

State of Arkansas  
90th General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2015

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1812

By: Representative Bell

## For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CREATION OF A BAIL BOND  
FORFEITURE NOTIFICATION SYSTEM; CONCERNING THE  
FORFEITURE OF A BAIL BOND WHEN A DEFENDANT FAILS TO  
APPEAR IN COURT; CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF THE  
BAIL BOND INDUSTRY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

## Subtitle

PROVIDING FOR THE CREATION OF A BAIL BOND  
FORFEITURE NOTIFICATION SYSTEM;  
CONCERNING THE FORFEITURE OF A BAIL BOND  
WHEN A DEFENDANT FAILS TO APPEAR IN  
COURT; AND CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF  
THE BAIL BOND INDUSTRY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 16-84-201 is amended to read as follows:

16-84-201. Action on bond in district courts.

(a)(1)(A) If the defendant fails to appear for trial or judgment, or at any other time when his or her presence in district court may be lawfully required, or to surrender himself or herself in execution of the judgment, the district court may direct the fact to be entered on the minutes and shall promptly issue an order requiring the surety to appear, on a date set by the district court not more than one hundred twenty (120) days from the date notice is sent by ~~certified mail to the surety company at the address shown on the bond~~ the notification system described under § 16-84-208, whether or not it is received by the surety, to show cause why the sum specified in the



1 bail bond or the money deposited in lieu of bail should not be forfeited.

2 (B) The one-hundred-twenty-day period in which the  
3 defendant must be surrendered or apprehended under subdivision (c)(2) of this  
4 section begins to run from the date notice is sent by ~~certified mail to the~~  
5 ~~surety company at the address shown on the bond~~ the notification system  
6 described under § 16-84-208, whether or not it is received by the surety.

7 (2) The order shall also require the officer who was responsible  
8 for taking of bail to appear unless:

9 (A) The surety is a bail bondsman; or

10 (B) The officer accepted cash in the amount of bail.

11 (b) The appropriate law enforcement agencies shall make every  
12 reasonable effort to apprehend the defendant.

13 (c)(1) If the defendant is surrendered or arrested, or good cause is  
14 shown for his or her failure to appear before judgment is entered against the  
15 surety, the district court shall exonerate a reasonable amount of the  
16 surety's liability under the bail bond.

17 (2) However, if the surety causes the apprehension of the  
18 defendant or the defendant is apprehended within one hundred twenty (120)  
19 days from the date notice is sent by ~~certified mail to the surety company at~~  
20 ~~the address shown on the bond~~ the notification system described under § 16-  
21 84-208, whether or not it is received by the surety, a judgment or forfeiture  
22 of bond may not be entered against the surety, except as provided in  
23 subsection (e) of this section.

24 (d) If after one hundred twenty (120) days from the date notice is  
25 sent by ~~certified mail to the surety company at the address shown on the bond~~  
26 the notification system described under § 16-84-208, whether or not it is  
27 received by the surety, the defendant has not surrendered or been arrested,  
28 the bail bond or money deposited in lieu of bail may be forfeited without  
29 further notice or hearing.

30 (e) If the defendant is located in another state and the location is  
31 known within one hundred twenty (120) days from the date notice is sent by  
32 ~~certified mail to the surety company at the address shown on the bond~~ the  
33 notification system described under § 16-84-208, whether or not it is  
34 received by the surety, the appropriate law enforcement officers shall cause  
35 the arrest of the defendant and the surety shall be liable for the cost of  
36 returning the defendant to the district court in an amount not to exceed the

1 face value of the bail bond.

2 (f)(1) In determining the extent of liability of the surety on a bond  
3 forfeiture, the court, without further notice or hearing, may take into  
4 consideration the expenses incurred by the surety in attempting to locate the  
5 defendant and may allow the surety credit for the expenses incurred.

6 (2) To be considered by the court, information concerning  
7 expenses incurred in attempting to locate the defendant should be submitted  
8 to the court by the surety no later than the one-hundred-twentieth day from  
9 the date notice is sent by ~~certified mail to the surety company at the~~  
10 ~~address shown on the bond~~ the notification system described under § 16-84-  
11 208, whether or not it is received by the surety.

12 (g) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, a district court may  
13 suspend a bail bond company's or agent's ability to issue bail bonds in its  
14 court if the bail bond company or agent fails to comply with an order of the  
15 district court or fails to pay forfeited bonds in accordance with a district  
16 court's order.

17  
18 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 16-84-207(b)(2), concerning action on bail  
19 bonds in circuit courts, is amended to read as follows:

20 (2) The circuit clerk shall:

21 (A)(i) Notify the county sheriff and each surety on the  
22 bail bond that the defendant should be surrendered to the sheriff as required  
23 by the terms of the bail bond+.

24 (ii) The surety shall be notified by the  
25 notification system described under § 16-84-208; and

26 (B) Immediately issue a summons on each surety on the bail  
27 bond requiring the surety to personally appear on the date and time stated in  
28 the summons to show cause why judgment should not be rendered for the sum  
29 specified in the bail bond on account of the forfeiture.

30  
31 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 16, Chapter 84, Subchapter 2, is  
32 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

33 16-84-208. Forfeiture notification system.

34 When a defendant fails to appear and a forfeiture action is commenced  
35 under this subchapter, the court clerk shall send an email to a surety  
36 notification system administered by the Professional Bail Bond Company and

1 Professional Bail Bondsman Licensing Board, and the board shall then notify  
2 the surety that wrote the bond of the defendant's failure to appear and the  
3 commencement of forfeiture.

4  
5 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code Title 17, Chapter 19, Subchapter 2, is  
6 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

7 17-19-213. Forfeiture notification system – Compliance required.

8 (a) A person or entity licensed under this chapter shall be required  
9 as a condition of licensing to complete training in and register with the  
10 forfeiture notification system administered by the Professional Bail Bond  
11 Company and Professional Bail Bondsman Licensing Board and which is designed  
12 to notify a surety by email that a forfeiture action has been commenced  
13 against a defendant who has failed to appear.

14 (b) A person or entity licensed under this chapter is required to keep  
15 the board informed of his or her most current telephone number and email  
16 address.