

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Registered Architect FAQ's:

1. Q: How do I login to the Licensing Portal?

A: Please go to <https://www.onlineboa.org/login/>

***The first time you go to the licensing portal, make sure you register first (no prior passwords have been affiliated with your license file in this new system).***

***You will need your name, date of birth, and last four of your social security number (as it appears in your official BOA record) to create your account.***

*Once registered, then you can simply login anytime to renew or update your record.*

2. Q: What do I do if I'm experiencing login issues with the Licensing Portal?

A: *If you have followed the login steps in item 1 above and are still experiencing login issues, please send an email to [licensing@boa.alabama.gov](mailto:licensing@boa.alabama.gov) or call the Licensing Agent directly at (334) 242-4522. Please include your license number and specific error information so we can better assist in the resolution of the issue.*

3. Q: How do I change my contact information?

A: Please go to <https://www.onlineboa.org/login/> where you can enter your new information. It is recommended this be done within thirty (30) days of the change.

4. Q: How do I report a disciplinary action in another state, civil suit, or criminal conviction?

A: *Registered Architects can email their report of disciplinary action in another state, civil suit, or criminal conviction to [admin.boa@boa.alabama.gov](mailto:admin.boa@boa.alabama.gov) It is recommended this be reported immediately.*

5. Q: How many hours of continuing education does the state of Alabama require and how many of these hours should be health, safety, and welfare?

A: Alabama requires a minimum of 12 hours of continuing education per calendar year, all of which must be in health, safety, and welfare.

***Make sure you have obtained your twelve hours of HSW in the calendar year before you login to renew your registration*** (unless CE exempt\*). The renewal application requires an attestation of completion of the required CE hours at the time of submitting your renewal. This is not a new requirement.

*The system will randomly select 10% of renewals for CE Audit. The selection process is blind to staff and anyone renewing their license is eligible to be audited (even if randomly selected for audit in the prior year). Notification of audit will be sent to the licensee with specific instructions for submitting proof of CE for their renewal to be processed.*

*\*CE Exempt – those renewing for the first time who have passed the ARE to obtain initial Alabama licensure.*

## COA FAQ's:

1. Q: I just got my Architect License, now how do I get my COA within the required 30 days?

A: First, you will need to contact the Secretary of State's (SOS) Office to become registered to do business in Alabama at [www.sos.alabama.gov](http://www.sos.alabama.gov) or (334) 242-5324. You will need to provide proof of your Alabama Architect Registration with a copy of your current certificate. Upon approval from the SOS office, you may then apply for a COA with the Board office.

Second, make application for COA at <https://www.onlineboa.org/login/>

2. Q: What is the 2/3 ownership requirement?

A: Two-thirds (2/3) or more of the officers, partners, directors, members, or others (depending on the legal structure of the entity) are registered/licensed architects and/or licensed professional engineers in any United States jurisdiction and are also voting stockholders of the entity.

At least one (1) of the stockholding officers, partners, directors, or members must be an architect registered in the State of Alabama, who has authority to contractually bind the entity and whose name and registration seal shall appear on all documents prepared under his or her responsible control.

3. Q: How do I update my firm officers, owners, etc.?

A: Please go to <https://www.onlineboa.org/login/> where you can enter or upload your new information using the Supervising Professional tab. It is recommended this be done within thirty (30) days of the change.

4. Q: How does a COA change their Responsible Architect?

A: Please go to <https://www.onlineboa.org/login/> where you can enter or upload your new information using the Supervising Professional tab. It is recommended this be done within thirty (30) days of the change.

5. Q: COA Renewal Questions?

A: The COA license cycle runs from May 1st through April 30, which is different from the license cycle for individual which runs from January 1 through December 31. Therefore, all COA's expire annually on April 30<sup>th</sup> regardless of issue date. The COA Renewal Application **opens on April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.**

You will need the firm name and COA number (as it appears in your official BOA record). If you do not know your COA number, you can search by firm name at <https://www.onlineboa.org/public/licensesearch>. On the first renewal application in the new system you will also need to enter your FEIN #.

6. How do I login to the licensing portal to renew my COA?

A: Please go to <https://www.onlineboa.org/login/> **The first time you go to the licensing portal, make sure you register first** (no prior passwords have been affiliated with your COA file in this new system). Your COA email and password must be unique and not the same as your individual Architect License email and password. Once registered, then you can simply login anytime to renew or update your record

### Applicant FAQ's:

1. Q: How do I apply for Reciprocity?

A: First, go to <https://www.ncarb.org/> and request your NCARB Record be sent to the Alabama Board of Architects. Then go to the BOA Licensing Portal at <https://www.onlineboa.org/login/> to submit your reciprocal application.

2. Q: How long does it take for my application to be reviewed?

A: *Please allow ten business days from receipt of your application for processing. Applications are reviewed in order of receipt. Following the initial application review, you will be contacted by email ([licensing@boa.alabama.gov](mailto:licensing@boa.alabama.gov)) regarding your application status.*

3. Q: What are the qualifications to obtain an initial Registration in Alabama?

A: Completion of the three E's – Education, Examination, Experience. Detailed information on each can be located at <https://www.ncarb.org/>

- *Education – Graduation from a school or college of architecture accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB). In Alabama there are currently 2 NAAB Accredited Architecture Schools: Auburn University and Tuskegee University.*
- *Examination – Pass the Architects Registration Exam (ARE). This is a computerized exam developed by the National Council of Architecture Registration Boards (NCARB). There are six divisions to the examination: Project Planning & Design; Programming & Analysis; Project Development & Documentation; Project Management; Practice Management; and Construction & Evaluation.*
- *Experience – Period of practical experience in architectural work under the responsible control of a registered architect. Specifically, the Architectural Experience Program (AXP) established by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB).*

### Consumer & Compliance FAQ's:

1. Q: When is a registered architect required?

A: 1. *All buildings over 2,500 square feet or larger that are erected, enlarged, or altered require the services of a registered architect, unless the building is a single-family residence, farm building, or utility building.*

2. *All buildings erected, enlarged, or altered that are intended for the assembly occupancy of people regardless of size require the services of a registered architect.*

3. *All buildings erected, enlarged, or altered that are intended for use as an education facility regardless of size require the services of a registered architect.*

2. Q: Does Alabama offer a temporary architect registration?

A: *No. Alabama does not offer a temporary architect registration.*

3. Q: Can plans be submitted for a proposal for architectural services without being registered?

A: *No.*

4. Q: Is an architect needed for a renovation project?

A: *Yes, if the renovation results in a change to a more restrictive occupancy type.*

5. Q: Is an architect required on a roofing replacement project?

- A. *Maybe. If the project calls for an exact replacement for maintenance of the building, an architect is not required. If the roof pitch is altered or if new roofing materials will be used, either an architect or engineer should be employed to evaluate whether the building's structure will support the new roof.*
6. Q: If a metal building plan has the seal of a professional engineer on them, is there any need for an architect's seal?  
A: *Once occupancy type is established, an architect is required for design of the interior spaces, unless otherwise exempted.*
7. Q: Does an Architect have to sign, date, and seal every architectural sheet in a set of drawings?  
A: *Every architectural sheet must be sealed. There is no requirement concerning a date or signature.*
8. Q: Can an architect place his or her seal on engineering plans?  
A: *Generally speaking, no. An architect can seal engineering drawings if:*  
(a) *The architect designs a minor engineering item, but not a complete engineering system;*  
(b) *The architect's design includes an addition to the main engineering system and does not affect the primary engineering system; or*  
(c) *The engineering item is a small, incidental part of the project.*
9. Q: Can an architect bid for a project?  
A: *Architects are encouraged not to provide a price for services until the client has selected a firm or architect based on professional qualifications.*
10. Q: Can an architect have more than one office?  
A: *Only if there is an architect resident and regularly employed in each office. An architect may not supervise more than one location.*
11. Q: What building code does the State of Alabama use?  
A: *Contact the local building department in the municipality where the project is located concerning the edition which has been adopted in that jurisdiction. If there is no local building department, the State Fire Marshal becomes the Authority having jurisdiction.*
12. Q: What are the requirements for the Seal?  
A: *The seal may be a rubber stamp, an impression seal, or a computer-generated seal, if allowed by the Authority Having Jurisdiction. The seal shall be circular, two inches in diameter, and shall contain an outer circle which reads "STATE OF ALABAMA" at the top and "REGISTERED ARCHITECT" at the bottom.*

*The architect's name and registration number must be placed inside the inner circle. The seal shall be used to identify all drawings, duplication of drawings, plans, specifications, plats and reports issued from his or her office for use in this state. By affixing the seal, the architect signifies that the document was prepared either by the registrant personally or under his or her responsible control.*

*The architect's seal must be affixed on all final drawings, plans, specifications, plats and reports*

whenever presented to a client or any public or governmental agency for the purpose of obtaining a permit for construction. Work products presented which are not final shall be so identified. Working drawings or unfinished, in-progress drawings must contain the following statement: "PRELIMINARY—NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION."

The architect's seal shall substantially resemble the sample seal shown below:



### **Troubleshooting - What to do if...**

#### **I'm having trouble logging into the new Licensing Portal.**

Answer: Make sure to select, "Click here to Register" the first time you go to the licensing portal (rather, than selecting login first). You will receive a temporary password by text message and email. Then you will be able to login to the Licensing Portal and set your own password.

If following this step does not correct the issue, please send an email to [licensing@boa.alabama.gov](mailto:licensing@boa.alabama.gov) and include the specific technical issue you are experiencing so we can better assist in the resolution of the issue.

#### **I'm in the Licensing Portal, but I don't see where I renew.**

Answer: You will need to scroll down to the "License" Section. In this section you will see a "Renew" option (do not select, "Start Application" at the top – this is only for new applications and not renewals).

#### **I'm having trouble getting to the site or it's not showing current information on the site.**

Answer: We recommend google chrome as your web browser or clearing your browsing history. Also, please double check the website address and make sure you are going to <https://boa.alabama.gov/>

#### **I don't want to renew my license and want to voluntarily surrender my license.**

Answer: Please send an email to [licensing@boa.alabama.gov](mailto:licensing@boa.alabama.gov) with your license number requesting your license be placed on Voluntarily Lapsed status.

#### **I am no longer practicing and wish to change my license status to Emeritus Architect.**

Answer: If you have been licensed in Alabama for at least ten consecutive years and are at least 65 years of age, you qualify to place your license on Emeritus status. To do so, please complete the Emeritus Architect Application located at <https://boa.alabama.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Application-for-Emeritus-Status-e-signature-Fillable.pdf>

**More questions?** Please email them to [licensing@boa.alabama.gov](mailto:licensing@boa.alabama.gov)

Thank you for your timely attention to your license renewal and for your patience with the launch of the new licensing portal.