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Senate Bill No. 827

CHAPTER 661

An act to amend Sections 53234, 53235.1, and 53235.2 of, and to add Article 2.4.6 (commencing with Section 53238) to Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Division 2 of Title 5 of, the Government Code, relating to local government.

[Approved by Governor October 11, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 11, 2025.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 827, Gonzalez. Local agency officials: training.

Existing law imposes ethics training on specified local agency officials. Existing law requires each training to be 2 hours and requires the officials to receive each training every 2 years, and as described otherwise, with the first training within one year of commencing service. Existing law requires the local agency to maintain records of the trainings, as prescribed.

This bill would expand which local agency officials are required to complete the above-described ethics training to include department heads, or other similar administrative officers, as specified, and would instead require officials who commence service on or after January 1, 2026, to receive their initial training within 6 months of commencing service. The bill would require the local agency to post clear instructions and contact information for requesting the training records on its internet website, as specified.

This bill would additionally require all local agency officials, as defined, to receive at least 2 hours of fiscal and financial training, as described. The bill would require the training to be received at least once every 2 years, as provided. The bill would exempt from these requirements specified local agency officials if they are in compliance with existing education requirements specific to their positions.

This bill would authorize a local agency or an association of local agencies to contract with or otherwise collaborate with a provider of a training course to offer one or more training courses, or sets of self-study materials with tests, to its local agency officials to meet the training requirement, as described. The bill would require the training courses and materials to be developed in consultation with experts in local government finance, as specified. The bill would require providers of training courses to provide participants with proof of participation for purposes of complying with specified recordkeeping requirements. The bill would require a local agency to provide information on training available at least once annually. By imposing additional duties on local officials, the bill would create a state-mandated local program.

The bill would include findings that changes proposed by this bill address a matter of statewide concern rather than a municipal affair and, therefore, apply to all cities, including charter cities.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 53234 of the Government Code is amended to read:

53234. For purposes of this article, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Legislative body" has the same meaning as specified in Section 54952.

(b) "Local agency" means a city, county, city and county, charter city, charter county, charter city and county, school district, county office of education, charter school, or special district.

(c) "Local agency official" means any of the following:

(1) A member of a local agency legislative body or an elected officer of a local agency who receives any type of compensation, salary, or stipend or reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duties.

(2) A department head or other similar administrative officer of a local agency.

(A) For a local educational agency, a "department head or other similar administrative officer" means the superintendent of a school district, the county superintendent of schools, or the chief administrator of a charter school.

(B) For purposes of subparagraph (A), a "local educational agency" means a school district, county office of education, or charter school.

(3) An employee designated by a local agency governing body to receive the training specified under this article.

(4) A member of the governing board of a school district, a county board of education, or the governing body of a charter school, whether or not that member receives any type of compensation, salary, or stipend or reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duties.

(d) "Ethics laws" include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Laws relating to personal financial gain by public servants, including, but not limited to, laws prohibiting bribery and conflict-of-interest laws.

(2) Laws relating to claiming perquisites of office, including, but not limited to, gift and travel restrictions, prohibitions against the use of public resources for personal or political purposes, prohibitions against gifts of public funds, mass mailing restrictions, and prohibitions against acceptance of free or discounted transportation by transportation companies.

(3) Government transparency laws, including, but not limited to, financial interest disclosure requirements and open government laws.

(4) Laws relating to fair processes, including, but not limited to, common law bias prohibitions, due process requirements, incompatible offices, competitive bidding requirements for public contracts, and disqualification from participating in decisions affecting family members.

SEC. 2. Section 53235.1 of the Government Code is amended to read:

53235.1. (a) Each local agency official in local agency service as of January 1, 2006, except for officials whose term of office ends before January 9, 2007, shall receive the training required by subdivision (a) of Section 53235 before January 1, 2007. Thereafter, each local agency official shall receive the training required by subdivision (a) of Section 53235 at least once every two years.

(b) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), each local agency official who commences service with a local agency on or after January 1, 2006, shall receive the training required by subdivision (a) of Section 53235 no later than one year from the first day of service with the local agency and each local agency official who commences service with a local agency on or after January 1, 2026, shall receive the training required by subdivision (a) of Section 53235 no later than six months from the first day of service with the local agency. Thereafter, each local agency official shall receive the training required by subdivision (a) of Section 53235 at least once every two years.

(2) Each local agency official who, as of January 1, 2025, is a member of the governing board of a school district, a county board of education, or the governing body of a charter school, except for officials whose term of office ends before January 1, 2026, shall receive the training required by paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 53235 before January 1, 2026. Thereafter, each local agency official who is a member of the governing board of a school district, a county board of education, or the governing body of a charter school shall receive the training required by paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 53235 at least once every two years.

(c) A local agency official who serves more than one local agency shall satisfy the requirements of this article once every two years without regard to the number of local agencies with which the official serves.

SEC. 3. Section 53235.2 of the Government Code is amended to read:

53235.2. (a) A local agency that provides the ethical training prescribed by this article shall maintain records indicating both of the following:

(1) The dates that local officials satisfied the requirements of this article.

(2) The entity that provided the training.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a local agency shall maintain these records for at least five years after local officials receive the training. These records are public records subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act (Division 10 (commencing with Section 7920.000) of Title 1).

(c) Commencing July 1, 2026, a local agency that maintains an internet website shall post on that website clear instructions and contact information for the purpose of requesting records required by this section.

SEC. 4. Article 2.4.6 (commencing with Section 53238) is added to Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Division 2 of Title 5 of the Government Code, to read:

Article 2.4.6. Fiscal and Financial Training

53238. For purposes of this article:

(a) "Fiscal and financial training" includes, but is not limited to, training in all of the following:

(1) Laws and principles relating to financial administration and short- and long-term fiscal management, including, but not limited to, the role and responsibilities of financial administration, financial policies, municipal budgets and budget processes, and financial reporting and auditing.

(2) Laws and principles relating to, but not limited to, capital financing and debt management, mechanisms for local agency revenues, pensions and other postemployment benefits, cash management and investments, the prudent investor standard, and the ethics of safeguarding public resources.

(3) General fiscal and financial planning principles and any pertinent laws relevant to the local agency official's public service and role in overseeing the local agency's operations and relevant to the local agency's procurement and contracting practices and responsibilities.

(b) "Legislative body" has the same meaning as in Section 54952.

(c) "Local agency" means a city, county, city and county, charter city, charter county, charter city and county, or special district.

(d) "Local agency official" means any of the following:

(1) Any member of a local agency legislative body or any elected officer of a local agency.

(2) Any official who is appointed by the governing body who, as part of their official duties, makes decisions or recommendations regarding financial administration, budgeting, or the use of public resources.

(3) A local agency executive, as defined in subdivision (d) of Section 3511.1, or other similar administrative officer of a local agency.

(4) An employee designated by a local agency governing body to receive the training specified under this article.

53238.1. (a) All local agency officials shall receive at least two hours of fiscal and financial training pursuant to this article.

(b) A local agency or an association of local agencies may contract with or otherwise collaborate with a provider of a training course to offer one or more training courses, or sets of self-study materials with tests, to its local agency officials to meet the requirements of this article.

(c) Training courses, or the sets of self-study materials with tests, may be taken in person or online. These courses and materials shall be developed in consultation with widely recognized experts in local government finance, including local government associations.

(d) All providers of training courses under this article shall provide participants with proof of participation to meet the requirements of Section 53238.3.

(e) A local agency shall provide information on training available to meet the requirements of this article to its local agency officials at least once annually.

53238.2. (a) Every local agency official who is in a local agency's service as of January 1, 2026, and commenced that service prior to January 1, 2026, shall receive the fiscal and financial training required by this article before January 1, 2028, unless that official's term of office ends before January 9, 2028. Thereafter, the local agency official shall receive the training at least once every two years.

(b) Every local agency official who commences service with a local agency on or after January 1, 2026, shall receive the fiscal and financial training required by this article no later than six months from the first day of service with the local agency. Thereafter, the local agency official shall receive the training at least once every two years.

(c) A local agency official who serves more than one local agency is only required to comply with the training requirements of this article once every two years, regardless of the number of local agencies the local agency official serves. However, the local agency official shall provide a copy of proof of participation to all local agencies that they serve.

53238.3. (a) A local agency that provides the fiscal and financial training required by this article shall maintain records indicating both of the following:

(1) The dates that local agency officials satisfied the requirements of this article.

(2) The entity that provided the training.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a local agency shall maintain these records for at least five years after local agency officials receive the training. These records are public records subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act (Division 10 (commencing with Section 7920.000) of Title 1).

(c) Commencing July 1, 2026, a local agency that maintains an internet website shall post on that website clear instructions and contact information for the purpose of requesting records required by this section.

53238.4. A local agency official who is in compliance with Section 26945, 26945.1, 27000.7, 27000.8, or 27000.9 is exempt from the provisions of this article.

SEC. 5. The Legislature finds and declares that the fiscal management of local governments is a matter of statewide concern and is not a municipal affair as that term is used in Section 5 of Article XI of the California Constitution. Therefore, Sections 1 to 4, inclusive, of this act amending Sections 53234, 53235.1, and 53235.2 of, and adding Article 2.4.6 (commencing with Section 53238) to Chapter 2 of Part 1 of Division 2 of Title 5 of, the Government Code apply to all cities, including charter cities.

SEC. 6. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.