

MICHIGAN PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING (PE) 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 Engineer must do to become eligible for engineer licensing in Michigan. At the same time, it includes some background and tips on the larger engineer profession to give you an idea of the variety of opportunities available as you work to rebuild your career.

REGULATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING PROFESSION

Professional Engineers in Michigan are regulated by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). You must be licensed to practice as a professional engineer in Michigan.

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

You will become a Professional Engineer by examination. The Fundamentals of Engineering examination (FE) and the Principles and Practice of Engineering examination (PE) is administered through testing centers by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) at www.ncees.org.

2. ELIGIBILITY FOR PE LICENSE

OVERVIEW

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

- I. Be of good moral character.
- II. Comply with the education requirements which requires an individual to have completed ABET/EAC or CEAB accredited degree, or have your foreign degree evaluated by NCEES.
- III. Pass the FE and PE examinations.
- IV. Comply with the experience requirements which requires an individual to have obtained 8 years of professional experience, with no more than 5 of those years being from education.
- V. 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 Professional Engineer License from LARA that can be found at www.michigan.gov/occupationallicense.
- Appropriate Fee
- College transcripts for an ABET/EAC or CEAB accredited degree, or a course by course evaluation of your foreign credentials by NCEES.

The Application for a Professional Engineer 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 a professional engineer license in Michigan, you must take and pass the FE and PE examinations. To sit for the FE and PE examinations, you must apply to NCEES at www.ncees.org.

CONTENT AREAS OF THE FE AND PE EXAMINATION

The FE exam is offered in seven disciplines (Chemical, Civil, Electrical and Computer, Environmental, Industrial and Systems, Mechanical, Other Disciplines). The content of the exam is specific to that discipline it is offered in.

The PE exam is offered in several different disciplines, which can be found at www.ncees.org. The content of the exam is specific to that discipline it is offered in.

FAILING THE FE OR PE EXAM

If you fail either of the examinations, you may retake that exam again in a future testing window. There are no limits on the number of times you may sit for either exam.

PRACTICING FOR THE FE AND PE EXAMS

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.

NCEES offers examination preparation materials on their website at www.ncees.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 engineering to help them meet longer-term licensing goals. If you take a job with fewer responsibilities but with access to a supervising professional engineer, 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 FE and PE exams can take time. Working in an engineering 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. engineering 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

A Professional Engineer license is renewed every 2 years and expires on October 31st. The cost to renew each license is \$80 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 a Professional Engineer in Michigan shall complete at least 15 hours of continuing professional education annually for a total of 30 hours during a 2 year license cycle.

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 Professional Engineer license in Michigan and wish to perform professional engineering 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 Professional Engineers profession in Michigan. The Bureau's website is www.michigan.gov/bpl. The website specifically for the professional engineers is www.michigan.gov/engineers 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.
- The page that focuses specifically on Professional Engineers is: www.michigan.gov/engineers. It includes information regarding the boards, applications and licensing information.
- 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

TESTING:

- National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES)
www.ncees.org