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nearly 50 laws took effect across the state.

Jan. 02, 2014



As 2014 began, Texans started the year with more than just new resolutions — nearly

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connoisseurs will now have to pay 8.25 percent tax on the sales price of the item sold, prepared or served. This is House Bill 3572.

And concerning gun laws, Texans applying for or renewing their concealed carry licenses will no longer have to provide a social security number and the Department of Public Safety is no longer required to request it. This is House Bill 1349.

There have been additional changes to state gun laws. For example, people who lost their right to purchase a firearm because they became wards of the state will now be able to buy a gun after a court no longer has guardianship over them. In order for this to happen, the individual must tell a court what led to the imposition of a firearms disability, their mental history, their criminal history and their reputation.

If a court finds the person is no longer likely to act in a manner dangerous to public safety and removing the person's disability to buy a gun is in the public interest, the court may remove the firearm purchasing disability. This is House Bill 2407.

Here's a look at a small sampling of the other laws that already took effect:

RENTERS' PROTECTION

If a natural disaster strikes Cameron County, tenants should rest assured that a landlord who rents them another unit—if theirs was destroyed—may not execute a lease for a term longer than the remaining time on the tenant's lease. This is Senate Bill 1120.

NO POWER

Landlords will have to take notice of this bill, particularly if they have fallen behind on payments to a utility provider. This bill requires landlords who rent out apartments or condominiums or townhouses where “all bills are paid,” to provide

written notice to their tenants if service is going to be disconnected because

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Food service establishments or retail stores may not deny a service animal admittance into the establishment, even if the person controlling the animal has a disability that is not readily apparent, like post-traumatic stress syndrome. And employees may only ask the customer whether the service animal is required because the person has a disability and what type of work the canine is trained to perform. Those tasks include guiding someone with visual impairment; alerting someone who has a hearing impairment or who is deaf; pulling a wheelchair; alerting and protecting someone who has a seizure disorder; reminding a person who has mental illness to take their medications; and calming a person who has post-traumatic stress disorder. This is House Bill 489.

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