

**Arkansas State Board of Licensure  
for Professional Engineers and Professional Surveyors  
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (F.A.Q.'S)**

Hours: Mon. – Fri. 8:00am – 4:30pm CST

Website: [www.pels.arkansas.gov](http://www.pels.arkansas.gov)

Email: [pelsboard@arkansas.gov](mailto:pelsboard@arkansas.gov)

PELS: <https://pelslicensing.arkansas.gov>

Phone: 501-682-2824 Fax: 501-682-2827

Mailing address: P.O. Box 3750; Little Rock, AR 72203-3750 Physical address: 623 Woodlane Ave; Little Rock, AR 72201-1009

**GENERAL INFORMATION:**

**Q. Where are the Board's Rules?**

- [http://www.pels.arkansas.gov/Websites/pels/images/Electronic%20Rulebook%20\(eff.%20October%202013\).pdf](http://www.pels.arkansas.gov/Websites/pels/images/Electronic%20Rulebook%20(eff.%20October%202013).pdf)

**Q. How do I view information for a licensee such as; contact, PDH carryover, License status and if there has been a Disciplinary action?**

- Through our Online Roster. On our home page, under "Licensing", click "Licensee Lookup". Choose Individuals or Firms, click "Search". Click on the name to view the results.

**Q. Where's your Newsletter and what's in it?**

- The PELS News newsletters are posted at <http://www.pels.arkansas.gov/publications>
- A few of the articles are the President's message, current topics, disciplinary case summaries, upcoming events.

**Q. How do I change email address, mailing address or other contact information for my firm or individual license?**

- Online – Through PELS <https://pelslicensing.arkansas.gov/>. Enter your Username and Password and choose the appropriate option below then click "View/Update":
  - License & Application information – Individuals
  - Certificate of Authorization (COA) - Firms
- Email ("Contact Us" at bottom right corner of our homepage), or fax (501-682-2827).

**Q. What is PELS?**

- PELS (Professional Examination and Licensing System) is a "real-time" online application and licensing system designed for applicants or licensees, individuals or firms, as a means by which they may be involved and have access to their licensing file throughout their career.

**Q. What services are available through PELS?**

- Change contact information, print a receipt or licensing sheet (with expiration date).
- Application status tracking. To include which forms or verifications we've received (e.g. NCEES Council Record, references, education, exams) and whether it's complete or not.
- License status, such as expiration or issue date. You can also print a license sheet with your expiration date.

**Q. How do I access PELS?**

- On our home page under Licensing or Applicants:
  - Licensees – click "Licensee Login (PELS)"
  - Applicants (New/Current) – click "Applicant Login (PELS)"
- Enter your Username and Password and choose the appropriate menu option.
  - License & Application information – Individuals
  - Certificate of Authorization (COA) - Firms
- First time users will need to Register for a Username and Password by clicking the "Click here to Register" box.

**Q. I forgot my PELS Username or password, now what?**

- Click on either the "Forgot your password?" or "Need to change your Password..." links on the login page.

**VERIFICATION OF AN ARKANSAS LICENSE/EXAM (you're applying for a license in another state):**

**Q. What is the process? One of two ways, either:**

1. Electronically – Log into your MyNCEES account at <http://account.ncees.org>; or
2. Paper – Complete your section(s) and forward to the Board's office.

**Q. I've completed my section(s), how do I get the Paper form to the Arkansas Board?**

- a. Email – the form to [pelsboard@arkansas.gov](mailto:pelsboard@arkansas.gov). Forms are processed within 24-48 hours.
- b. USPS – send to our PO Box address. From the date you mail the form, allow 2-3 weeks for the other state to receive it.
- c. Fax – (501)682-2827

**Q. What does the Board do with the form?**

- a. We complete our section (verify all license(s), and all exams taken within our jurisdiction).
- b. We then forward the completed form to the state where you are seeking licensure.

**Q. Do you charge a fee for license/exam verification(s)?**

- No.

## **APPLICATION INFORMATION FIRM – CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORIZATION (COA) (Article 21)**

### **Q. Does a firm need a COA for just its home office or for all regional offices?**

- One per firm is enough and as the firm chooses, it can be the home office, regional or other office that obtains the COA.

### **Q. The Secretary of State says I need a “letter of good standing”. How do I obtain one?**

- When a Certificate of Authorization license is issued, a licensing letter is generated and sent to the firm. You then present the firm’s license letter to the Secretary of State as your letter of good standing.

### **Q. I’m a “one-person” office, do I need a COA?**

- Maybe – The **ONLY** exception to this requirement is where the firm is a sole proprietorship practicing in the name of the licensee. For example, Joe Schmo PE., PS would be exempt, Joe Schmo, PE., PS., LLC would not. Neither would LLP, LLC, Inc., PA, LPA or any other kind of legal entity.

### **Q. Do we need to submit an application even if we do not have an office in Arkansas?**

- Yes – a COA is required for all firms that wish to practice or offer to practice engineering and/or surveying in Arkansas regardless whether or not they have an office in the state.

### **Q. What is the application process?**

- Firms offering or providing engineering services: Need an employee who is an Arkansas PE, then submit an application.
- Firms offering or providing surveying services: Need an employee who is an Arkansas PS, then submit an application.
- Firms offering or providing both engineering AND surveying services: Need both an Arkansas PE and an Arkansas PS, then submit an application.

### **Q. How do I apply for a license?**

- Online – through PELS <https://pelslicensing.arkansas.gov/>. On our home page under “Applicant”, click “Applicant Login (PELS)”:
  - Login with your Username and Password. Select “Certificate of Authorization (COA) Information – Firm”;
  - First time users will need to Register for a Username and Password by clicking the “Click here to Register” box.
- Paper – From our homepage under “Applicants”, click “Certificate of Authorization”.

### **Q. What is the application fee?**

- \$150.00

### **Q. How long does the process take?**

- Once the application is complete, 2-3 business days.

### **Q. How do I obtain a copy of my receipt?**

- Login to PELS and go to Receipts. Click “Print Receipt” and choose to either save the PDF document or print it.

### **Q. How do I change the name or licensee of record on my COA?**

- An application to amend your COA must be filed within 30 days of the change or the firm may be in violation of the Rules.

### **Q. Our engineer/surveyor designated as being in Responsible Charge for engineering/surveying services is no longer employed by our firm, what do we need to do?**

- An application to amend your COA adding the duly licensed Arkansas professional must be filed within 30 days of the change or the firm may be in violation of the Rules.

## **APPLICATION INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUAL - PE, PS, EI, OR SI:**

### **Q. How do I apply for a license?**

- Online – through PELS <https://pelslicensing.arkansas.gov/>. On our home page under “Applicant”, click “Applicant Login (PELS)”:
  - Login with your Username and Password. Select “License & Application Information – Individual”;
  - First time users will need to Register for a Username and Password by clicking the “Click here to Register” box.
- Paper – From our homepage under “Applicants”, select the link for the type of license you need.

### **Q. What is the process and how long does it take?**

- Review the qualifications – for the license you wish to apply for (see Article 8 of the Boards’ Rules)
- Apply – If you feel you’re qualified. NOTE: Board Members are the only ones who can determine if you’re qualified or not.
- Approval – Once the application is complete, it can take anywhere from a week to 2 months. Determining factors are:
  - Your qualifications (does it have to go to the Board or not for approval);
  - Application type; and
  - Additionally, if Board action is required it will depend on how soon the Board will meet again after the completion date. The Board meets six times a year, and the meetings are scheduled every two months starting in January.

### **Q. Which type of application should I choose?**

- Engineer Intern (EI): You’ve passed the FE and graduated from an EAC of ABET approved, or equivalent, engineering program.
- Professional Engineer (PE) – Original: This will be your first PE license and you need to take the PE exam.
- Professional Engineer (PE) – Comity: You’re already a PE in another state.
- Surveyor Intern (SI): You’ve passed the FS and see Article 8 for further details.
- Professional Surveyor (PS) – Original: This will be your first PS license and you need to take the PS and AR State Specific exams.
- Professional Surveyor (PS) – Comity: You’re already a PS in another state (you’ll take the AR State Specific exam).

**Q. What is the application fee?**

- Intern – Engineer or Surveyor \$ 50.00
- Professional – Engineer OR Surveyor
  - Original \$ 75.00
  - Comity \$200.00

**Q. How do I obtain a copy of my application receipt?**

- Login to PELS and go to Receipts. Click “Print Receipt” and choose to either save the PDF document or print it.

**Q. How can I find out my application status?**

- Login to PELS to see which forms/verifications (e.i. NCEES Council Record, references, education, exams) we’ve received and whether it’s complete or not.

**Q. I have an NCEES Council Record (Comity Applicants). What else do I need?**

- Ask NCEES to transmit your Record to Arkansas. THEN
- Apply online through PELS <https://pelslicensing.arkansas.gov/>. The instructions (link follows) for an online application contain information regarding which documents the Arkansas Board will accept from your Council Record.

Online Instructions: <http://www.pels.arkansas.gov/Websites/pels/images/OnlineappinstructionsPEPS-CorO.pdf>

**Q. How do I Reinstate my license?**

- From Inactive to Active – submit proof of 30 PDH and a \$100 Reinstatement fee; these requests are processed administratively.
- From Non-Renewed to Active –
  - If less than 2 years, submit current renewal form and fees.
  - If more than 2 years, you’ll need to reapply, call the Board for details regarding the process.

**Q. Where do I find out more about applying?**

- Article 8 of the Board’s Rules

**QUALIFICATIONS EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (Article 8, 9 & 10)**

**Q. When can I start counting professional experience?**

- Engineers – After completing the requirements for the EAC of ABET degree; and shall be experience that requires the exercise of original thought and independent responsibility.
- Surveyors – Have specific requirements to follow, See Article 8 for more information.

**Q. I have a non EAC of ABET undergraduate engineering degree (i.e. a foreign degree or engineering technology degree with or without a graduate degree), do I need an NCEES credentials evaluation (Equivalency Article 8)?**

- It depends on your qualifications because there may be 2 ways that someone’s education could be found equivalent to an EAC of ABET degree:
  - Having an unaccredited engineering or engineering technology program and a graduate engineering degree from an institution that offers an EAC of ABET accredited undergraduate degree in the same discipline as the graduate degree; OR
  - Having your non-accredited degree program(s) transcript(s) evaluated by NCEES and found acceptable; or have made up any deficiencies identified by the evaluation with courses offered by an EAC of ABET accredited degree program.

**QUALIFICATIONS EXPERIENCE (Article 10)**

**Q. Through what date may I use for completing the experience (Article 9.A)?**

- Experience requirements must be satisfied by the date of the application.

**Q. Engineer – I have several years' experience of part-time research assistant under supervision of licensed PE, does this experience count for the PE exam requirement?**

- Experience is something over which the Board has considerable discretion. In general, the Board is reluctant to grant credit for part time experience and/or experience obtained while in a graduate program.

**Q. Engineer - My experience is out of the country, working full-time, can these be counted for the PE exam requirement?**

- It depends. There is no requirement that work experience be obtained in the U.S. The Board Members will review the work experience record for acceptability in accordance with Article 10.
- There is a requirement in Article 8.C.1.a., that an original applicant cannot qualify prior to 4 years after completing the requirements for the EAC of ABET degree *or its equivalent*. If the EAC of ABET requirement is met by the equivalency provision referenced above, then the Board has consistently required that experience be creditable only after the graduate degree.

**Q. Surveyor – Experience count?**

- It depends. The Rules for very specific. Please see our Hot Topics article titled “[SURVEYOR APPLICANTS – Requirements for licensure changed January 1, 2017](#)” for further details.

## **QUALIFICATIONS EXAMINATIONS**

### **Q. Do I qualify to take an exam?**

- FE & FS – yes, Board authorization is not required to take these exams. Visit [www.ncees.org](http://www.ncees.org) to register for an exam.
- PE & PS – Board members will review your application and if they deem you're qualified for licensure, you'll be admitted to the appropriate exam(s).

### **Q. How do I find out more about exam specifications?**

- Visit <http://ncees.org/exams/>
  - FE – <http://ncees.org/exams/fe-exam/>
  - FS – <http://ncees.org/exams/fs-exam/>
  - PE – <http://ncees.org/exams/pe-exam/>
  - PS – <http://ncees.org/exams/ps-exam/>

## **CERTIFICATES AND SEALS (Article 12)**

### **Q. Is Arkansas discipline-Specific?**

- No – License holders can sign and seal in areas in which they are competent and when the plans were prepared under their direct control or personal supervision.

### **Q. How do I order a duplicate Wall Certificate and what is the fee?**

- Send to the Board a written request (containing your name, license type, License number); AND
- \$5.00 fee (check – personal, cashiers, company, or bank or money order payable to PELS Board).

### **Q. What documents are required to be dated, signed and stamped/sealed?**

- Engineering – Each final engineering document to include drawings, cover sheet of each volume of specifications, and written reports, prepared by a licensee (Article 12.B.1.a).
- Surveying – Final surveying drawings, plats, and reports, that you either prepared by a licensee (Article 12.B.2).
- Firms – The cover sheet of each volume of final engineering drawings, written plans, specifications, and similar documents carrying the seal of a PE, or each survey carrying the seal of a PS, are required to also carry the COA seal. Or the seal may be placed on each sheet thereof. The one exception to this requirement is where the firm is a sole proprietorship practicing in the name of the licensee (Article 21).

### **Q. What is the SIZE (Article 12.B.4.a)?**

- From 1 ¼ to 2 inches in diameter with a milled edge in conformance with these designs:



### **Q. What name can I use on the Seal (Article 12.B.4.b)?**

- The licensee's name shall correspond with the Certificate of Licensure.

### **Q. Where do I get a Seal?**

- Any rubber stamp, trophy, award or sign company.

### **Q. Are computer-generated seals acceptable?**

- Yes – In accordance with Article 12.B.4.e.

### **Q. How do I obtain an electronic image of the seal?**

- Any person who can manipulate graphic files should be able to make up an object file for use in drawings (example above).

### **Q. Do I need to submit my seal for approval or submit a copy?**

- No.

### **Q. Where do I find out more about Certificates and Seals?**

- Article 12 of the Board's Rules

## **RENEWAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS (Article 13):**

### **Q. What is the renewal period and expiration dates?**

- All licenses are renewed every two (2) years. A license that is not renewed will expire on these dates:
  - PE's, EI's and COA's 12/31
  - PS's, SI's 6/30
  - Dual (PE & PS) 9/30

**Q. How do I renew my license?**

- Online – through PELS at <https://pelslicensing.arkansas.gov/>. Upon login select either Individual or Firm and “Renew”.
- Paper – On our homepage under Licensing, click “Renewal forms”, scroll to the bottom of the page and select the form you need. Allow 3-4 weeks for processing.

**Q. What is required to Renew?**

- PE or PS – Fee and Continuing Education (see section *Continuing Education (PDH) Info* below for details)
- EI or SI – Fee
- COA – Fee and licensee in responsible charge.

**Q. I don't have the required PDH to renew my license, what are my options, should I go ahead and renew?**

- YES – A license not renewed by the expiration date will lapse. To avoid a lapsed license and the assessment of late penalties, pay your renewal fee before the expiration date. During the renewal process, if you report less than the required hours, you'll be offered a probationary period of 180 days to acquire the balance.

**Q. What does “Probationary Status” mean (Article 20.K)?**

- The licensee was not in compliance with the continuing education requirements of renewing their license. Less than the required PDH were submitted and they were placed on probationary status. The licensee shall have six months from the renewal date to provide documentation of having obtained both the originally reported and the necessary additional hours. Lacking documentation, your license will be placed in inactive status.

**Q. How much is the renewal fee for the 2 year period?**

- EI or SI \$ 10.00
- PE \$ 80.00
- PS \$ 60.00
- COA \$100.00
- Dual (PE & PS) \$140.00 (\$80 for PE & \$60 for PS)

**Q. What methods of payment will you accept for my renewal fee?**

- Online – Credit Card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express), or E-Check.
- Mail in – Check (personal, cashiers, company, or bank) or money order payable to PELS Board.

**Q. How do I obtain a copy of my renewal receipt?**

- Online – Login to PELS <https://pelslicensing.arkansas.gov/> and go to Receipts. Click “Print Receipt” and choose to either save the PDF document or print it.
- Or your cancelled check will serve as your receipt if sent by mail.

**Q. What happens if I don't renew by the expiration date?**

- Your license WILL lapse AND YOU MAY NOT OFFER OR PRACTICE IN THIS STATE. Professionals: only those licensees in good standing may offer or practice engineering or surveying.
- You may be returned to good standing by paying the fees for renewal and late penalty. Late penalties are assessed as follows:
  - Renewed between 1-60 days after the expiration date, a late penalty of 50% is added,
  - Between 61 days to 2 years after the expiration date, a late penalty of 100% is added to the Renewal Fee.
- Licenses that have been non-renewed for more than 2 years, you will have to reapply.

**Q. Is there a grace period?**

- No, your license lapses on the first day after it expires.

**Q. Is there a retired status?**

- No. If you are no longer wish to maintain your license, the status would be changed to Non-Renewed.

**Q. I'm retiring OR not using my Arkansas license OR thinking about letting it go. What are my options? Is it possible to place my license in a status of Retired OR Inactive?**

- Arkansas does not have a retired status. The statuses are: Active, Exempt, Inactive, and Non-Renewed.
- Statuses of Active, Exempt and Inactive all require a renewal fee, Non-Renew does not.
- The main difference between an Inactive license and one that is Non-Renewed is apparent if you wish to be active again. If you choose to go Inactive and continue to renew your “inactive” license you would simply send in a reinstatement fee and up to 30 PDH. If you are non-renewed for more than 2 years, you would have to reapply.

**Q. Where do I find out more about renewals?**

- Article 13 of the Board's Rules

**CONTINUING EDUCATION (PDH) INFO & REQUIREMENTS (Article 20)**

**Q. How many PDH are required per renewal period and how many can I carry over to the next renewal period?**

- PE's or PS's 30 and 30
- Dual (PE & PS) 40 (at least 10 engineering, 10 surveying + 20 in either) and 40
- EI or SI Not applicable

**Q. Can a licensee be exempt from the PDH requirement?**

- Yes – In Accordance with Article 20.G

**Q. How and when do I submit PDH hours?**

- During your renewal – You will be required to submit the total hours you've earned during the 2 years preceding your renewal.

**Q. Does the Board need copies (ie. Certificates, or logs) of PDH submitted in order to renew? What about ones I've completed during the current renewal period?**

- No. Written confirmation of attendance and document maintenance is the responsibility of the licensee and must be retained for 3 years. Proof will be requested in the instance the licensee is selected for random audit.

**Q. Where can I view my PDH carryover hours?**

- Online – From our homepage under “Licensing”, click “Licensee Lookup”. Choose Individuals and follow the instructions on the next page. Click on the name to view the results.

## **ENFORCEMENT/COMPLAINTS**

**Q. How do I file a complaint?**

- File a written Complaint – From our home page, go to the “Complaints”, review the information and scroll down for the form.

**Q. How do I find out if a licensee has had any disciplinary actions taken against him/her?**

- Online – Through our Roster. From our home page under “Licensing”, click “Licensee Lookup”. Choose “Individuals” or “Firms”, follow the instructions on the next page. Click on the name to view the results.

**Q. How do I find information about Disciplinary Actions?**

- In accordance with the provisions of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act, any person may call upon the Board for information about disciplinary or enforcement actions.

**Q. Can the Board Resolve a Property Line Dispute?**

- No – It is not within the Board’s jurisdiction. These must be resolved by the individual parties or in the court system.

**Q. Can the Board Resolve a Fee or Contract Dispute with a Professional Engineer or Professional Surveyor?**

- No – In most cases this kind of dispute does not fall within the jurisdiction of the Board. Most fee and contract disputes result from a lack of communication or misunderstanding between the parties or a direct breach of contract. These must be resolved by the individual parties or in the court system.

**Q. Can the Board reimburse my court costs?**

- No – The Board has no authority to collect reimburse or collect Court fees, enforce a contract or award monetary damages.

**Q. What disciplinary action(s) may be taken against a non-licensee?**

- Referral to the Prosecuting Attorney for possible Criminal Charges;
- Levy a Civil Penalty of not more than \$5,000.00 for each separate violation; and
- Any other action as agreed upon by the Board and Respondent(s) and outlined in a Consent Agreement.

**Q. What disciplinary action(s) may be taken against a licensee? Any of the following, in any combination:**

- Criminal Charges
- Reprimand
- Revocation/Suspension of certificate of licensure and/or certificate of authorization
- Place on Probation
- Levy a Civil Penalty of not more than \$5,000.00 for each separate violation, and
- Any other action as agreed upon by the Board and Respondent(s) and outlined in a Consent Agreement.

**Q. If I or my firm is licensed in another state and not in Arkansas, may I affix my Seal and sign plans for an Arkansas project?**

- No

**Q. If I or my firm is licensed in another state, can I offer or provide engineering or land surveying services before I or the firm is licensed in Arkansas?**

- No

**Q. How do I find out more about Enforcement/Complaints?**

- Online – at <http://www.pels.arkansas.gov/complaints>
- Laws and Rules of the Board online <http://www.pels.arkansas.gov/rulesregsstandards>
  - Engineers 17-30-102, 17-30-305, & 17-30-306,
  - Surveyors 17-48-102, 17-48-106, 17-48-205, & 17-48-208
  - Rules of the Board Articles 14, 15, & 16