

Architect Licensure Handbook

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What is the California Architects Board?

The California Architects Board was created by the Legislature and later approved by Governor Henry Gage on March 23, 1901, through “An Act to Regulate the Practice of Architecture.” The mission of the Board is to protect the public health, safety, and welfare by regulating architectural practice. The Board is under the purview of the [Department of Consumer Affairs](#), which is responsible for consumer protection and regulation of professional licensure in California.

What We Do

The Board's mission is protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public through the regulation of the practice of architecture in California. The Board fulfills its mission by establishing the qualifications and regulations for the licensing of individuals who want to practice architecture in California and maintaining the records of those individuals throughout candidacy and licensure. Individuals interested in becoming a licensed architect must apply with the Board, which issues architect licenses in California. Candidates must possess and maintain an active National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) Record at the time they apply with the Board.

Candidates and licensees should be familiar with and adhere to the statutes and regulations of the [Architects Practice Act](#).

Practice of Architecture

California law defines the practice of architecture as the planning of sites, and the design, in whole or in part, of buildings or groups of buildings and structures. Any person who uses the title of “architect” (or any term confusing similar) or advertises to provide architectural services in California must be licensed as an architect by the Board. The Board has a helpful [Design Limitations Chart for Professionals](#) available on its website that specifies the types of projects that may be designed by an unlicensed individual. It also specifies the limitations placed on other licensed design professionals.

The Board is composed of **10 members** (five architects and five public members) who are appointed by the governor, the speaker of the Assembly, and the Senate Rules Committee.

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Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding state holidays

Information, downloadable forms, and more are available on the Board's website (cab.ca.gov).



Unlicensed Practice

Unlicensed individuals, which includes licensure candidates, should be aware it is a misdemeanor punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both to:

- Practice architecture.
- Represent oneself as an architect.
- Use any term similar to the word “architect.”
- Use the stamp of a licensed architect.
- Advertise or put out any sign, card, or other device that might indicate to the public that they are an architect, qualified to engage in the practice of architecture, or an architectural designer.
- Affix a stamp or seal that bears the legend “State of California” or words or symbols that represent or imply that the person is licensed by the state to prepare plans, specifications, or instruments of service.
- Advertise or represent that they are a “registered building designer” or is registered or otherwise licensed by the state as a building designer.

Who is NCARB?

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (**NCARB**) is a nonprofit organization made up of the architectural licensing boards for 55 U.S. states and territories and has three strategic goals: facilitate licensure; foster collaboration; and centralize credential data. The California Architects Board works collaboratively with NCARB to achieve its goals and fulfill its mission of protecting consumers. NCARB provides services to the Board that are required as components of licensure.

Among the requirements a candidate must complete are the **Architectural Experience Program** (AXP) and the **Architect Registration Examination** (ARE) to receive a California license. The AXP is the program that provides a framework for gaining professional experience, and the ARE is the nationally recognized architectural licensing examination. Both the AXP and ARE are NCARB-administered programs and two of the many services it provides the Board.

Additionally, NCARB offers its certificate to licensees. The **NCARB Certificate** indicates a licensee has met the national licensure standard and facilitates reciprocal licensure for candidates wishing to practice in other member jurisdictions. Reciprocal licensure candidates who apply and request a transmittal of their NCARB Certificate are immediately eligible for the California Supplemental Examination (CSE). California does not require licensees to maintain an NCARB Certificate as a condition of licensure.

How do I Become an Architect?

Overview

California's examination and licensure requirements to become an architect are more flexible than most other jurisdictions. Although each candidate's path to licensure may differ, all will complete the process with the necessary knowledge, skills, and ability to be a licensed architect who practices in a way that protects the health, safety, and welfare of Californians.

No single aspect can accurately measure whether an individual is qualified to be licensed to practice architecture in California. The Board considers three separate aspects of an individual's architectural development – **education**, **experience**, and **examination** – when assessing the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to competently perform the services required of an architect.

A candidate who provides evidence of having completed the following requirements is eligible to receive a license to practice architecture:

- Be at least 18 years of age or the equivalent of a graduate from high school.
- Five years of architectural educational experience or the equivalent as specified in the Board's regulations.¹
- Architectural Experience Program (AXP) or the Canadian Provincial Internship in Architecture Program (IAP).^{1, 2}
- All divisions of the Architect Registration Examination (ARE).
- California Supplemental Examination (CSE).

It is important to note that each candidate may have different education and training backgrounds, and it is not possible to describe each education and experience background in this *Handbook*. An individual whose background is not discussed here should directly contact the Board to learn how to fulfill the requirements.

A complete step-by-step licensure process chart is located at the end of the *Handbook*.

¹ When combined, will total the eight years of architectural training and education experience required for licensure—see Business and Professions Code (BPC) section **5552**.

² Candidates who meet the exemption requirements specified in the Board's regulations may substitute work experience in lieu of AXP.

Education

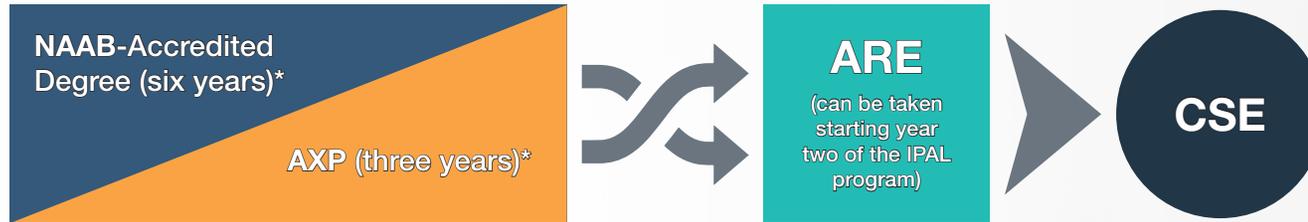
To be eligible for the ARE and begin the licensure process, a candidate must furnish evidence of completing the required education or training experience in architectural work (or the equivalent). Candidates may possess an accredited degree, graduate from an Integrated Path to Architectural Licensure (IPAL) program, possess a nonaccredited degree, or solely document work experience. A description of each path (option) is provided below.

Accredited Degree Path



A professional degree from a program accredited by the [National Architectural Accrediting Board](#) (NAAB) earns the most architectural educational experience credit (five years) and fulfills the Board's eligibility requirement for the [ARE](#). The NAAB-accredited degree is required for Certification by NCARB and for licensure in most U.S. jurisdictions.

Integrated Path to Architectural Licensure (IPAL)



* NAAB degree and AXP are earned concurrently.

IPAL is an option available for candidates pursuing licensure in California. IPAL integrates the experience and examination aspects with a NAAB-accredited professional degree program. Candidates can complete the licensure requirements while earning an accredited degree. IPAL programs provide a structured approach to complete the AXP and take each division of the [ARE](#) before graduation.

A candidate enrolled in an IPAL degree program may fulfill all three aspects of licensure in less time than it typically takes candidates to complete the licensure process. There are prerequisites specific to each school that must first be met before admission is accepted by the respective program. Contact the respective program for more details about it.

After a candidate is awarded their degree in an IPAL program and completes the ARE, they will be eligible to take the [CSE](#).

Candidates interested in pursuing this path should visit the [IPAL portal](#) for more information.

Nonaccredited Degree Path



* Work Experience cannot overlap AXP.

The Nonaccredited Degree Path affords the most flexibility for architecture license candidates as it permits them to combine any field of study with architectural training experience. The amount of architectural training experience required varies depending upon the specific degree awarded and field of study or the number of postsecondary units earned for those without a degree. A candidate fulfills the education aspect when they document five years of training and educational experience in architectural work on an [Employment Verification Form](#) (EVF).

Candidates with foreign degrees may receive credit for education at foreign colleges and universities. A [Board-approved educational evaluation service](#) must evaluate certified original transcripts and diplomas from the foreign school(s) and equate the degree to a comparable U.S. degree for credit to be granted. The service must submit the original recommendation report along with transcripts directly to the Board. The candidate is responsible for any cost of evaluation. Candidates should request that an original “short” or “general” report be submitted directly to the Board along with a copy of the original transcripts. It should be noted that NCARB only accepts foreign degrees evaluated by the NAAB [Education Evaluation Services for Architects](#) (EESA) for NCARB certification.

Work Experience-Only Path



* Work Experience must be under an architect.

A fourth path for receiving ARE eligibility in California is the Work Experience-Only Path. Candidates who select this path work full time for five years (40 hours per week) under the direct supervision of an architect licensed to practice in the U.S. in lieu of earning a degree. The training experience earned, documented on an EVF, fulfills the education aspect for licensure and meets the Board's ARE eligibility requirements.

Some architectural training experience may be granted credit for work performed beyond 40 hours in a week.

Contact the Board for more details.

Experience

All candidates seeking licensure must complete a three-year equivalent work experience requirement in addition to the five-year education requirement for a total eight years of experience needed to receive a license. Candidates may concurrently complete the education and experience aspects immediately upon high school graduation (or the equivalent).

The requirement must be fulfilled through completion of either NCARB's AXP or the Canadian Architectural Licensing Authorities' (CALA) Intern Architect Program (IAP).

Candidates who use work experience under an architect as an educational substitute *may not* also submit the same work experience for earning AXP/IAP credit hours.

NCARB offers another option (the [AXP Portfolio](#)) for candidates who may have placed their licensure goals on hold due to career, personal, or economic reasons. The AXP Portfolio is specifically designed for unlicensed individuals who need to complete AXP for initial licensure. Complete information regarding the AXP Portfolio is available on the NCARB website. The Board accepts this pathway as the equivalent of three years of documented experience.

AXP: Overview

Many aspects of architectural practice are best learned through hands-on experience. For this reason, NCARB developed the AXP, which is designed to provide candidates exposure to the broad range of practice involved in architecture.

AXP is the nationally recognized experience program for licensure candidates that provides a framework for gaining and recording professional experience. It requires the compilation and maintenance of a record of activity reflecting development of competency in key tasks performed in architectural practice. AXP is administered and maintained by NCARB. The AXP:

- Defines tasks of architectural practice in which licensure candidates should be able to competently perform upon licensure.
- Encourages additional experience in the broad aspects of architectural practice.
- Offers quality information and advice about education, experience, and professional issues and opportunities.
- Provides a uniform system for documentation and periodic assessment of experience activity.

A maximum of five years of education or work experience credit is granted to individuals who have completed AXP. To obtain credit for completion of AXP, a candidate must have their AXP record transmitted by NCARB directly to the Board for evaluation. Most jurisdictions require completion of AXP for initial licensure, and NCARB requires AXP for NCARB certification.

Candidates should refer to [AXP Guidelines](#) for more detailed information regarding the program.

IAP: Overview

CALA represents the 11 architectural regulators in Canada. The 11 provincial and territorial regulatory bodies are responsible for setting the standards for entry into the profession and for issuing registration/licenses to those who meet established standards of qualifications and practice. The IAP is developed by CALA and is considered equivalent to completion of AXP.

IAP has the following objectives to:

- Define and document areas of architectural practice in which professional knowledge and skills must be gained in a structured, supervised, and mentored environment.
- Provide a uniform system for documentation and periodic assessment of internship activities.
- Provide feedback and guidance to the intern.
- Involve the members of the profession in the development and training of future members.

Candidates should refer to [IAP Guidelines](#) for more detailed information regarding the program.

Work Experience Credit

Work experience is evaluated based upon a 40-hour work week. Credit is granted for both part-time and full-time work experience, and overtime may be considered. Work experience credit is granted toward fulfilling the Board's experience requirements as follows:

- 100% credit for work experience under the direct supervision of U.S. licensed architects.
- 50% credit for work experience under the direct supervision of architects licensed in [qualifying foreign countries](#) up to a maximum of seven years of credit.

Credit may also be granted for work experience obtained under the authority of or on the property of the federal government when the experience is under the direct supervision of a U.S.-licensed architect or engineer.

Candidates may receive credit for work experience obtained under the direct supervision of professionals other than licensed architects only after they fulfill the educational aspect. If such experience is obtained prior to fulfilling the educational aspect, the credit is deferred until fulfillment of the educational aspect (described in a previous section). Credit for work experience obtained under other licensed professionals applies as follows:

Important Note: All candidates must earn and verify at least one year of credit under the direct supervision of an architect licensed in a U.S. jurisdiction or two years of experience under the direct supervision of an architect registered in a Canadian province prior to CSE eligibility and licensure. Completion of AXP fulfills this requirement.

Pursuant to the Rules of Professional Conduct (California Code of Regulations, title 16, section 160), California-licensed architects must represent a candidate's training and experience accurately when completing an EVF or providing other information in connection with the candidate's application for licensure.

- 50% credit for work experience under the direct supervision of U.S.-registered civil or structural engineers and U.S.-licensed landscape architects up to a maximum of two years of credit.
- 50% credit for work experience under the direct supervision of California-licensed general building contractors or California certified building officials up to a maximum of one year of credit.

Documenting Work Experience

The following guidelines apply to the Employment Verification Form ([EVF](#)):

- Each EVF must contain: the dates of employment; hours worked per week; name and address of the company; and the supervising professional's name, license number, license issue date/expiration date, original signature, and date.
- EVF may not contain any alterations or corrections.
- All signatures on the EVF must be original.

The Board recommends candidates should stay current on their submissions of EVFs and submit one at least every six months.

When the Board receives an EVF, an evaluation is performed, and a notice is mailed to the candidate advising the current application status and credit granted. Candidates may request an update of their status at any time by calling or emailing the Board.

Examination

Architect Registration Examination (ARE)

The ARE, developed by NCARB, is the national architectural licensing examination that consists of six divisions. The ARE assesses candidate knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the practice of architecture. A candidate must successfully complete each ARE division and may elect to do so in any order for their convenience.

Complete information can be found in the [ARE 5.0 Guidelines](#).

Candidates may apply at any time for ARE eligibility evaluation. To be eligible for the ARE, a candidate must apply with the Board, possess an active NCARB record, and document five years of postsecondary education and training experience in architectural work, or the equivalent as determined by the Board's regulations, or be enrolled in and meet an IPAL program's requirements.

Once the Board determines a candidate is eligible to begin taking the ARE, authorization will be granted to take the various divisions through the NCARB record. Candidates will be sent an email from NCARB and the Board notifying them of their eligibility.

A candidate's testing eligibility remains valid provided they are active in the examination process. To remain active, a candidate must take an examination within five years from the date of the Board's determination that the candidate is eligible to begin taking the ARE or the date the candidate last took a division of the ARE. Testing eligibility may only be maintained in one jurisdiction at a time as NCARB does not allow multiple eligibilities.

Divisions

The ARE is administered and graded by computer. ARE 5.0 consists of six divisions:

- [Practice Management](#)
- [Project Management](#)
- [Programming and Analysis](#)
- [Project Planning and Design](#)
- [Project Development and Documentation](#)
- [Construction and Evaluation](#)

Candidates are encouraged to visit the [NCARB website](#) or read the [ARE Guidelines](#) for the latest detailed information.

Fees

Candidates pay the fee to take the ARE directly to NCARB or its authorized representative. Payment information is described in the ARE Guidelines.

As stated in the ARE Guidelines, the ability of a candidate to request review of an ARE division, challenge multiple-choice questions, or appeal an ARE division result is available to a candidate **only** if permitted by a board of architecture. However, the Board's regulations do not permit such review, challenge, or appeal of an ARE result.

Scheduling Procedures

The ARE is administered year-round, Monday through Saturday, at computer testing centers throughout the U.S. and at select locations across the world. Eligible candidates may take the ARE at a testing center in any participating jurisdiction; scores are reported to the Board regardless of where a candidate takes a division.

Scheduling information is included in the ARE Guidelines. There is no set schedule for the administration of the divisions. After eligibility has been established, candidates may schedule appointments for their desired division(s) by logging into their NCARB Record.

References and Study Materials

NCARB's **ARE 5.0 Handbook** includes a list of specifications, suggested references, and sample questions for each division. NCARB developed practice programs for the ARE, which can be accessed through a candidate's NCARB record. Additionally, NCARB created a video test preparation series and an ARE Community, which allows candidates to ask questions, reach out to each other for study information, and offers a direct link to NCARB staff should there be any questions.

In an effort to assist candidates, NCARB has an [Approved Test Prep Provider](#) program that lists providers that meet NCARB's standards.

Results

ARE results are reported as pass or fail and can be found in a candidate's NCARB record approximately one to two weeks after taking the division. Candidates receive an email notification when the score report is available.

Rolling Clock (Expiration)

After passing an ARE 5.0 division, the score remains valid for five years from the date of that exam; this is known as the ARE Rolling Clock. If the remaining ARE divisions are not completed before the [ARE Rolling Clock](#) period for a division ends, the passing score for that division will expire, and it must be retaken.

NCARB allows for limited extensions to the ARE Rolling Clock for reasons including birth of a child, serious medical condition, or active-duty military service. Requests for an extension must be made prior to a division expiring. More information, including the corresponding [request form](#), can be found on NCARB's website.

Transferring Scores

A candidate who has completed all or some of the ARE in another jurisdiction and wants to complete the examination process and become licensed in California should contact that jurisdiction to have a certified record of

the examination scores sent to the Board. Copies of examination scores will not be accepted directly from the candidate.

The Board will send a certified record of examination scores to another jurisdiction or Canada upon written request from the candidate.

California Supplemental Examination (CSE)

The Board administers a supplemental examination to ensure that candidates have the necessary architectural knowledge and skills to respond to the characteristic conditions specific to California.

Prior to taking the CSE, candidates must complete all other licensure requirements, including education, experience, and examination.

The CSE is based upon a test plan that consists of the critical task and knowledge associated with entry-level practice of architecture. The intent of the CSE is not to duplicate coverage of general areas of practice already addressed in the ARE, but rather focus on California-specific aspects of practice. It is therefore neither comprehensive nor representative of the full-scope of architectural practice. The tasks are organized into four categories:

- General Practice
- Programming/Design
- Development/Documentation
- Bidding/Construction

The CSE is a computer-based multiple-choice examination that lasts approximately 3.5 hours. Candidates are required to demonstrate at least entry-level competence in the areas outlined in the [CSE Test Plan](#). A competent entry-level architect can perform the responsibilities incumbent upon them in providing professional architectural services to the public. In addition, candidates must understand the integration of architectural practice and their responsibilities as they relate to architectural practice in California.

The CSE consists of individually timed sections and may include general multiple-choice items and project scenario-related items pertaining to the content within the Test Plan and the applicable knowledge and ability statements. Candidates should refer to the [CSE Handbook](#) for detailed information regarding scheduling and taking the CSE. Examination results are provided to a candidate at the testing site after completing the examination.

References and Study Materials

The CSE Test Plan and [reference materials](#) are available on the Board's website.

Third-party vendors may offer CSE preparatory material to candidates. Please be aware that the Board does not contribute to or endorse any supplemental examination study guide or training seminar. Providers of such study material are not given any information beyond what is available on the Board's website.

Final Steps in Securing a License

When a candidate passes the CSE, an Application for Licensure is provided at the test site. Candidates submit the completed application to the Board along with the appropriate licensing [fee](#). The license is typically issued within three to four weeks after the Board receives a complete application.

Reciprocity

Reciprocity candidates are individuals who possess an active license or registration in another U.S. jurisdiction or foreign country (with an NCARB certificate) and submit a [California Architect Reciprocity Application](#).

Individuals who apply for a reciprocal license must meet the same requirements as an initial licensure candidate.

Reciprocal candidates who document three or more years of post-licensure experience are not required to document completion of AXP. Submittal of a valid NCARB certificate will satisfy Board requirements for CSE eligibility.

Postlicensure

California architect licenses expire at midnight on the last day of the licensee's birth month in odd-numbered years and must be renewed every two years.

Architects must fulfill the following requirements to renew a license:

- Complete continuing education (CE) coursework on disability access requirements within the previous two years as mandated by BPC section [5600.05](#) (see coursework audits below).
- Complete an [Architect License Renewal Application](#).
- Pay license renewal fee.
- Mail signed original application and fee to the Board with a postmark on or before the license expiration date.

Renewing a license on time is critical. Renewal notices are sent to the licensee's address of record approximately 60 days prior to the expiration date. Architects may not submit an application and payment more than 60 days before their current license period ends.

Allow up to eight weeks for processing. The most frequent cause of delay in renewal processing is an incomplete application. The Architect License Renewal Application is available on the Board's website if one is not received in the mail.

Licensees who have complied with the license renewal requirements (i.e., complete application, signature, correct fee, certification of completed CE, etc.) prior to its expiration may engage in legal practice of their profession until receipt of the renewed license if the delay was not the fault of the licensee ([BPC section 121](#)). This provision does not apply to delinquent or incomplete renewal applications.

Continuing Education (CE)

As a condition of license renewal, architects must:

- Complete five hours of coursework on disability access requirements within the previous two years. The coursework must be presented by trainers or educators with knowledge and experience in the disability access requirements.
- Certify on the renewal application completion of the required coursework and sign the application.
- Maintain records documenting completion of the required coursework for two years from the date of license renewal.
- Provide, upon request, coursework records to the Board for auditing.

Important: Licensees who submit false or misleading information or fail to respond to the Board's request for documentation will be subject to an administrative citation, which may include an administrative fine or disciplinary action (BPC section 5600.05).

Licensees are encouraged to complete these requirements in a timely manner to avoid a delay in the processing of their license renewal. Those who fail to complete the required coursework cannot renew their license nor practice architecture until they have fulfilled these requirements. The renewal requirement to complete the coursework applies to licensees regardless of the length of time the license is held prior to renewal. Individuals applying for their initial license should consider the length of time remaining until they must renew their license.

Continuing Education Coursework Audits

The Board conducts audits of continuing education coursework. Licensees who are selected for an audit will be required to submit coursework documentation confirming that they have fulfilled the requirement. Licensees must keep records of their coursework documentation for at least two years from the date of their license renewal

(BPC section 5600.05). Records must include the following:

1. Course title.
2. Subjects covered.
3. Name of provider.
4. Name of educator or trainer.
5. Date of completion.
6. Number of hours completed.
7. Statement about the trainer's or educator's knowledge and experience background.

Appendices

Military Expedite

The Board will expedite the licensure process for current members or former members of the U.S. armed forces who were honorably discharged. Current and former members of the military may possess transferrable skills that help them meet the minimum experience requirements required of all candidates. The Board may assist these individuals by:

- Expediting the application process once the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD-214) is received by the Board.
- Evaluating college transcripts to verify education credit.

Please submit a [Military Expedite Request Form](#) along with the application.

Are All Candidates Required to Complete an Internship Program?

The AXP/IAP requirement affects candidates who apply for examination eligibility on or after January 1, 2005, and candidates who were previously eligible but have not taken an examination as a Board candidate for five or more years. Candidates who were eligible for the ARE on or before December 31, 2004, and who remain active in the examination process are exempt from the AXP requirement.

Reasonable Testing Accommodations

The Board has a procedure for granting reasonable testing accommodations to candidates with impairments as outlined under the Americans with Disabilities Act and state law. Candidates with impairments who require reasonable testing accommodations should inquire with the Board at the time they initially apply for eligibility evaluation to obtain current information. Reasonable accommodation request forms for the ARE and CSE are available on the Board's [website](#) in the corresponding section.

Name and Address Changes

Once a candidate has filed an application with the Board, all name and address changes must be submitted to the Board in writing. Name change request forms must be accompanied by appropriate legal documentation. Candidates and licensees are responsible for keeping the Board always informed of their current address. The [Name Change Request](#) and [Change of Address](#) forms and instructions are available on the Board's website.

Note: Name and address changes made in your NCARB record are NOT updated with the Board. Candidates must submit these changes to both entities separately.

The Board is composed of **10 members** (five architects and five public members) who are appointed by the governor, the speaker of the Assembly, and the Senate Rules Committee.

Inactive Candidates and Retention of Application Files

The record of a candidate who has not taken an examination for five or more years becomes inactive. The Board purges inactive files.

Transcripts, foreign evaluations, and each [EVF](#) submitted by individuals who have not also submitted an [Application for Eligibility Evaluation](#) are retained for two years, and then purged.

An inactive candidate whose file has been purged and who later wishes to resume the examination process must reapply to the Board by submitting the appropriate application, the current eligibility review fee, and the supporting documentation. The candidate will be evaluated according to the licensure requirements operative at the time of reapplication.

Licensure in Another State

Candidates seeking licensure outside of California may request in writing that the Board send a certification of examination scores to another state board. Because every state has its own requirements, the Board recommends candidates directly contact the specific state board or NCARB for details.

Social Security Number (SSN) / Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)

Collection of a candidate's Social Security Number (SSN) is mandatory and is authorized by BPC section **30** and Public Law 94-455 [[42 U.S.C. § 405\(c\)\(2\)\(C\)](#)]. BPC section [5550.5](#) authorizes the Board to accept an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) in lieu of an SSN. The SSN/ITIN is used exclusively for purposes of establishing the identification of persons affected by state tax laws, compliance with any judgment or order for family support in accordance with Family Code section [17520](#), measuring employment outcomes of students who participate in career technical education programs offered by California community colleges, and verification of licensure or examination status by a licensing or examination entity that utilizes a national examination and where licensure is reciprocal with the requesting state.

While a SSN/ITIN may not be required for a candidate to legally work in California, it is required to obtain and maintain a professional license. BPC section 30 prohibits the Board from processing any application for an original license unless the applicant provides their SSN/ITIN where required on the application.

Notice on Collection of Personal Information

The Board collects the personal information requested on the application form as authorized by BPC sections [30](#), [5526](#), [5550](#), [5550.5](#), [5552](#), [5558](#), and CCR sections [104](#) and [109](#). The Board uses this information principally to identify and evaluate applicants for licensure, issue and renew licenses, and enforce licensing standards set by statute and regulation. Submission of the requested information is mandatory. The Board cannot consider an application for examination, licensure, or renewal unless all requested information is provided.

Possible Disclosure of Personal Information

The Board makes every effort to protect the personal information candidates provide. The information provided may be disclosed in the following circumstances:

- In response to a [Public Records Act](#) request (Government Code section [6250 et seq.](#)), as allowed by the [Information Practices Act](#) (Civil Code section [1798 et seq.](#)).
- To another government agency as required by state or federal law.
- In response to a court or administrative order, a subpoena, or a search warrant.

Public Notices and Information

The Board uses a [subscriber list](#) service to notify individuals who are interested in receiving email alerts about important Board and licensure updates. Public notices regarding various changes to the regulations and upcoming meetings are provided to individuals on the Board's emailing list and are referenced on the Board's website.

Collateral Organizations

The American Institute of Architects (AIA)

1735 New York Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20006
Email: infocentral@aia.org
Phone: (800) 242-3837

The American Institute of Architects, California (AIA, California)

1931 H St.
Sacramento, CA 95811
Email: mail@aiacc.org
Phone: (916) 448-9082
Various [AIA, California Chapters](#)

The American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS)

1735 New York Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20006
Email: mailbox@aia.org
Phone: (202) 808-0075
Various [West Quad AIAS Chapters](#)

Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA)

1735 New York Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20006
Email: info@acsa-arch.org
Phone: (202) 785-2324

National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB)

1735 New York Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20006
Email: info@naab.org
Phone: (202) 783-2007

National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB)

1401 H St., NW, Ste. 500
Washington, DC 20005
Email: customerservice@ncarb.org
Phone: (202) 879-0520

Step-By-Step Licensure Process Checklist

Candidates for licensure must complete the following:

- Establish an NCARB record
 - Select California as the testing jurisdiction
- Complete an [Application for Eligibility Evaluation](#)
 - Application must contain an original signature
 - Include application fee (check or money order)
 - Mail to California Architects Board
- Complete one of the following for ARE eligibility:
 - Earn a degree from a program accredited by NAAB
 - Earn a degree and document work experience under an architect licensed to practice in a U.S. jurisdiction
 - Document five years of work experience under an architect licensed to practice in a U.S. jurisdiction
 - Transmit transcripts directly to the Board from the college/university or be visible through the NCARB record
 - Document work experience on an EVF and with the supervising architect's original signature
- Complete the ARE
 - Pass each division within the five-year Rolling Clock period:
 - Practice Management
 - Project Management
 - Programming and Analysis
 - Project Planning and Design
 - Project Development and Documentation
 - Construction and Evaluation
- Complete AXP or IAP
 - Request transmittal of the completed AXP/IAP record to California after the ARE has been completed
- Complete the CSE
 - Submit a completed CSE application¹ and fee to the Board
 - Examination results are provided at site and either a license application or a retest application is provided to candidate
- Complete an Application for Licensure
 - Application must contain the applicant's original signature
 - Include application fee (check or money order)
 - Mail to California Architects Board

¹ The CSE application is only available to eligible candidates as determined by the Board in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations. **The CSE application will be automatically sent to an eligible candidate** and is unavailable for download.

