

# Construction Codes Advisory

Promoting construction of safe, healthy, habitable buildings

## Building Official Licences

### Question

“How do I obtain a building official licence (BOL)?”

### Answer

By demonstrating to the Chief Codes Administrator (CC Administrator) that you have the prerequisite qualifications and have completed the following:

- A training program acceptable to the CC Administrator; and
- Mandatory Legislative Framework Training.

### Background

In May 1997, the province implemented a licensing program to help municipalities appoint qualified people as building officials. *The Construction Codes Act* (the CC Act) provides the legislative framework that requires local authorities to appoint only licensed building officials to conduct plan reviews, inspections and enforce compliance of building construction.

As codes and standards have developed over the years, the technical knowledge required by building officials has steadily increased.

The vocation has become increasingly more knowledge-based and continues to evolve with the introduction of energy efficiency in building design and construction.

Building officials must be appointed by each local authority that intends to use their services for actions authorized by the *Construction Codes Act* (CC Act).

### Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

The CC Act, section 10, titled Building official licences, provides that:

- “(1) The chief codes administrator may issue a building official licence to a qualified person who:
- (a) demonstrates in the prescribed manner that the person is qualified to perform the duties of a building official; and
  - (b) pays the prescribed fee.
- (2) A licence pursuant to subsection (1):
- (a) maybe issued for a limited period; and
  - (b) may contain any terms, conditions and restrictions on the duties that may be performed by the licensee that the chief codes administrator considers appropriate.”

### Classes of Building Official Licences

Identified in section 19 of *The Building Code Regulations* (the BC Regulations) are three primary classes of BOL which authorize BOL holders to provide plan review, inspection and enforcement services on certain building types:

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- **Class 1** – residential buildings within the scope of Part 9 of the National Building Code of Canada (NBC) that contain one or two dwelling units, including residential buildings in which either or both contain a secondary suite.
- **Class 2** – any buildings within the scope of Part 9 of the NBC or the scope of Part 9 of the NBC and that are constructed in accordance with the requirements of the National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings (NECB).
- **Class 3** – any buildings within the scope of the NBC and the NECB.

Two secondary classes of BOL, identified as Temporary and Restricted, entitle the BOL holder to take any actions stipulated in the BOL by the CC Administrator.

### Applications for Building Official Licences

As per the BC Regulations section 20, the prerequisite qualifications a person needs to be accepted as a candidate for a BOL include two years of full-time work (or equivalent) in a related occupation plus one of the following:

- Holds a diploma of technology in architecture, engineering or a related program;
- Holds a Journeyman Certificate of Qualification in a designated trade, within the meaning of *The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Act* and the regulations made pursuant to that Act, which is related to building construction;
- Is an interior designer or is eligible for registration as an interior designer;
- Is an engineer or eligible for registration as an engineer;
- Is an architect or is eligible for registration as an architect; or
- Has completed a training course regarding building codes and inspections acceptable to the CC Administrator.

## Training

There are two streams available for training as building officials in Saskatchewan.

### Stream One – The Alliance of Canadian Building Officials Association Certification Examinations

With the gradual phase-out of Stream Two (Provincial Challenge Exams), a replacement examination database is available to individuals to obtain a Class 1, Class 2, or Class 3 BOL. The Alliance of Canadian Building Officials Association (ACBOA) certification examinations are sponsored by the Saskatchewan Building Officials Association (SBOA) and offered in collaboration with Southeast College.

ACBOA Certification Examinations syllabus is described as follows with additional detail found at <https://sboa.sk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-02-17-sboa-certification-exam-content-outlines.pdf>. The examinations questions are based on the National Building Code (NBC) 2015.

- SBOA Level 1 – Building Envelope. Exam 1 is 50 multiple choice questions, open book for two hours. A passing grade of 80 per cent is required for the examination.
- SBOA Level 1 – Health and Safety. Exam 2 is 50 multiple choice questions, open book for two hours. A passing grade of 80 per cent is required for the examination.

Achieving a passing grade of 80 per cent for the SBOA Exams 1 and 2 would satisfy one of the pre-qualification requirements for an individual applying for a Class 1 BOL.

- SBOA Level 2 – HVAC and Fire Protection. Exam 3 is 50 multiple choice questions, open book for two hours.
- SBOA Level 2 – Structural. Exam 4 is 50 multiple choice questions, open book for two hours.

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- SBOA Level 2 – Plan Review. Exam 5 is 50 multiple choice questions, open book for two hours.

Achieving a passing grade of 80 per cent for the SBOA Exams 3 to 5 would satisfy one of the requirements for a building official applying to upgrade a BOL from a Class 1 to a Class 2.

- SBOA Level 3 – Large Building Health and Safety. Exam 6 is 40 multiple choice questions, open book for two hours.
- SBOA Level 3 – Large Building Classification & Construction. Exam 7 is 50 multiple choice questions, open book for two hours.
- SBOA Level 3 – Large Building Plan Review. Exam 8 is 50 multiple choice questions, open book for two hours.
- SBOA Level 3 – Life Safety Systems. Exam 9 is 50 multiple choice questions, open book for two hours.
- SBOA Level 3 – Fire Protection. Exam 10 is 50 multiple choice questions, open book for two hours.

Achieving a passing grade of 80 per cent for the SBOA Exams 6 to 10 would satisfy the requirements for a building official applying to upgrade a BOL from a Class 2 to a Class 3.

Information about the SBOA Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 examinations may be found by contacting:

Southeast College  
P.O. Box 1565  
WEYBURN SK S4H 0T1  
Phone: 1-866-999-7372  
[www.southeastcollege.org](http://www.southeastcollege.org)

### Stream Two – Provincial Challenge Examinations

There are three Provincial Challenge Examinations (PCE), which have been an integral component of licensing and have historically been used by individuals to obtain a building official licence and advance from one licence class to a higher licence class.

### Building Official Licence Class 1 Examination\*

The PCE for a Class 1 BOL consists of questions from the National Building Code (NBC) 1995 regarding residential buildings containing one or two dwelling units. The 210-question, open-book examination is five hours. A passing grade of 80 per cent is required for the examination.

In addition to questions about *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act* (The UBAS Act) and regulations, the following is a list of the sections of the NBC 1995 that may be assessed with the BOL Class 1 examination. The examination may also include questions related to general construction practices and construction theories.

- Section 9.2. Definitions
- Section 9.3. Materials, Systems and Equipment
- Section 9.4. Structural Requirements
- Section 9.5. Design of Areas and Spaces
- Section 9.6. Doors
- Section 9.8. Stairs, Ramps, Handrails and Guards
- Subsection 9.9.9. Egress from Dwelling Units
- Section 9.10. Fire Protection (only items which apply to dwellings units)
- Section 9.11. Sound Control
- Section 9.12. Excavation
- Section 9.13. Dampproofing, Waterproofing and Soil Gas Control
- Section 9.14. Drainage
- Section 9.15. Footings and Foundations
- Section 9.16. Floors-on-Ground
- Section 9.17. Columns
- Section 9.18. Crawl Spaces
- Section 9.19. Roof Spaces
- Section 9.20. Above-Grade Masonry
- Section 9.21. Chimneys and Flues
- Section 9.22. Fireplaces
- Section 9.23. Wood-Frame Construction
- Section 9.24. Sheet Steel Stud Wall Framing – (not included in testing)
- Section 9.25. Heat Transfer, Air Leakage and Condensation Control
- Section 9.26. Roofing
- Section 9.27. Cladding

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- Section 9.28. Stucco
- Section 9.29. Interior Wall and Ceiling Finishes
- Section 9.30. Flooring
- Section 9.31. Plumbing Facilities
- Section 9.32. Ventilation
- Section 9.33. Heating and Air-Conditioning
- Section 9.34. Electrical Facilities
- Section 9.35. Garages and Carports

\*The PCE for the BOL Class 1 will be phased out effective January 1, 2024.

### **Building Official Licence Class 2 Examination\*\***

The PCE for the BOL Class 2 examination will consist of questions relating to provisions of the NBC respecting buildings within the scope of Part 9 of the NBC 1995 other than buildings that contain one or two dwelling units. In addition, examination questions relating to provisions of section 3.8. Barrier-Free Design will also be included. The 196-question, open-book examination is five hours. A passing grade of 80 per cent is required for the examination.

In addition to questions about the UBAS Act and regulations, the following is a list of the sections of the NBC that may be assessed with the BOL Class 2 examination. The examination may also include questions related to general construction practices and construction theories.

- Section 1.1. General
- Section 2.1. Application
- Section 2.2. Climatic Data
- Section 2.3. Plans, Specifications and Calculations
- Section 2.4. Materials, Appliances, Systems and Equipment
- Section 2.5. Equivalents
- Section 2.7. Referenced Documents
- Section 3.8. Barrier-Free Design
- Subsection 4.1.1. General
- Section 7.1. General
- Section 8.1. General
- Section 8.2. Protection of the Public and Fire Safety
- Section 9.1. General

- Section 9.2. Definitions
- Section 9.3. Materials, Systems and Equipment
- Section 9.4. Structural Requirements
- Section 9.5. Design of Areas and Spaces
- Subsection 9.7.5. Protection of Windows in Public Areas
- Subsection 9.8.6. Pedestrian Ramps
- Section 9.9. Means of Egress
- Section 9.10. Fire Protection
- Subsection 9.11.2. Required Sound Control Locations (Airborne Sound)
- Section 9.24. Sheet Steel Stud Wall Framing
- Subsection 9.34.2. Lighting Outlets
- Subsection 9.34.3. Emergency Lighting

\*\*The PCE for the BOL Class 2 will be phased out effective January 1, 2025.

### **Building Official Licence Class 3 Examination\*\*\***

The PCE for a BOL Class 3 licence will consist of questions relating to the UBAS Act, regulations pursuant to the UBAS Act, and provisions of the NBC 1995 respecting buildings that are within the scope of the NBC, with a focus on buildings within the scope of Part 3. The 268-question, open-book examination is seven hours long. A passing grade of 80 per cent is required for the examination.

In addition to questions about the UBAS Act and regulations, the following is a list of the sections of the NBC that may be assessed with the BOL Class 3 examination. The examination may also include questions related to general construction practices and/or construction theories.

- Section 3.1. General
- Section 3.2. Building Fire Safety
- Section 3.3. Safety within Floor Areas
- Section 3.4. Exits
- Section 3.5. Vertical Transportation
- Section 3.6. Service Facilities
- Section 4.1. Structural Loads and Procedures
- Section 4.2. Foundations
- Section 4.3. Design Requirements for Structural Materials

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- Section 4.4. Design Requirements for Special Structures
- Section 5.1. General
- Section 5.2. Loads and Procedures
- Section 5.3. Heat Transfer
- Section 5.4. Air Leakage
- Section 5.5. Vapour Diffusion
- Section 5.6. Precipitation
- Section 5.7. Surface Water
- Section 5.8. Moisture in the Ground
- Section 6.1. General
- Section 6.2. Design and Installation
- Section 6.3. Chimneys and Venting Equipment

\*\*\*The PCE for the BOL Class 3 will be phased out effective January 1, 2026.

Class 1 PCE – Phase-out January 1, 2024

Class 2 PCE – Phase-out January 1, 2025

Class 3 PCE – Phase-out January 1, 2026

### The Building Code Training for Canadians Series 1, 2010

For individuals requiring basic training for construction and application of the NBC, a self-study course called the Building Code Training for Canadians (BCTC) Series 1 is available. The BCTC which is based on the National Building Code (NBC) 2010, is sponsored by the Saskatchewan Building Officials Association (SBOA) and offered in collaboration with the Southeast College. The BCTC is formatted with three separate modules that are followed by three corresponding examinations. Each module examination requires a passing grade of 80 per cent. Information about the BCTC may be obtained by contacting:

Southeast College  
P.O. Box 1565  
WEYBURN SK S4H 0T1  
Phone: 1-866-999-7372  
[www.southeastcollege.org](http://www.southeastcollege.org)

### Legislative Framework Training

In 2014, the Building and Technical Standards branch introduced the Legislative Framework Training (LFT) workshop. It became a requirement for new licensees to obtain a BOL and as a condition of licence renewal for all existing licensees. LFT must be completed every five years and is included in continuing education requirements for building officials. Successful completion of the two-day workshop contributes 16 hours to the mandatory training requirements.

The topics identified in the LFT are as follows:

- Acronyms and References
- Five Principles
- NBC 2015, Division C, Part 2, Administrative Provisions
- The Administrative Requirements for Use with the NBC 1985
- *The Construction Codes Act*
- *The Building Code Regulations*
- *The Energy Code Regulations*
- Building Bylaws
- Order Writing and the Appeal Process
- Service of Documents
- Emergencies (the CC Act, Part 7)
- Saskatchewan Amendments to the NBC 2020
- NBC 2015, Division A, Functions and Objectives
- NBC 2015, Division C, Alternative Solutions

The LFT ends with a 30-question, multiple-choice, open-book examination for two hours. A passing grade of 80 per cent is required. More information may be obtained by contacting:

Building and Technical Standards Branch  
1430 – 1855 Victoria Avenue  
REGINA SK S4P 3T2  
Phone: 306-787-4113  
Email: [btstandards@gov.sk.ca](mailto:btstandards@gov.sk.ca)  
Website: [www.saskatchewan.ca/btstandards](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/btstandards)

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### Period, Renewal and Expiry of Licences

Primary class BOLs are valid for five years from the date of approval by the CC Administrator, provided that a BOL fee is paid annually or in full for five years. At the end of the five-year licence cycle, the licence holder may renew the BOL by including proof of continuing education requirements through Building Official Licence Training (BOLT). BOLT requires 100 hours of continuing education over five years comprised of mandatory, discretionary and self-directed training and may include:

- Completion of related training courses.
- Attendance at information sessions.
- Participation in code development activities.
- Participation in other related activities acceptable to the CC Administrator.
- Attendance at Legislative Framework Training workshop.
- Attendance at code adoption workshop.

Failure to meet the requirements for renewal may result in the refusal to issue a BOL of the applied licence class.

A Temporary BOL expires on the date stipulated on the BOL and may be renewed only once.

A Restricted BOL may be issued for up to five years and is non-renewable. Also, Restricted BOLs may be issued for a specific project or municipality.

Holders of either Temporary or Restricted BOLs must be aware of the conditions and restrictions of their licences before conducting work related to those licence classes.

### Suspension, Revocation or Changing a Class of Licence

As stated in section 28 of the BC Regulations, the CC Administrator has the authority to suspend, revoke or downgrade a BOL where the licence holder is found to have committed any of the following:

“28(1)(a) made any false or misleading statement in an application or in presenting evidence of qualifications;

(b) cheated on an examination or removed from the examination room any question or copy of a question given in an examination;

(c) undertook to complete or completed actions outside of the authorized scope of the licence holder’s licence;

(d) has been convicted of an offence that the chief codes administrator reasonably believes prevents the building official from performing the duties of a building official;

(e) performed any other action in connection with activities performed under the licence that, in the opinion of the chief codes administrator, is negligent or malicious;

(f) has failed to pay an administrative penalty issued pursuant to section 11 of the Act within the period set by the chief codes administrator; has failed to comply with a discipline order issued pursuant to section 14 of the Act;

(g) has failed to pay a licence fee within the period set by the chief codes administrator;

(h) has failed to pay a licence fee within the period set by the chief codes administrator;

(i) contravened any condition attached to the licence holder’s licence;

(j) conducted plan reviews or an inspection of a building in which the licence holder has a financial interest without receiving prior written approval from the applicable local authority;

(k) lacks the capacity to provide building official services; or

(l) has engaged in any other activities or has done or failed to do any other thing that, in the opinion of the chief codes administrator, makes it in the public interest to suspend or revoke a licence or change the class of licence.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the chief codes administrator may suspend or revoke a licence, or change the class of a licence held by a building official to a lower class of licence previously held in good standing by the licence holder in any other



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circumstances if, in the opinion of the chief codes administrator, it is in the public interest to do so.”

With respect to the suspension, revocation or downgrade of a BOL, section 28 also provides an administrative process for the CC Administrator to follow which includes a mechanism for appeal.

A BOL can also be suspended, revoked, or downgraded by the CC Administrator with application of the CC Act. Subsection 14(1), titled Discipline orders provides that:

“14(1) The chief codes administrator may issue a discipline order pursuant to this section against any person who:

- (a) is in contravention of this Act and its regulations;
- (b) fails to comply with an order pursuant to section 25 or 31; or
- (c) fails to comply with a term or condition of a permit or licence.”

An example of a violation of the CC Act or BC Regulations, where a BOL suspension may be applied, would be where a licensed building official completes a plan review or an inspection of a construction project which is beyond the scope of their BOL class as prescribed by section 19 of the BC Regulations.

Section 14 also provides an administration process for the CC Administrator to follow, along with a mechanism for appeal.

### Licence Fees

Annual fees for any class or type of BOL are \$50 per year. Except for Temporary licences, licensees may opt to prepay five years of annual fees when their licence is issued or renewed at a reduced cost of \$200. These fees are in addition to any examination fees to show qualification for a licence class.

All BOLs are withheld for issuance until receipt of the required fees. Therefore, failure to make payment may impact the authority of a person to perform plan review and inspection services in the capacity of a building official.

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1430 - 1855 Victoria Avenue  
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 3T2  
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Chief Codes Administrator

This guide is published by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Government Relations for purposes of providing information to users on the topic contained herein. In case of conflict between *The Construction Codes Act* (the CC Act), *The Building Code Regulations* (the BC Regulations) and the National building Code 2020 (NBC 2020) and this Advisory, provisions of the CC Act, the BC Regulations and the NBC 2020 apply.