

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Board of Examination and Registration of Architects

#### Individual Architect Registrants

##### When is a Rhode Island Architect registration legally required?

Architecture is a profession that is regulated by the State of Rhode Island. This means that there is a state agency that issues registrations to qualified individuals and regulates the profession. To practice architecture in Rhode Island, you must obtain a registration from the Rhode Island Board of Examination and Registration of Architects at the Department of Business Regulation. Applicants may be registered by examination or reciprocity.

- Only Rhode Island Registered Architects (“ARC”) can “practice or offer to practice architecture” and/or to hold oneself out to the public as an Architect (“ARC”) or by using “RA” or “AIA” designation and/or other related titles after their name as outlined in R.I. Gen. Laws § 5-1-7, [R.I. Gen. Laws 5-1-7](#).
- For the definition of the “practice of architecture,” please visit, R.I Gen. Laws § 5-1-2: [R.I. Gen. Laws 5-1-2](#).
- For the purpose of determining what architectural practices are permitted, please visit R.I. Gen. Laws § 5-1-14: [R.I. Gen Laws 5-1-14](#).

##### What is the Rhode Island Board of Examination and Registration of Architects?

The Rhode Island Board of Examination and Registration of Architects (“Board”) is established and governed by R.I. Gen. Laws Chapter 5-1, R. [R.I. Gen. Laws Governing Architects](#), and the Board’s Rules and Regulations for Architects, [415-00-00-1](#). It is part of the Division of Building, Design and Fire Professionals housed within the Department of Business Regulation. The Board is responsible for licensing architects (“ARCs”), and firms practicing architecture by the issuance of a Certificate of Authorization (“ARC

COA”). The Board receives and processes complaints that allege violations of statutory and regulatory provisions under the Board’s jurisdiction. The Board periodically reviews its statutes, regulations, applications, and processes for updating and streamlining.

### How do I obtain a list of Board members?

The Board is comprised of qualified individuals appointed by the Governor to serve on the Board on a voluntary basis. To view information about board member appointments, please visit: [Board Member Appointments](#).

### How often and when does the Board meet?

The Board is a public body that generally meets every other month beginning in January. While administrative staff may be able to answer certain routine questions between meetings, matters that require Board action are required to be noticed on the Board’s meeting agenda per the Open Meetings Act, [Annual Meeting Notice](#).

### Who can attend Board meetings?

Open Session Meetings are open to the public. Executive Session Meetings are closed to the public.

### How can I find out when the next Board meeting is?

All meetings are listed on the Rhode Island Secretary of State’s Office (“SOS”). Please visit [Open Meetings](#) for this information.

1. Enter “Architects” in the “Keywords” box
2. Click the “Search” radio button
3. Scroll down, and you will see the information for the “Architects, Board of Examination and Registration of.”

### Can I be added to a list for meeting notifications?

All meetings are listed on the Rhode Island Department of State's Office ("SOS").

Please visit: [Open Meetings](#) for this information.

1. Enter "Architects" in the "Keywords" box
2. Click the "Search" radio button
3. Scroll down to "Upcoming Meetings for Keyword Search"
4. On the left, click the orange "email" button, enter "email address," click the "verify email button" – on the right, click the down arrow to choose how often you would like to receive the notifications.

### I am interested in becoming a member of the Board. Who should I contact for more information?

Please submit your "Letter of Interest" and "Resume" to [Donna.Costantino@dbr.ri.gov](mailto:Donna.Costantino@dbr.ri.gov).

Do Board Members receive Continuing Education for their volunteer service on the Board?

- Yes. Board Members of any state architecture licensing board will receive up to four (4) continuing education hours (CEHs) per year for attending licensing board meetings.

Candidates for Registration by Examination:

### What are the requirements for registering by examination?

Applicants for licensure by examination must:

- Possess a professional degree in architecture from an accredited school approved by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB);
- Pass all sections of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards ("NCARB") Architect Registration Examination® ("ARE®"); and

- Complete the minimum practical experience per the guidelines on practical experience of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (“NCARB”) Architect Experience Program® (“AXP®”).

Does Rhode Island accept the NCARB Integrated Path to Architectural Licensure (IPAL) Program?

- Yes. The NCARB IPAL Program is accepted.
- The Program allows Applicants enrolled in an NCARB approved IPAL degree program to take components of the Architectural Registration Examination® (ARE®) prior to graduation.

**I just passed the NCARB Architect Registration Examination® (“ARE®”)! What do I do next to obtain my “Initial Registration” to practice or offer to practice architecture in the State of Rhode Island?**

If you just passed the NCARB (“ARE®”) - Congratulations!

- Complete the Online Application and make an online Payment of sixty dollars (\$60).
- Contact NCARB and request that they transmit your NCARB Record to the Rhode Island Board. You can do so by logging into your NCARB account at “MY ACCOUNT.”
- When the Rhode Island Board receives your Online Application and NCARB Record, the Board will review it.
  - If your package can be administratively approved, your approval package will be sent to you, via email, within fourteen (14) to twenty-one (21) business days.
- If your application package cannot be administratively approved, it must be presented to the Board for review. The Board generally meets on the third Monday every other month. You will then receive the Board’s written decision, via email, approximately fourteen (14) to twenty-one (21) business days after that date.

Candidates for Registration by Reciprocity:

### What is reciprocity?

“Reciprocity” refers to a non-resident registered architect seeking to practice architecture in the state of Rhode Island, [R.I. Gen. Laws 5-1-9](#).

### How do I obtain a “Reciprocal Registration” as an Architect in Rhode Island?

- Complete the Online Application, [elicensing](#), with Online Payment of sixty dollars (\$60);
- Contact NCARB and request that they transmit your NCARB Record to the Rhode Island Board. You can do so by logging into your NCARB account at “MY ACCOUNT.”
- When the Rhode Island Board receives your Online Application and NCARB Record, the Board will review it;
  - If your package can be administratively approved, your approval package will be sent to you, via email, within fourteen (14) to twenty-one (21) business days.
  - If your application package cannot be administratively approved and must be presented to the Board for review, the Board meets on the third Monday every other month. You will then receive the Board’s written decision, via email, approximately fourteen (14) to twenty-one (21) business days after that date.
- For the “reciprocal registration instructions,” please visit: [Reciprocal Registration Instructions](#).

Certificate of Authorization:

### What is a Certificate of Authorization (“COA”)?

A COA authorizes a sole proprietor, corporation, limited liability company (“LLC”), limited liability partnership (“LLP”) or partnership, named in the certificate to practice or offer to practice architecture in the state.

For the definition of “certificate of authorization,” please visit: [R.I. Gen. Laws 5-1-2](#).

### When is a COA required?

A COA is required for anyone practicing architecture in RI, whether a sole proprietor, corporation, limited liability company (“LLC”), limited liability partnership (“LLP”) or partnership as outlined in R.I. Gen. Laws § 5-1-7, [R.I. Gen. Laws 5-1-7](#).

### What is required to obtain a COA to practice or offer to practice in Rhode Island?

The structure of the corporation, LLC, LLP or partnership must meet the criteria as outlined in R.I. Gen. Laws § 5-1-15.1. [R.I. Gen. Laws 5-1-15.1](#).

### What is the difference between your “individual (personal) registration” and a COA?

In order to practice or offer to practice architecture in the State of Rhode Island, the following is required:

- A “person” must hold an individual (personal) registration.
  - This registration expires on December 31st of the odd number years (2021, 2023, etc.)
- A “firm” must hold a Certificate of Authorization (“COA”). “Firms” can be organized as a Sole Proprietorship, or as a corporate entity: Corporation, Limited Liability Company (“LLC”), Limited Liability Partnership (“LLP”) or Partnership.
- The COA expires on December 31st of the even numbered years (2020, 2022, etc.).

## Registration and COA Renewals:

### What is the process to renew a registration?

#### 1. Individual (Personal) Registration Renewal:

Please log into your account at the following link: [elicensing](#). Enter the User ID and Password associated with your registration. Complete and submit the online renewal application. If you do not have your User ID and Password, please contact the Board, [dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov](mailto:dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov), for assistance.

#### 2. COA:

Please log into your account at the following link: [elicensing](#). Enter the User ID and Password associated with the COA. Complete and submit the COA online renewal application. If you do not have your User ID and Password, please contact the Board, [dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov](mailto:dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov), for assistance.

### What is the renewal schedule and fee for Architects and COAs?

Type of Registration	Fee	How Often	Due Date
Individual (“Personal”) Registration	\$120	Biennially	December 31st of the ODD numbered years (2021, 2023, etc.)
Certificate of Authorization (“COA”) for the Firms	\$0.00 – No Employees \$120 – One (1) or more Employees	Biennially	December 31st of the EVEN numbered years (2022, 2024, etc.)
Renewal of an Expired Certificate or Certificate of Authorization	\$60		

If I miss the renewal deadline, is there a renewal late fee?

1. **Architect Registration expired less than 6 months:**

If your registration has been expired for not more than six (6) months past the expired date, you can still renew your registration online as follows. Log into your account at the following link: [elicensing](#). Enter your User ID and Password to access your online renewal application. Complete and submit your online renewal application. If you do not have your User ID and Password, please contact the Board, [dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov](mailto:dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov), for assistance.

2. **Architect Registration expired 6 months to not more than 2 years:**

If your registration **has been expired for a period of six (6) months to not more than two (2) years**, please complete and submit the following via mail:

- a. Paper renewal application and tax payer status affidavit located on the Board's website at the following link: [Paper Renewal Application - Tax Affidavit](#).
- b. A brief outline of activities set forth during the lapsed period, and
- c. A check in the amount of \$180 (\$120-Renewal, \$60-Late Fee) made payable to the "General Treasurer, State of Rhode Island."

3. **Architect Registration expired greater than 2 years:**

If your registration **has been expired for a period of greater than 2 (two) years**, you will follow the procedure for a new application.

- **If you were registered by reciprocal registration**, please follow the instructions for applying for a reciprocal registration as if you were never registered in RI.

Please note: The reciprocal application can only be submitted via paper. The paper application can be found when logging into your "MY NCARB" and following the Rhode Island Transmittal Instructions. **Do not complete an online application.**

- **If you were registered by examination registration**, please contact the Board via email, [dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov](mailto:dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov) for further assistance.

- Upon receipt your application will be reviewed.
  - If it can be administratively approved, your approval package will be sent to you, via email, within fourteen (14) to twenty-one (21) business days.
  - If your application package cannot be administratively approved and must be presented to the Board for review, the Board meets on the third Monday every other month. You will then receive the Board's written decision, via email, approximately fourteen (14) to twenty-one (21) business days after that date.

### How can I renew by expired COA?

Log into your account at the following link: [elicensing](#). Enter the User ID and Password associated with the COA. Complete and submit the COA online renewal application. If you do not have your User ID and Password, please contact the Board, [dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov](mailto:dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov), for assistance.

Continuing Education:

### What are the continuing education requirements in order to renew a registration?

An architect **must complete a minimum of 12 Continuing Education Hours (“CEHS”) each calendar year** or be exempt from these continuing education requirements as provided in § 1.8(G) of [415-00-00-1](#). Failure to comply with these requirements may result in non-renewal of the architect's registration.

For the “Continuing Education” Regulation, § 1.8, please visit: [415-00-00-1](#).

### What “qualifies” for CEHs?

All CEHs must be received from Health, Safety and Welfare subjects (“HSW”) and contain the HSW designation on the course completion certificate or AIA transcript. Limited CEHs may be awarded for services on a state architecture licensing board or

other RI boards. See Regulation, § 1.8.C and D of the Rules and Regulations for Architects, for further information: [415-00-00-1](#).

#### What is accepted for Self-Reported Continuing Education Hours?

- CEH in Health, Safety, and Welfare may be awarded for verified membership and service on:
  - A State Board of Registration/Licensure of Architects,
  - A Rhode Island zoning board,
  - A Rhode Island planning board,
  - A Rhode Island historic district commission,
  - The Rhode Island Building Code Standards Committee,
  - The Rhode Island Fire Safety Code Board of Appeal and Review, or
  - The Rhode Island Rehabilitation Building and Fire Code for Existing Buildings and Structures board.
- Registrants may claim one (1) CEH per meeting attended up to a maximum of four (4) CEHs per year, with a maximum of eight (8) CEHs per biennium. For each CEH claimed, an architect must be able to prove attendance at one (1) board meeting that was in session for at least fifty (50) minutes. Acceptable proof of attendance includes meeting minutes or recording of meeting demonstrating attendance and participation.
- No other types of self-reported CEHs qualify for CEH credit in Rhode Island.

### What is a CEH and how is it Awarded?

A CEH is one continuous instructional hour (50 to 60 minutes of contact) spent in Structured Educational Activities intended to increase or update the architect's knowledge and competence in HSW.

The Board will accept Nano learning credits for programs less than one (1) full hour in length provided that the program is eligible for HSW credit (following the same criteria for full-length courses set forth in the Board's [Regulations](#)).

### Where can CEHs be obtained?

CEHs may be acquired at any location, through in-person or remotely delivered instruction. Remotely delivered online courses may be presented either as a live/synchronous course or as an on-demand/pre-recorded/asynchronous course.

### Can CEHs be carried over into the next year?

Excess Continuing Education Hours may not be credited to a future calendar year.

### Are there "Exemptions" to the CEHs requirement?

An architect shall not be subject to these requirements if:

1. The architect has been granted emeritus/emerita status by the Board; or
2. The architect otherwise meets all renewal requirements and is called to active military service, has a serious medical condition, or can demonstrate to the Board other like hardship, then upon the Board's so finding, the architect may be excused from some or all of these requirements.

### How many CEHs are required for a registrant's first renewal period or fraction thereof?

The continuing education requirements for renewal shall be required at the rate of one CEH per month of registration.

### What is my obligation for reporting, recordkeeping and audit of the CEHs obtained?

- An architect shall complete and submit forms as required by the Board certifying that the architect has completed the required CEHs.
- CEH Forms may be audited by the Board for verification of compliance with these requirements.
- Documentation of reported CEHs in the form of completion certificates or an American Institute of Architects (“AIA”) transcript shall be maintained by the architect for six (6) years from the date of award.
- Proof of completion is determined by the Board’s review of completion certificates or an AIA transcript for CEHs that are identified as Health, Safety and Welfare (“HSW”).
- If the Board disallows any CEHs, the architect shall have sixty (60) days from notice of such disallowance either to provide further evidence of having completed the CEHs disallowed or to remedy the disallowance by completing the required number of CEHs (but such CEHs shall not again be used for the next calendar year).
- If the Board finds, after proper notice and hearing, that the architect willfully disregarded these requirements or falsified documentation of required CEHs, the architect may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws Chapter 5-1 [R.I. Gen. Laws 5-1](#) and [415-00-00-1](#).

Contact Information and Email Address:

### How do I update my contact information to include address(es) and Email Address?

Log into your account at the following link: [elicensing](#).

1. Enter the User ID and Password associated with your Account,
2. In the upper right-hand corner, click on “ONLINE SERVICES,”
3. Under “Account,” click “Change Address,”
4. In the upper left-hand corner, click “Logout,”

5. If you do not have your User ID and Password, please contact the Board, [dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov](mailto:dawne.broadfield@dbr.ri.gov), for assistance.

Additional Links:

For more information about college programs for ARC candidates, please visit: [NAAB Programs - Schools](#).

For more information about gaining the architectural experience, please visit: [NCARB - AXP - Experience -Start](#).

For more information about the Architect Registration Examination® (“ARE®”), please visit: [NCARB - Pass the ARE - Start](#).