

## MICHIGAN ARCHITECT LICENSING GUIDE FOR SKILLED IMMIGRANTS

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### 1. HOW THE PROFESSION IS ORGANIZED IN MICHIGAN

#### OVERVIEW

This guide looks at things that you as a foreign-educated Architect must do to become eligible for architect licensing in Michigan. At the same time, it includes some background and tips on the larger architect profession to give you an idea of the variety of opportunities available as you work to rebuild your career.

#### REGULATION ARCHITECTS

Architects in Michigan are regulated by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). You must be licensed to practice as an Architect in Michigan.

The guide assumes that you are an international architect who is beginning to build your career in the U.S. and that your Michigan license will be your first U.S. architect's license. The guide will include steps that come before the final state licensing process which includes education and exams.

You will become an Architect by examination. The Architect Registration Examination (ARE) is administered through testing centers by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) at [www.ncarb.org](http://www.ncarb.org).

## 2. ELIGIBILITY FOR ARCHITECT LICENSE

### OVERVIEW

Internationally educated architects need to meet several requirements to receive a license in Michigan.

- Be of good moral character.
- Comply with the education requirements which requires an individual to either have completed a National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accredited degree, or meet the revised July 2016 NCARB Certification Guidelines.
- Pass all portions of the ARE.
- Comply with the experience requirements which requires an individual to have completed any internship program developed by NCARB.
- Submit your licensure application, required supporting documents, and pay the application fee.

Your application sent to the Bureau of Professional Licensing should include:

- Online Application for Architect License from LARA that can be found at [www.michigan.gov/occupationallicense](http://www.michigan.gov/occupationallicense).
- Appropriate Fee
- College transcripts for a NAAB accredited degree, or NCARB council record.

The Application for an Architect License and fee are valid for 1 year. If you have not met all requirements within 1 year, you will need to submit a new application and pay the appropriate fee again.

### 3. TESTS

To obtain an architect license in Michigan, you must take and pass all portions of the ARE. To sit for the ARE, you must apply to NCARB at [www.ncarb.org](http://www.ncarb.org).

#### CONTENT AREAS OF THE ARCHITECT REGISTRATION EXAMINATION (ARE)

The ARE is split into six divisions (Practice Management, Project Management, Programming & Analysis, Project Planning & Design, Project Development & Documentation, and Construction & Evaluation). The content of each portion is specific to that topic it is offered in.

#### FAILING THE ARCHITECT REGISTRATION EXAMINATION

If you fail any division of the ARE, you may retake that division again. You can retake a failed division as soon as 60 days after the previous attempt and up to three times within a 12-month period.

#### PRACTICING FOR THE ARCHITECT REGISTRATION EXAMINATION

There are many different resources that can help you prepare for the content and the testing environment. There are a variety of test preparation resources available for low cost.

NCARB offers examination preparation materials on their website at [www.ncarb.org](http://www.ncarb.org).

### 4. OTHER CAREERS AND CREDENTIALS

#### LOWER-LEVEL OPPORTUNITIES

Preparing for licensing takes a significant amount of time, money, and effort. Some professionals choose to seek lower-level positions in architecture to help them meet longer-term licensing goals. If you take a job with fewer responsibilities but with access to a supervising architect, you may find some distinct advantages. These include the ability to build job security, polish technology skills and adapt to the US workplace culture in a

lower-pressure environment, and to have more energy left over to focus on preparing for licensing exams.

Preparing for the ARE can take time. Working in an architecture field in a different way and with fewer responsibilities may offer you some advantages, such as:

- more energy to focus on studying
- a chance to adapt to the U.S. architecture workplace culture in a lower-pressure environment

You should be honest with your employer about your long-term plans. You may find some employers have benefits such as tuition reimbursement or schedule flexibility that will support your goals.

## 5. BEYOND LICENSING

### MAINTAINING LICENSURE

An Architects license is renewed every 2 years and expires on October 31<sup>st</sup>. The cost to renew each license is \$70 and must be renewed online at BPL's website using the online payment system. LARA will send a notification reminding you to renew your license however, this is a courtesy reminder and it is the licensee's responsibility to renew the license in a timely manner. Be sure to keep your contact information up to date with the Licensing Division to ensure notices are received. If the license expires for more than 60 days, you will be required to apply for relicensure to reactivate the license.

As a condition of license renewal, an individual licensed as an Architect in Michigan shall complete an average of 12 hours of continuing professional education in HSW subjects annually. HSW subjects means technical and professional subjects, relevant to the practice of architecture, which contain elements that will enhance the public's health, safety, and welfare.

### LICENSING MOBILITY (RECIPROCITY)

There is not a direct reciprocal agreement between Michigan and other states for licensing at this time. This means that if you earn your Architect license in Michigan and wish to perform architecture services to people or organizations in other states, you will

need to research the process for that state and learn how to practice temporarily or permanently there.

## 6. IMPORTANT LINKS

### LICENSING AND REGULATION:

The Bureau of Professional Licensing is the state regulatory agency for the Architect profession in Michigan. The Bureau's website is [www.michigan.gov/bpl](http://www.michigan.gov/bpl). The website specifically for the architect profession is [www.michigan.gov/architects](http://www.michigan.gov/architects) which includes links to the architect profession's laws and administrative rules, applications, frequently asked questions, etc.

- The main page for the licensing of any occupational profession is [www.michigan.gov/occupationallicense](http://www.michigan.gov/occupationallicense).
- Contact information:

Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs  
Bureau of Professional Licensing  
PO Box 30670, Lansing MI 48909  
Telephone Number: 517-241-9288  
Fax: 517-373-3179  
Email: [bplhelp@michigan.gov](mailto:bplhelp@michigan.gov)

### TESTING:

- National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) [www.ncarb.org](http://www.ncarb.org)