



State of Nebraska Board of Engineers and Architects



The Nebraska Professional

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Nebraska Board of Engineers and Architects

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Engineers Week 2026



This week, the Board celebrates the innovation, dedication, and expertise of engineers everywhere. From the roads and bridges we travel to the buildings where we live and work, engineers shape the infrastructure that keeps our communities safe, connected, and thriving.

Their problem-solving skills drive progress, strengthen our economy, and improve quality of life in countless ways—often behind the scenes.

During Engineers Week, we thank engineers for their commitment to excellence and their lasting impact on society. Your work truly builds the future.

For more information and tools on Engineers Week, how to celebrate engineers, and how to encourage those interested in a career in engineering, please visit the [DiscoverE](#) website.

Certificates of Authorization: Clearing Up Confusion

The Board has seen an increase in organizations practicing — or offering to practice — engineering and/or architecture without a required Certificate of Authorization (COA). In many cases, this appears to stem from confusion about how the Nebraska Engineers and Architects Regulation Act (the Act) applies to business entities.

Based upon the number of complaints regarding Certificates of Authorization, it is apparent that there continues to be widespread confusion about what the E&A Act requires with regard to practicing engineering or architecture through a business entity, such as a corporation or a limited liability company.

A common theme among those who have failed to obtain a Certificate of Authorization is that the licensee does not feel they need one because he or she practices alone, without any other professional, and is therefore a "sole proprietorship." This interpretation of the E&A Act is simply wrong, as a number of licensees can attest based upon the Board's rejection of this argument.

The reality is that anyone practicing in the name of a business organization *must* have a current Certificate of Authorization for that organization. The number of professionals involved in the organization is irrelevant, as is the number of employees. The starting point for this analysis is Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-3436(1), which states that licensees may practice "through an organization" as long as the organization meets the "criteria for organizational practice established by the board" and that the organization has "been issued a certificate of authorization." [Rule 7.2](#) sets out the minimum organizational requirements.

"Organization" is defined in §81-3418 as "a partnership, limited liability company, corporation, or other form of business entity." (Public service providers are not organizations under the Act). This definition reaches every form of business entity, irrespective of the number of employees or licensees working for, or with, the entity.

As noted above, a common misconception is that a Certificate of Authorization is not required for a corporation or limited liability company which is owned solely by a licensee; particularly when the licensee does not have any professional employees. This mistake is often expressed as, "I am a sole proprietor because I do not have any employees." The law, however, does not turn upon having employees or being a sole owner.

The law is concerned about whether the licensee has elected to practice within the protections of a business entity. The decision to do so is generally intended to shield personal assets from liability for professional actions. To be sure, that reasoning is not improper or unethical. However, every such business entity is required to have a valid Certificate of Authorization which, among other things, establishes the particular licensees who are in responsible charge of the professional practice.

The correct interpretation of the Act is also evident from the information provided on the Board's website. In particular, the website explains that a "sole proprietor" is not required to have a Certificate of Authorization. "Sole proprietor" is defined as "an individual without a partnership, corporation, or other type of organization." Thus, the status as a sole proprietor depends entirely upon the absence of any business organization.

The rule is very simple - a Certificate of Authorization is required for every partnership, corporation, limited liability company, or other form of business organization through which engineering and/or architecture is being practiced, or offered, in Nebraska. It does not matter whether there is only one owner, or whether there are hundreds. Nor does it matter whether the business employs other professionals. If in doubt, look at your tax returns.

If you receive a Form K-1 for your professional income, you are part of a business organization and that organization requires a Certificate of Authorization. Similarly, if you file a partnership or corporate tax return for your professional practice, you are required to have a Certificate of Authorization.

The Certificate of Authorization requirement has been part of the E&A Act for many years and each licensee has a duty to know and comply with the Act. Failure to obtain the necessary certificate is difficult to justify to the Board and licensees should expect to be assessed the appropriate fees, as well as possible civil penalties, for the period during which there was no certificate.

If you are unsure whether your organization needs a Certificate of Authorization, reviewing your structure now can prevent complications later. When in doubt, consult the Board's [website](#) or contact the [Board office](#) for guidance.

Continuing Education Audits

On February 2, 2026, licensees selected for a continuing education (CE) audit for the 2024–25 renewal period were notified by mail and email.

If you were selected for an audit, you must submit your CE documentation for this period, including a log showing the type of activities claimed, sponsoring organization,

location, duration, instructor's or speaker's name, and unit credits earned, with supporting information to include attendance verification records in the form of completion certificates or other documents supporting evidence of attendance.

A CE log developed by the Board is available [here](#). Licensees may use their own log if it contains the same information found on the Board's CE log.

Alternatively, the board will also accept a licensee's continuing education records that they maintain through NCEES, NCARB, or other organizations that satisfy the above requirements.

The CE log and all supporting documentation must be arranged in chronological order by date of completion and combined into one document, such as a single PDF. If the Board receives materials that do not comply with this requirement, the submission will not be accepted, and the licensee must resubmit the information in conformance with Board requirements.

If a licensee is claiming [carryover hours](#) from a previous renewal period, all supporting documentation for those hours must be submitted with the 2024-25 renewal period materials. This is because the licensee must prove that they qualify for any carryover they may claim.

Licensees who have been selected for an audit may send the information by email to nbea.compliance@nebraska.gov or by mail to: Nebraska Board of Engineers and Architects, PO Box 95165, Lincoln, NE 68509-5165. Once received, it may take Board staff up to 30 days to review.

If a licensee successfully completes the continuing education audit, they will be notified by email. If the licensee does not successfully complete the audit, they will be notified by both mail and email with instructions to satisfy the continuing education requirements. If they fail to respond to the audit or do not provide adequate documentation by July 31, 2026, the licensee's license may be subject to disciplinary action.

Upcoming NBEA Lunch and Learn Webinar

Please join us for the next installment of the NBEA Lunch and Learn Webinar Series regarding professional practice and ethics on Monday, March 9, 2026, at noon (central time)!

The webinar will discuss the enforcement process, complaints and investigations into alleged violations of the E&A Act, and case studies filed against individuals alleged to have violated the E&A Act, and helpful ethical information regarding each allegation.

[Register today to reserve your spot!](#)

Please remember, if an individual would like to claim professional development hours from the webinar, they will need to register individually as the attendance roster is generated from WebEx based on each individual's email address or phone number that is logged into the webinar.

Share this invitation with others who might benefit. If you have specific questions about these topics, please submit them before the webinar so we can better answer them during the presentation. Please send questions to nbea.marketing@nebraska.gov.

**NBEA Lunch and Learn
Webinar Series**
Monday, March 9, 2026 at 12 P.M. CST

[Register here](#)

**Join us for a FREE live and interactive
webinar regarding professional
practice and
ethics!**



Amy Habe
Compliance Officer



Allyson Berglund
Public Information Officer

The following topics will be discussed:

- The enforcement process,
- Complaints and investigations on alleged violations of the E&A Act,
- Case studies filed against individuals alleged to have violated the E&A Act, and helpful ethical information regarding each allegation.

**Don't miss this opportunity to learn directly from
the Board, ask questions, and gain insights on these
important topics!**

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NCEES News

NCEES Seeks Licensed Engineers and Engineering Faculty for FE Exam Survey

NCEES is seeking licensed engineers and engineering faculty to participate in an online survey for the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) exam.

To access the online survey, please click [here](#). The survey will remain open until April 6,

2026.

NCEES Seeks Licensed Industrial and Systems Engineers' Professional Experience and Advice

NCEES is currently seeking licensed industrial and systems engineers to participate in a professional activities and knowledge study, or PAKS, for the PE Industrial and Systems exam. The results of this online survey will be used to update specifications for the exam, which is used throughout the United States for licensing purposes.

To access the online survey, please click [here](#). The survey will remain open until June 12, 2026. For more information, contact NCEES Exam Development Engineer William Bowen at wbowen@ncees.org.

NCARB News

Reciprocity Licensure Reimagined: Who Is Working on Pathways to Practice?

NCARB's Licensure Process Research & Development (R&D) Task Force is one of many NCARB volunteer committees made up of practicing architects, public members, and executives from U.S. licensing boards. Over the past several years, the Licensure Process R&D Task Force has worked to reimagine the future of licensure and is continuing to steer NCARB's [Pathways to Practice initiative](#). The larger Pathways initiative is now engaging with an even broader group of volunteers, including collateral representatives and licensure candidates, as development work is being led by NCARB's Education, Experience, and Examination committees.

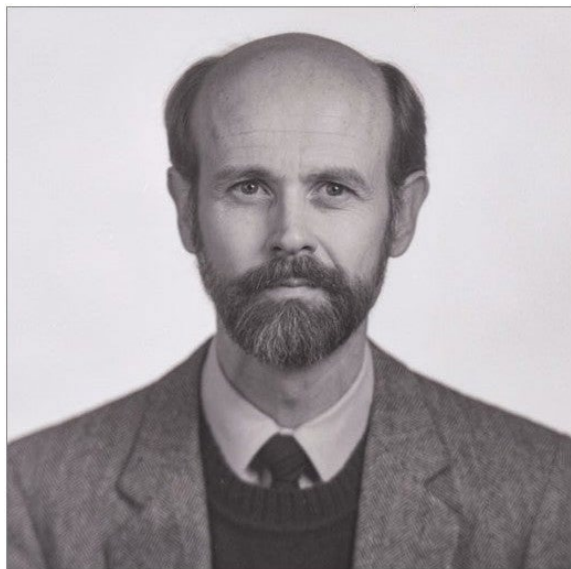
Developed in 2022, the [NCARB Competency Standard for Architects](#) establishes 16 knowledge areas, skills, abilities, and behaviors—called competencies—that describe the capabilities necessary at the point of initial licensure for an individual to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare.

The Licensure Process R&D Task Force and program committees will use the competencies defined in the Competency Standard to envision new pathways to become an architect, as well as the criteria and methods that could be used to assess each competency.

For more information on this initiative, click [here](#).

In Memoriam: James J. Potter

The Board is saddened to learn of the passing of former Board member and architect James Potter,



who served on the Board from 1987 to 1990.

Potter earned his Bachelor of Science degree from California State Polytechnic University, followed by a Master of Architecture from the State University of New York at Buffalo, and a Ph.D. from Pennsylvania State University, reflecting a lifelong commitment to scholarship and the advancement of the profession.

In 1981, Potter joined the University of Nebraska–Lincoln faculty, where he dedicated nearly three decades of service to the College of Architecture before retiring in August 2010.

Potter was the second architect representing the College of Architecture on the Nebraska Board of Engineers and Architects, succeeding Ernest Moore in March 1987.

The Board extends its sympathies to Potter's family, friends, and colleagues.

The Nebraska Professional Archive

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If you have questions about topics in this digital newsletter, previous issues, or other topics that would be helpful to publish in our next release, please [contact us](#).

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