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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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Held to a Higher Standard?

by Daniel Thiele, P.E., Board Secretary

After reviewing summaries of recent disciplinary cases published in the Nebraska Board of Engineers and Architects' monthly newsletter, a licensee provided feedback to the Board regarding the summaries. This licensee believed that the actions taken against licensed individuals appeared to be much more severe than those taken against individuals practicing without a license, in his opinion. Board compliance case summaries typically identify the licensee when disciplinary action is taken, while unlicensed individuals are not routinely identified. On the surface, case summaries may appear to show different treatment based on license status. However, upon closer examination, the reality is more nuanced.



It is first helpful to restate that the Board does identify individuals and firms in case summaries when they are disciplined. Disciplinary actions include actions taken by this board following contested hearings as well as consent agreements made in lieu of formal proceedings. Complaints and investigations are maintained confidentially. When an investigation or complaint does not result in disciplinary action, the names and identifying information of those involved are not disclosed to the public.

Many recent disciplinary cases involving licensees are related to mandatory continuing education (CE) as a condition of license renewal. The Board has the authority to perform CE audits on up to five percent of all biennial renewals. For licensees who have hours disallowed by the Board, there are provisions in the Board's rules that allow applicants extra time to either substantiate their original claim or earn other credit to satisfy CE requirements.

A clear trend has become apparent in these CE audits. For in-state licensees, many individuals are responsive to CE audits and eventually pass without disciplinary action. However, the Board has noted that a significant percentage of out-of-state licensees are not responsive to audits, even when repeatedly asked for substantiation and documentation by the Board. Furthermore, some have completed very few actual hours that are nowhere near the 24 hours (for architects) or 30 hours (for professional engineers) required. The Board takes into consideration the specific circumstances of each case, including the number of hours reported, whether hours were disallowed due to restrictions, and whether the licensee was responsive to Board inquiries and adhered to timeframes allowed for both responses and for making up deficiencies. Only serious deficiencies or unresponsive individuals trigger disciplinary actions being taken against licensees involving CE non-compliance.

As you might expect, most cases involving non-licensees are for the unauthorized practice of engineering or architecture. It is important to understand that Nebraska statutes provide that a property owner who allows an improvement on their real property that involves the practices of architecture or engineering—without engaging a licensee—is considered to be unlawfully practicing architecture and/or engineering. The Board has found that many of these cases involve individuals or firms that are not preparing construction drawings for themselves or others; most cases involve property owners who hired a local contractor or lumber yard to make improvements to their property without a clear understanding of the requirements for licensed design professionals to perform the work.

In these matters, the Board prefers to bring the project into compliance with the E&A Act to ensure the protection of the public that may occupy or be otherwise affected by the constructed project. The remediation process requires the owner to engage licensed individuals to review the architecture and engineering work involved, identify any deficiencies, generate solutions to remove those deficiencies, and take responsibility for the project. If a property owner cooperates and remediates their project in a timely

manner, the Board typically dismisses the complaint of unlicensed practice against the project owner without imposing fines or other penalties. In these cases, identifying information on the individual and the project is not publicly disclosed. In cases where the owner does not cooperate in a timely manner, the Board may take disciplinary action. However, consistent with the goal of bringing the project into compliance, some aspects of the discipline may be stayed if the project can be remediated reasonably quickly. In these cases, identifying information will be published, but the final disciplinary action may appear to be minor due to some or all of the discipline being permanently stayed.

In cases of unlicensed practice by property owners, you may wonder about the contractor or other industry professional who steered the owner down the wrong path. These are often handled in separate complaint cases, but the Board's approach remains focused on remediation, education, and prevention.

Not all complaints fall into the two broad categories of CE compliance and unlicensed practice, but rather reflect the “carrot and stick” approach of the current Board when considering discipline. In all matters, the Board prefers to take a remedial or preventative approach as long as the respondent cooperates and works to resolve the matter. However, the Board routinely imposes discipline for both egregious actions and repeated violations.

It is true that the Board expects a licensee to be familiar with the statutes and regulations governing the practice of engineering and architecture, yet it does not hold an unlicensed property owner to the same standard. Licensees are held to a higher standard, as they have a legal responsibility under the E&A Act to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

2025 License Renewal Notices

Online renewals are now open for architects and professional engineers whose last names begin with the letters A through K. Renewal forms must be received and processed online no later than 11:59 CT on December 31 to avoid a late payment fee. To renew online, please click [here](#).

A penalty of \$8 per month (\$80 maximum) is assessed for the renewal of licenses after December 31, 2025. Please note you cannot practice with an expired license, as provided in *Neb. Rev. Stat. §§81-3442*.

If the online renewal system will not accept your password or you wish to renew by check, please contact the Board office at (402) 471-2021 or nbea.office@nebraska.gov for assistance.

You must have satisfied the continuing education requirements before you may renew

your license.

If your license expired December 31, 2024 and you wish to renew, you can no longer renew online. Please contact us for a paper renewal application.

Continuing Education Reminders

With renewal season upon us, please review the information below for licensees regarding continuing education (CE).

Architects must complete 24 hours of architectural-related learning every biennial period, while professional engineers must complete 30 hours of engineering-related learning.

Acceptable topics must be either technical in nature, or a topic that is part of a profession's body of knowledge as developed by the applicable national professional engineering society or categorized as a Health Safety and Welfare (HSW) topic by NCARB.

Restrictions: Web-based course offerings provided by the following types of providers may constitute the entire biennial requirement:

1. International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) approved providers,
2. Institutions of higher education that have an accredited program in architecture or engineering,
3. Professional engineering or architectural societies,
4. Technical societies and associations recognized at a national level,
5. Governmental agencies, or
6. NCARB and NCEES

Web-based, non-live course offerings provided by providers other than those specified above may constitute no more than one-fourth of the biennial education requirement, which is six hours for architects or seven and one-half hours for professional engineers.

Live courses are led by an instructor that enable both the instructor and attendees to give, receive, and discuss information *in real time*.

Ethics: At least one hour of the biennial continuing education requirements must be directly related to ethical issues of a licensee's professional practice.

Self-Guided Activities: Self-guided activities planned and performed under the licensee's own direction and guidance may constitute no more than one-fourth of the biennial education requirement, which is six hours for architects or seven and one-half hours for

professional engineers.

Self-guided hours are those obtained during a self-directed educational activity. This activity may not have a sponsor or host; you did not receive a certificate for this educational time, and earned it under your own direction and guidance.

To document self-guided activities, you must complete a [Nebraska Continuing Education Self-Guided Reporting Form](#) and submit this if selected for audit.

No Pre-Approval: *The Board DOES NOT pre-approve CE courses or providers.* A CE provider who says they or their courses are approved in Nebraska or “all 50 states” is a **red flag**.

The Board has final authority concerning courses, credit, unit value for courses, and other methods of earning CE credit. *Board staff cannot provide guidance to licensees as to whether a particular course or activity qualifies for credit.*

Carryover: Licensees may carry up to one-half of the required continuing education credits from the previous biennial period. Excess credits can be carried over only into the biennial period immediately following the period in which the credit was earned.

For example, a professional engineer whose license expires on December 31, 2025 gained 25 hours in the 2024-25 renewal period. The required number of hours for professional engineers is 30 hours. This professional engineer can and intends to use 5 excess hours gained in the 2022-23 renewal period. However, to use these 5 hours in the subsequent renewal period, the professional engineer must demonstrate that they gained at least 35 acceptable hours in the 2022-23 period. Therefore, if selected for audit, this professional engineer would need to submit documentation (logs, completion certificates, etc.) for both the 2024-25 and the 2022-23 renewal periods.

Recordkeeping: Every licensee is responsible for maintaining records necessary to support credits claimed for continuing education. Records required include, but are not limited to:

- A [CE log](#) showing the type of activity claimed, sponsoring organization, location, duration, instructor's or speaker's name, and unit credits earned, with supporting information to include verification records in the form of completion certificates or other documents supporting evidence of attendance; or
- Records relating to continuing education that are maintained by NCEES, NCARB, or other organizations that satisfy Rule 9.5.1 requirements.

Exemptions and Waivers: Some exemptions from CE requirements are available due to unique situations, such as serving on military duty, experiencing physical disability, or illness.

Audits: If selected for an audit, you will be notified by mail and email in early 2026. Please ensure your mailing address and email address are up to date.

Please do not send audit documentation unless you have been notified that you have been selected for an audit.

For more details about CE requirements, refer to Board Rule [Chapter 9](#).

NBEA Lunch and Learn Webinar Series

Thank you to everyone who attended the recent Lunch and Learn Webinar covering license renewals, CE requirements, and audits.

The webinar is now available on the Board's [YouTube channel](#). Click [here](#) to view the presentation. To access the PDF version of the webinar, click [here](#).

As a reminder, certificates **will not** be issued as attendance verification. If you participated in the entire presentation, you will receive an email within a week of the webinar confirming your attendance. Use this email as attendance verification if need to substantiate CE hours for this webinar.

Please follow us on all the Board's social media platforms for upcoming NBEA Lunch and Learn Webinar Series presentations and never miss any important updates or information! Additionally, visit our [website](#) for upcoming webinar information, as well as past webinar YouTube videos and presentation documents.

If you have any suggested topics for future webinars, please email nbea.marketing@nebraska.gov.



NCEES News

Structural PE Exam Changes in 2026

Last month, NCEES hosted a webinar to discuss the changes being made to Structural PE Examination specifications starting in April 2026.

The total time for the Vertical Depth and Lateral Depth sections of the exam will increase by an hour. The total appointment time will be 6-½ hours, an increase from the current 5-½ hours. The exam will continue to contain scored and unscored (pretest) questions and be an alternative item type (AIT) question.

To view the YouTube presentation of the webinar, click [here](#), and for a PDF of the

PowerPoint presentation, click [here](#).

NCEES Foundation 2025-26 Funding Cycle Now Open

The NCEES Foundation announced that the 2025–26 funding cycle is now open. Applicants may begin submitting letters of inquiry now through February 1, 2026.

Priority is given to proposals that demonstrate a clear connection to advancing engineering and surveying licensure to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Advancing licensure can be achieved by promoting the value of engineering and surveying licensure, building a pipeline of future engineers and surveyors at the K-12 level, and retaining current engineering and surveying students enrolled and successful in their respective programs.

The NCEES Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying. The Foundation is committed to supporting programs that further the NCEES mission to advance licensure for engineers and surveyors in order to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

For more information on the NCEES Foundation, please click [here](#).

NCARB News

NCARB Expands Reciprocity Access for Architects Without a Professional Degree

On January 15, 2026, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) will retire a three-year waiting period between licensure and NCARB certification eligibility for architects without a degree from an accredited architecture program. The removal of the three-year wait addresses a common barrier for architects wishing to pursue NCARB's Education Alternative to Certification program, aligning with recent NCARB efforts to ensure accessibility in its programs and services for individuals of all backgrounds.

While most architects who earn NCARB certification hold a degree from a program accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), NCARB's Education Alternative program provides a pathway to certification for U.S. architects with other educational backgrounds.

Under the program's current eligibility requirements, architects must have been licensed for at least the last three consecutive years in a U.S. jurisdiction before pursuing certification. This requirement does not apply to architects who hold a degree from a

NAAB-accredited program, who have historically been eligible to pursue certification immediately after becoming licensed.

This change aligns with NCARB's ongoing *Pathways to Practice* initiative, which seeks to expand pathways to licensure and certification for architects of all backgrounds, including those who don't hold a degree from an accredited program. The retirement of the three-year Education Alternative delay follows recent NCARB changes designed to remove time-bound restrictions that aren't aligned with competency, including the [retirement of the exam's rolling clock policy](#) and [revisions to the experience program's reporting requirement](#).

Architects pursuing certification through the Education Alternative will still be required to document additional experience in lieu of a professional degree as part of their Certificate application. This can be done by either documenting two times the Architectural Experience Program's® (AXP®) hours or completing a portfolio demonstrating learning through experience, depending on the applicant's educational background.

Learn more about NCARB's pathways to certification for [architects who don't hold a degree from a NAAB-accredited program](#).

ARE Guidelines Clarify Instructions for Online-Proctored Appointments

To help individuals better prepare for online proctored exams, NCARB has clarified *ARE Guidelines* instructions regarding setup of testing spaces. These changes went into effect October 27, 2025.

These changes focus on requirements for taking an online-proctored exam and updating language around PSI's Proctoring Platform, as well as a few additional clarifications. These minor edits are intended to address common issues candidates experience when taking online-proctored exams, and do not impact the exam's content, format, or fees.

Test Runs: Going forward, a free PSI test run must be completed before taking each online exam division, including any time testing setup changes. Test runs allow individuals to confirm with a proctor that their setup meets online testing requirements. This includes equipment, internet connection, operating system, applications, and testing environment. NCARB will not issue refunds to candidates unable to complete an exam appointment due to technical or environmental issues if the candidate did not complete a test run before their scheduled exam.

Meeting Online Proctoring Requirements: NCARB has clarified language to address common issues and questions related to online proctoring requirements, including technical configuration and testing environment. Please keep in mind that the testing space must be clear of items and materials not required for testing.

PSI Proctoring Platform: NCARB replaced references to "Bridge" with "PSI Proctoring

Platform,” including both Bridge and PSI’s secure testing browser.

Fees: NCARB removed references to specific fees and linked the fees section to NCARB’s website for greater accuracy. Exam fees are not changing at this time.

Updated Privacy Agreement: NCARB has replaced PSI’s Online Proctoring Candidate Privacy Agreement with an updated version that adjusts the timeline for storing exam recordings from 30 to 90 days.

Reporting Exam Security Concerns: NCARB clarified confidentiality for individuals reporting exam security concerns through the ARE Security Tip Line.

To view the updated *ARE Guidelines*, click [here](#).

Licensure Updates

NEWLY-LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

Civil

David M. Gee	Omaha, NE
Rebecca D. Hall	Omaha, NE
Hunter L. Moural	Grand Island, NE
Brandon L. Purintun	Papillion, NE
Ashley N. Slattery	Omaha, NE

Electrical and Computer

Hani N. Qassem	Omaha, NE
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Environmental

Brendan C. Bunker	Lincoln, NE
Matthew J. Thompson	Lincoln, NE

Mechanical

Nicholas K. Begley	Omaha, NE
Grayson T. Harvey	Council Bluffs, IA

Recently Resolved Compliance Cases

Case 24.12 – Unlicensed Individual Practice; §81-3442(1)

Summary: The Board was notified of the submission of unsealed plans to another state agency for the construction of a single-story building [Assembly (A) Occupancy] comprising approximately 6,800 square feet. The plans did not bear the seal of a Nebraska-licensed architect or professional engineer.

Action: The project was subject to the Act due to the building area comprising more than 1,000 square feet of A-Assembly occupancy. The Board authorized architecture and engineering remediation to bring the project into compliance with the Act.

Per Board Rule 8.4, a Nebraska-licensed architect and professional engineer were engaged as remediation professionals, who then reviewed the project, identified deficiencies, and recommended corrections. However, the Board was notified by the Respondents that they had not been able to comply with the engineering remediation request at the time.

Due to the respondents' engaging in the unlicensed practice of engineering and failing to complete the engineering remediation, the Board held a hearing for disciplinary action. The Respondents were directed to cease and desist all acts constituting the unlicensed practice of engineering. Additionally, they were assessed a civil penalty of \$2,500 for the unlicensed practice of engineering, which was stayed for 120 days upon the successful remediation of the project within the allotted time frame.

The engineering remediation professional submitted their final engineering report, stating that the engineering deficiencies identified had been corrected. The Board then voted to dismiss the complaint based on the settlement agreement terms being fulfilled and permanently stay the penalty based on the successful completion of remediation within the timeframe imposed in the agreement.

Case 25.29 – Noncompliance with Laws; Rule 5.4

Summary: The Board was notified through a license disclosure that the Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors placed the professional engineer license of Steven Schaub (E-10904) on probated suspension. Schaub was found to be in violation of Rules 5.4.1 and 5.4.3 and subject to disciplinary action per Rule 5.4.3.1.

Action: The Board and Respondent entered into an agreement in which Schaub agreed that his Nebraska professional engineer license would be placed on probation for the time period concurrent with the Texas order and comply with all terms of the Texas disciplinary action.

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For further information regarding the enforcement process, please click [here](#).

For a full list of formal disciplinary actions taken by the Board, please click [here](#).

The Nebraska Professional Archive

[The Nebraska Professional #57](#)

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Please click [here](#) for past issues

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](#).

**State of Nebraska Board of Engineers
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