisting of three members exceeds four thousand inhabitants, estimated as
20 provided in this section, the board of supervisors shall order an increase in
21 the number of members of the district board. If the board of supervisors
22 determines at any time prior to one hundred eighty days before the next
23 regularly scheduled election for members of a district board that the
24 population of a fire district administered by a district board that consists
25 of five members exceeds fifty thousand inhabitants as prescribed in this
26 section, the board of supervisors shall inform the district board that it may
27 expand to seven members. Any expansion to seven members shall occur by
28 majority vote of the district board. The increase is effective for the
29 election of the additional members at the next regular election of members of
30 the district board.

31 B. If a vacancy occurs on the district board other than from
32 expiration of a term, A QUORUM OF the ~~remaining~~ board members shall fill the
33 vacancy by appointment of an interim member and except for a district formed
34 pursuant to article 3 of this chapter, A QUORUM OF the ~~remaining~~ board
35 members shall fill the vacancy within ninety days after the date the vacancy
36 occurs. Except for a district formed pursuant to article 3 of this chapter,
37 if the ~~remaining~~ QUORUM OF district board members do not appoint an interim
38 member within that ninety-day period, the board of supervisors shall appoint
39 an interim member to the district board within sixty days after expiration of
40 the ninety-day period, and if the district is located in more than one
41 county, the board of supervisors of the county in which the majority of the
42 assessed valuation of the district is located shall make the appointment
43 after the expiration of the ninety-day period. If the entire board resigns
44 or for any reason cannot fulfill its duties, OR DOES NOT HAVE REMAINING BOARD
45 MEMBERS SUFFICIENT TO CONSTITUTE A QUORUM OF THE BOARD, the board of
46 supervisors shall appoint INTERIM DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS TO FILL THE

1 VACANCIES, OR an administrator to administer the district with the same
2 duties and obligations of the elected board ~~If the board of supervisors fails~~
3 ~~to appoint an administrator within thirty days after the resignation of the~~
4 ~~entire board or its inability to fulfill its duties, a special election shall~~
5 ~~be held to fill the vacancies on the fire district board~~ TO SERVE UNTIL THE
6 NEXT ELECTION. A MAJORITY OF THE BOARD CONSTITUTES A QUORUM FOR THE
7 TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS.

8 C. Members of the district board shall serve without compensation, but
9 may be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in performing duties required
10 by law.

11 D. The board of a fire district shall appoint or hire a fire chief.

12 E. The district board shall elect from its members a chairman and a
13 clerk. Except for a district formed pursuant to article 3 of this chapter,
14 the election of the chairman and the clerk must occur at the district board
15 meeting that first occurs in the month immediately following each general
16 election.

17 F. For districts formed under article 3 of this chapter, of the
18 members first elected to district boards consisting of three members, the two
19 people receiving the first and second highest number of votes shall be
20 elected to four-year terms, and the person receiving the third highest number
21 of votes shall be elected to a two-year term. Of the members first elected
22 to district boards consisting of five members, the three people receiving the
23 first, second and third highest number of votes shall be elected to four-year
24 terms, and the two people receiving the fourth and fifth highest number of
25 votes shall be elected to two-year terms. Thereafter, the term of office of
26 each district board member shall be four years from the first day of the
27 month next following such member's election. Of the members elected as
28 additional members to a five-member district board, the person with the
29 highest number of votes is elected to a four-year term and the person with
30 the second highest number of votes is elected to a two-year term. If a
31 district resolves to increase the governing board to seven members pursuant
32 to subsection A of this section, the governing board may appoint two
33 additional members to serve until the next general election. After the
34 general election at which the two additional members are elected, the newly
35 elected member with the highest number of votes serves a four-year term and
36 the other member serves a two-year term. Thereafter, the term of office for
37 these two new members is four years.

38 G. For any fire district THAT IS administered by a three-member board
39 and that levies taxes in a fiscal year in the amount of five hundred thousand
40 dollars or more, the district must be administered by a five-member board.~~—~~
41 Beginning with the first general election held after the end of the fiscal
42 year in which the district levied the prescribed amount, the change to a
43 five-member board must occur as prescribed in this subsection. On levying
44 the prescribed amount, the district may not reorganize as a three-member
45 board regardless of any subsequent change in the district's levy. For
46 three-person boards with a single vacancy for an existing board membership

1 position and that are adding two additional members, the three persons with
2 the highest number of votes are elected to a four-year term of office. For
3 three-person boards with two vacancies for existing board membership
4 positions and that are adding two additional members, the three persons with
5 the first, second and third highest numbers of votes are elected to four-year
6 terms of office and the person with the fourth highest number of votes is
7 elected to a two-year term of office. Thereafter, all terms of office for
8 members of these five-person boards of directors must be four years. This
9 subsection applies to any three-member board that is expanding to a
10 five-member board, regardless of whether the expansion is the result of the
11 amount of the district's levy. This subsection does not apply to districts
12 formed under article 3 of this chapter.

13 H. Beginning with the 2014 general election and except for a district
14 formed pursuant to article 3 of this chapter, all persons who are elected or
15 appointed to a fire district board and the fire chief who is appointed or
16 hired by the district board shall attend professional development training
17 that is provided by an association of Arizona fire districts. District board
18 members and the fire chief shall complete at least six hours of professional
19 development training, with board members completing their training within one
20 year after the date of the certification of their election and for the fire
21 chief, within one year after the date of hiring. The fire district shall
22 reimburse board members and the fire chief for the reasonable costs of the
23 training. The professional development training must include training on
24 open meetings laws, finance and budget matters and laws relating to fire
25 district governance and other matters that are reasonably necessary for the
26 effective administration of a fire district.

27 I. On or before December 31 of each year, the fire district
28 association that has provided training required pursuant to subsection H of
29 this section shall submit a report that ~~describes the compliance with~~ **LISTS**
30 **THE ELECTED OFFICIALS AND FIRE CHIEFS WHO ATTENDED** the training ~~requirements~~
31 to the county board of supervisors for every county in which the fire
32 district operates. The annual report must include at least the following:

33 1. A compilation of the professional development training delivered by
34 the association pursuant to this section and the names of the fire district
35 board members and fire chiefs who ~~are compliant and noncompliant with the~~
36 ~~requirements of~~ **ATTENDED TRAINING AS REQUIRED BY** this section.

37 2. Recommendations regarding improvements to the laws of this state or
38 to administrative actions that are required under the laws of this state
39 pertaining to fire districts.

40 J. For fire district governing board members and fire chiefs who are
41 required to attend professional development training pursuant to subsection H
42 of this section, a fire district governing board member or fire chief who
43 fails to complete the professional development training within the time
44 prescribed in this section is guilty of nonfeasance in office. Any person
45 may make a formal complaint to the county board of supervisors regarding this
46 failure to comply, and the county board of supervisors may submit the

1 complaint to the county attorney for possible action. The county attorney
2 may take appropriate action to achieve compliance, including filing an action
3 in superior court against a fire district governing board member or a fire
4 chief for failure to comply with the professional development training
5 requirements prescribed in this section. If the court determines that a fire
6 district governing board member or fire chief failed to comply with the
7 professional development training requirements prescribed in this section,
8 the court shall issue an order removing the fire district governing board
9 member from office or the fire chief from employment or appointment with the
10 district. Any vacancy in the office of a fire district governing board as a
11 result of a court order that is issued pursuant to this subsection must be
12 filled in the manner provided by law.

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR APRIL 5, 2016.

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE APRIL 6, 2016.