

**REGISTRATION OF PERSONAL
INTRODUCTION SERVICES**

1998 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Sponsor: Afton B. Bradshaw

AN ACT RELATING TO COMMERCE AND TRADE; ENACTING THE UTAH PERSONAL
INTRODUCTION SERVICES PROTECTION ACT; DEFINING TERMS; REQUIRING
REGISTRATION; PROVIDING EXEMPTIONS; REQUIRING BOND, CERTIFICATE OF
DEPOSIT, OR LETTER OF CREDIT; ADDRESSING CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS;
REQUIRING RECORDKEEPING; PROVIDING A STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS; AND
PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES AND REMEDIES.

This act affects sections of Utah Code Annotated 1953 as follows:

AMENDS:

13-2-1, as last amended by Chapters 26 and 79, Laws of Utah 1996

ENACTS:

13-30-101, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-102, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-103, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-104, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-105, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-106, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-107, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-108, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-109, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-110, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-111, Utah Code Annotated 1953

13-30-112, Utah Code Annotated 1953

1 **13-30-113**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

2 **13-30-114**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

3 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

4 Section 1. Section **13-2-1** is amended to read:

5 **13-2-1. Consumer protection division established -- Functions.**

6 There is established within the Department of Commerce the Division of Consumer
7 Protection. The division shall administer and enforce the following:

- 8 (1) Chapter 5, Unfair Practices Act;
- 9 (2) Chapter 11, Consumer Sales Practices Act;
- 10 (3) Chapter 15, Business Opportunity Disclosure Act;
- 11 (4) Chapter 16, Motor Fuel Marketing Act;
- 12 (5) Chapter 20, New Motor Vehicle Warranties Act;
- 13 (6) Chapter 21, Credit Services Organizations Act;
- 14 (7) Chapter 22, Charitable Solicitations Act;
- 15 (8) Chapter 23, Health Spa Services Protection Act;
- 16 (9) Chapter 25a, Telephone and Facsimile Solicitation Act;
- 17 (10) Chapter 26, Telephone Fraud Prevention Act; and
- 18 (11) Chapter 28, Prize Notices Regulation Act.
- 19 (12) Chapter 30, Utah Personal Introduction Services Protection Act.

20 Section 2. Section **13-30-101** is enacted to read:

21 **CHAPTER 30. UTAH PERSONAL INTRODUCTION SERVICES**
 22 **PROTECTION ACT**

23 **13-30-101. Title.**

24 This chapter is known as the "Utah Personal Introduction Services Protection Act."

25 Section 3. Section **13-30-102** is enacted to read:

26 **13-30-102. Definitions.**

27 As used in the chapter:

- 28 (1) "Department" means the Department of Commerce.
- 29 (2) "Director" means the director of the Division of Consumer Protection.
- 30 (3) "Division" means the Division of Consumer Protection within the department.
- 31 (4) "Executive director" means the executive director of the department.

1 (5) "Personal introduction service" means a person who, for compensation, regularly
2 engages in the business of offering dating, matrimonial, or social referral services by:

3 (a) an exchange of names, telephone numbers, addresses, and statistics;

4 (b) a photograph or video selection process; or

5 (c) a personal introduction provided by the person at its place of business.

6 (6) "Personal introduction services contract" means a written contract between a buyer and
7 a provider of personal introduction services.

8 Section 4. Section **13-30-103** is enacted to read:

9 **13-30-103. Operation without registration unlawful.**

10 It is unlawful for any person to engage in a personal introduction service unless the person:

11 (1) registers with the division in accordance with this chapter; and

12 (2) maintains a valid registration.

13 Section 5. Section **13-30-104** is enacted to read:

14 **13-30-104. Records of the division.**

15 (1) The director shall keep a complete record of:

16 (a) all registered personal introduction services stating the name and address of each
17 personal introduction service; and

18 (b) the bonds, certificates of deposit, or letters of credit filed with the division under

19 Section 13-30-106, stating:

20 (i) the name, place of residence, and place of business of the principals and sureties; and

21 (ii) the name of the officer before whom the bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit
22 was executed or acknowledged.

23 (2) The division shall provide a copy of a record maintained under Subsection (1) to a
24 person:

25 (a) that requests a copy; and

26 (b) pays a fee established by the division in accordance with Section 63-38-3.2.

27 Section 6. Section **13-30-105** is enacted to read:

28 **13-30-105. Registration.**

29 (1) A personal introduction service shall register with the division by:

30 (a) filing an application with the division in the form prescribed by the division that
31 includes the following:

1 (i) the name and address of the personal introduction service;

2 (ii) a statement by the applicant that local municipal ordinances do not prohibit the
3 operation of the personal introduction service;

4 (iii) if the personal introduction service is carried on under a fictitious name, the fictitious
5 name;

6 (iv) if the personal introduction service is a partnership, the names and addresses of each
7 partner;

8 (v) if the personal introduction service is a corporation, the names and address of:

9 (A) each director or officer of the corporation; and

10 (B) the manager in charge of the business in this state; and

11 (vi) if the personal introduction service is a limited liability company, the names and
12 addresses of all managers or members of the limited liability company; and

13 (b) paying the fee established by the division in accordance with Section 63-38-3.2.

14 (2) (a) Each place of business operated in this state by a personal introduction service is
15 required to be registered under this chapter.

16 (b) Notwithstanding Subsection (2)(a), a personal introduction service that maintains more
17 than one place of business may file a single application that applies to all places of business. In
18 addition to the information required by Subsection (1), the application shall state:

19 (i) the location of each place of business; and

20 (ii) the manager in charge of each place of business.

21 (3) A registration shall cease to be valid when the director finds that any of the information
22 provided by the application form is:

23 (a) material, as defined by rule; and

24 (b) (i) false; or

25 (ii) no longer current.

26 Section 7. Section **13-30-106** is enacted to read:

27 **13-30-106. Bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit.**

28 (1) (a) A person may not conduct a personal introduction service unless at the time of
29 conducting the personal introduction service the person has on file with the division a good and
30 sufficient bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit.

31 (b) If a personal introduction service business obtains and maintains a bond, the bond shall

1 be a performance bond issued by a surety authorized to transact surety business in this state.

2 (2) The bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit shall be for at a minimum \$50,000
3 or a higher amount prescribed by rule, payable to the division.

4 (3) (a) The bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit shall provide that the person
5 giving it shall, upon written demand, remit to the division the amount necessary:

6 (i) as reimbursement for both administrative and civil violations of this chapter; and

7 (ii) in satisfaction of any civil and or criminal judgments rendered by a court of competent
8 jurisdiction for violations of this chapter.

9 (b) Notwithstanding Subsection (3)(a), recovery from a bond, certificate of deposit, or
10 letter of credit is limited to the amount of the bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit.

11 (4) The division may:

12 (a) specify the form of the bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit; and

13 (b) require that the bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit contain additional
14 provisions and conditions that the division considers necessary or proper to protect the persons for
15 whom the collection is undertaken.

16 (5) (a) A bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit required under this section shall be
17 for the term of one year from the date of issuance and shall run concurrently with the registration.

18 (b) The applicant shall maintain the bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit for the
19 entire duration of the registration and for a period of not less than one year after the division
20 receives notice in writing from the person engaged in the business of a personal introduction
21 service that all activities have ceased.

22 (c) An action on a bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit may not be initiated more
23 than two years from the date the bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit expires.

24 Section 8. Section **13-30-107** is enacted to read:

25 **13-30-107. Annual expiration.**

26 A registration shall cease to be valid on June 30 of each year unless the personal
27 introduction service has:

28 (1) paid a renewal fee; and

29 (2) filed a renewal application required by the division by rule.

30 Section 9. Section **13-30-108** is enacted to read:

31 **13-30-108. Requirements to personal services contracts.**

1 (1) (a) A personal introduction service may not perform personal introduction services
2 prior to executing a written personal services contract with a buyer.

3 (b) A copy of the contract shall be provided to the buyer at the time the buyer signs the
4 contract.

5 (c) A personal introduction services contract shall contain on its face, and in close
6 proximity to the space reserved for the signature of the buyer, a conspicuous statement in a size
7 equal to at least 12-point boldface type, as follows:

8 "You, the buyer, may cancel this agreement, without any penalty or obligation, at any time
9 prior to midnight of the original contract seller's third business day following the date of this
10 contract, excluding Sundays and holidays. To cancel this agreement, mail or deliver a signed and
11 dated notice, or send a telegram that states that you, the buyer, are canceling this agreement, or
12 words of similar effect. This notice shall be sent to the personal introduction service at the
13 location specified by the contract."

14 (d) A personal introduction services contract shall contain on the first page, in a type size
15 no smaller than that generally used in the body of the document:

16 (i) the name and address of the personal introduction service operator to which the notice
17 of cancellation is to be mailed; and

18 (ii) the date the buyer signed the contract.

19 (2) (a) A buyer may terminate a personal introduction services contract for any reason
20 without penalty or obligation at any time prior to midnight of the third business day following the
21 date that the personal introduction services contract is executed.

22 (b) A personal introduction services contract is cancelled on the date the buyer gives
23 written notice of cancellation by mail, telegram, or delivery to the personal introduction service
24 at the address specified in the personal introduction services contract.

25 (c) Notice of cancellation, if given by mail, is effective when deposited in the mail
26 properly addressed with postage prepaid.

27 (d) (i) Notice of cancellation given by the buyer is effective if it indicates the intention of
28 the buyer not to be bound by the personal introduction services contract.

29 (ii) A personal introduction service may not require a buyer to give a notice of cancellation
30 in a particular form to be effective.

31 (iii) All moneys paid under a personal introduction services contract shall be refunded

1 within ten days of receipt of the notice of cancellation.

2 (3) (a) If a buyer notifies the personal introduction service by telephone that the buyer is
3 canceling the contract within the three-day period specified in this section, the personal
4 introduction service shall stop the processing of a credit card voucher or check.

5 (b) Notwithstanding Subsection (3)(a), in addition to the telephone notice to cancel a
6 personal services contract, the buyer shall provide written notice in accordance with Subsection
7 (2).

8 (4) During the three business days between the date of the contract and the expiration of
9 the buyer's right to cancel, the personal introduction service may not restrict the buyer's access or
10 use of available services and benefits under the terms of the contract.

11 (5) A personal introduction services contract is void and unenforceable if the contract:

12 (a) does not comply with this chapter; or

13 (b) is entered into under willful and fraudulent or misleading information either as a result
14 of or at the time of the sales presentation or advertisements or otherwise resultant from the seller's
15 action.

16 (6) (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of any contract to the contrary, if the contract price
17 is payable in installments and the buyer is relieved from making further payments or entitled to
18 a refund under this chapter, the buyer is entitled to receive a refund or refund credit of that portion
19 of the cash price that is allocable to the services not actually received by the buyer.

20 (b) The refund of any finance charge shall be calculated according to rules made by the
21 division.

22 (7) Any waiver by the buyer of this chapter is void and unenforceable.

23 Section 10. Section **13-30-109** is enacted to read:

24 **13-30-109. Recordkeeping.**

25 (1) A personal introduction service shall maintain any record that is required by rules made
26 by the division.

27 (2) The records described under Subsection (1) shall be:

28 (a) open for reasonable inspection by the division or other law enforcement officials; and

29 (b) maintained for at least three years.

30 Section 11. Section **13-30-110** is enacted to read:

31 **13-30-110. Registration nontransferable -- Change of name -- Change of location --**

1 **Change of ownership.**

2 (1) A personal introduction service may not transfer its registration under this chapter.

3 (2) A personal introduction service shall notify the division no later than 30 days prior to
4 a change regarding any:

5 (a) change in:

6 (i) its name;

7 (ii) ownership; or

8 (iii) location; or

9 (b) change that may significantly affect the ability of the personal introduction service to
10 meet requirements for registration.

11 (3) If the personal introduction service makes a change described in Subsection (2)(a)(ii),
12 (a)(iii), or (b), the personal introduction service shall return its registration to the division for
13 cancellation and file a new registration application form including:

14 (a) a new bond, certificate of deposit, or letter of credit; and

15 (b) the registration fee.

16 Section 12. Section **13-30-111** is enacted to read:

17 **13-30-111. Statute of limitations.**

18 An administrative or civil action may not be maintained by the state related to any party
19 under this chapter unless filed within two years after the act or omission alleged as the ground for
20 division action.

21 Section 13. Section **13-30-112** is enacted to read:

22 **13-30-112. Powers of director -- Administrative actions -- Civil actions by division.**

23 (1) The director may take any of the following actions against a personal introduction
24 service after a hearing pursuant to Title 63, Chapter 46b, Administrative Procedures Act:

25 (a) imposing probation upon terms and conditions to be set forth by the director;

26 (b) suspending the registration; and

27 (c) revoking the registration.

28 (2) (a) After suspension of the registration on any of the grounds set forth in this chapter
29 or rules made pursuant to this chapter, the director may reinstate the registration upon proof of
30 compliance by the applicant with all provisions of the decision as to reinstatement.

31 (b) After revocation of a registration upon any of the grounds set forth in this chapter or

1 rules made pursuant to this chapter, the registration may not be reinstated or reissued within a
2 period of one year after the effective date of revocation.

3 (3) (a) In addition to other penalties and remedies set out under this chapter, and in
4 addition to its other enforcement powers under Title 13, Chapter 2, Division of Consumer
5 Protection, the director may issue a cease and desist order and impose an administrative fine of up
6 to \$1,000 for each violation of this chapter.

7 (b) All money received through administrative fines imposed under this section shall be
8 deposited in the Consumer Protection Education and Training Fund created by Section 13-2-8.

9 (4) The division may bring civil action to:

10 (a) recover, for each violation, actual damages, or obtain relief under Subsection (5), on
11 behalf of persons who have complained to the division under this chapter and or who complain to
12 the division within a reasonable period of time after the division has instituted proceedings under
13 this section;

14 (b) obtain a declaratory judgment that an act or practice violates this chapter; and

15 (c) enjoin, in accordance with the principles of equity, a personal introduction service that
16 has violated, is violating, or is otherwise likely to violate this chapter.

17 (5) The division may bring a class action on behalf of a person for the actual damages
18 caused by an act or practice that violates this chapter or a rule adopted by the division pursuant to
19 this chapter.

20 (6) Any civil judgment granted in favor of the division in connection with the enforcement
21 of this chapter shall include, in addition to any other monetary award or injunctive relief, an award
22 of:

23 (a) reasonable attorney's fees;

24 (b) court costs; and

25 (c) costs of investigation.

26 Section 14. Section **13-30-113** is enacted to read:

27 **13-30-113. Private actions.**

28 (1) Whether a person seeks or is entitled to damages or otherwise has an adequate remedy
29 at law, a person may bring a civil action to:

30 (a) obtain a declaratory judgment that an act or practice violates this chapter; and

31 (b) enjoin, in accordance with the principles of equity, a personal introduction service that

1 has violated, is violating, or is likely to violate this chapter.

2 (2) A person who suffers loss as a result of a violation of this chapter may recover, but not
3 in a class action, the sum of:

4 (a) the greater of:

5 (i) actual damages; or

6 (ii) \$2,000 ; and

7 (b) court costs.

8 (3) A person may bring a class action if certified by the court, for damages caused by an
9 act or practice that violates this chapter or a rule adopted by the division pursuant to this chapter.

10 (4) Any action brought under this section may be commenced by a person only after the
11 claim has been investigated and evaluated by the division.

12 (5) This chapter does not limit the rights or remedies that are otherwise available to a
13 person under any other law.

14 (6) In an action initiated under this section by a person, the court may award attorneys' fees
15 to the prevailing party.

16 Section 15. Section **13-30-114** is enacted to read:

17 **13-30-114. Criminal penalties.**

18 Any person who fails to comply with this chapter is guilty of a class B misdemeanor.

Legislative Review Note
as of 2-4-98 3:41 PM

A limited legal review of this bill raises no obvious constitutional or statutory concerns.

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel