



# Landscape Architecture Licensure Laws

## ASLA Summary of Provisions

### VIRGINIA

The Code of Virginia: Title 54.1, Chapter 4

Virginia Administrative Code: Chapter 18, Agency 10, Chapter 20

**Type of Law:** Practice/Title.

#### **Board for Architects, Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, Certified Interior Designers and Landscape Architects**

The thirteen-member board is composed of three architects, three professional engineers, three land surveyors, two landscape architects and two interior designers appointed by the Governor.

**Powers:** Promulgate necessary regulations governing its own organization, the professional qualifications of applicants, the requirements necessary for passing examinations in whole or in part, the proper conduct of its examinations, the implementation of exemptions from license requirements, and the proper discharge of its duties.

#### **Definitions**

**Landscape architect:** A person who, by reason of special knowledge of natural, physical and mathematical sciences, and the principles and methodology of landscape architecture and landscape architectural design acquired by professional education, practical experience, or both, is qualified to engage in the practice of landscape architecture and whose competence has been attested by the board through licensure as a landscape architect.

**Practice of landscape architecture:** Any service wherein the principles and methodology of landscape architecture are applied in consultation, evaluation, planning (including the preparation and filing of sketches, drawings, plans and specifications) and responsible supervision or administration of contracts relative to projects principally directed at the functional and aesthetic use of land.

#### **Exemptions**

Exempt persons:

- Any person not a resident of and having no established place of business in Virginia, or any recent resident, provided that such person is otherwise qualified to act as a landscape architect in another state or country and qualifies in Virginia and files prior to commencement of such practice an application, with the required fee, for licensure as a landscape architect. The exemption shall continue until the board has had sufficient time to consider the application and grant or deny licensure.
- Practicing as an employee under a licensed landscape architect.
- Practicing as an employee of the United States, unless the person furnishes advisory service for compensation to the public.
- Architects, professional engineers, land surveyors
- Nurserymen, landscape designers, land planners, community planners, landscape gardeners, golf course designers, turf maintenance specialists, landscape contractor, irrigation designer, horticulturist, arborist, or any other similar person from engaging in their occupation or the practice of their profession or from rendering any service in connection therewith that is not otherwise proscribed.

Note: Bracketed [ ] material is drawn from regulations.

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No person, however, may hold himself or herself out as, or use the title landscape architect or certified landscape architect unless licensed.

#### **Eligibility Requirements – Initial Licensure**

[All applicants must be able to speak and write English to the satisfaction of the board. Applicants from non-English speaking countries must take the TOEFL. There are two paths to eligibility, both requiring passage of the CLARB examination. If an applicant has graduated from an LAAB-accredited landscape architecture curriculum, the applicant must also obtain 3 years of experience, with at least one year under the direct supervision of a licensed landscape architect. The other 2 years could alternatively be under an architect, professional engineer or land surveyor, but such experience is credited only at a rate of 50%. In lieu of an LAAB-approved degree, an applicant can qualify to sit for the examination if he or she has obtained eight years of combined education and experience, as evaluated by the board. In calculating the 8 years of combined education and experience, the following apply: degree from accredited (up to 5 years) or non-accredited (up to 4 years) school of landscape architecture; degree or credits toward an allied professional discipline approved by the board (up to 3 years, with the first two years only crediting at a rate of 75%); any other bachelor degree (up to 2 years, with the first two years crediting 50% and succeeding years at 75%); qualifying experience in landscape architecture under the direct supervision of a landscape architect (no limit); qualifying experience directly related to landscape architecture under direct supervision of an architect, professional engineer, or land surveyor (up to 4 years, crediting at a rate of 50%). At least two years of experience must be under direct supervision of a landscape architect.]

[Qualifying landscape architectural training and experience shall be progressive in complexity and based on a knowledge of natural, physical and mathematical sciences, and the principles and methodology of landscape architecture.]

[Fee: Initial license, \$125; biennial renewal, \$110.]

#### **Eligibility Requirements – Reciprocal Licensure**

[An applicant's license must be in good standing in every jurisdiction where he or she holds a license prior to applying for a license in Virginia. A person holding a valid license issued to the applicant by other states, the District of Columbia, or any territory or possession of the U.S. based on requirements that were substantially equivalent to Virginia requirements that were in effect at the time of original licensure, may be licensed without further examination. Such individuals must have passed an exam that was substantially equivalent to that approved by the board at that time. A CLARB certificate automatically qualifies an individual for reciprocal licensure.]

[Fee: Initial license, \$125; biennial renewal, \$110.]

#### **Practice Entities**

Nothing shall prohibit the offering of landscape architecture by any entity provided such practice is rendered through its officers, principals or employees who are properly licensed. Entities offering landscape architecture must register with the board. As a condition of registration, the entity must name at least one landscape architect who will be responsible and have control of landscape architecture services rendered by the entity. [Any legal entity or professional maintaining a place of business from which the offering to practice or practice of certified landscape architecture is to be performed in Virginia shall name a Virginia professional resident at the place of business and in responsible charge. The named professional must hold a current Virginia license. Each named professional shall exercise supervision and control of the work being offered or practiced at the place of business for which he is named. Each named professional shall be in

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responsible charge of only one location at a time. A named professional may be in responsible charge of more than one location provided that he is resident at the place of business and is in responsible charge during a majority of the hours of operation at each location. Similar requirements are also provided for Professional Corporations and Professional Limited Liability Companies.]

[Fees – Business Entity (excluding PC & PLLC): Application, \$100. Renewal, \$50. Branch office designation, \$50/biennium.] Fees - Professional Corporation: Application, \$30. Renewal, \$25. Branch office designation, \$30. Biennial renewal of branch office designation, \$25. Fees – Professional Limited Liability Company: Application, \$100. Renewal, \$50. Branch office designation, \$50/biennium.]

### **Seal Requirements**

[The application of a professional seal shall indicate that the professional has exercised direct control and personal supervision over the work to which it is affixed. No professional shall affix a name, seal or certification to a plat, design, specification or other work constituting the practice of landscape architecture that has been prepared by an unlicensed individual unless such work was performed under the direct control and personal supervision of the licensee while the unlicensed individual was an employee of the same firm as the professional or was under written contract to the same firm that employs the professional. If the original professional of record is no longer employed by the regulant or is otherwise unable to seal completed professional work, such work may be sealed by another professional, but only after a thorough review of the work by the professional affixing the professional seal to verify that the work has been accomplished to the same extent that would have been exercised if the work had been done under the direct control and personal supervision of the professional affixing the professional seal.

An appropriately licensed professional shall apply a seal to final and complete original cover sheets of plans, drawings, plats, technical reports and specifications and to each original sheet of plans, drawings or plats, prepared by the professional or someone under his direct control and personal supervision.]

### **Enforcement**

Board powers: [The board may suspend or revoke any license, certificate, certificate of authority or registration, or fine any licensee.]

Prohibitions/penalties: [Licensees may be disciplined for the following: obtaining a license through fraud or misrepresentation; being found guilty by the board, or by a court of competent jurisdiction, of any material misrepresentation in the course of professional practice, or being convicted, pleaded guilty or found guilty, regardless of adjudication or deferred adjudication, of any felony or misdemeanor which, in the judgment of the board, adversely affects the person's ability to perform satisfactorily within the profession; being guilty of professional incompetence or negligence; abusing drugs or alcohol to the extent that professional competence is adversely affected; failing to comply with continuing education requirements; violating any standard of practice and conduct, as defined in the law or regulation.]

Prohibitions/penalties for unlicensed practice: It is a violation of the law for any unlicensed person practicing or offering to practice as a landscape architect. Civil penalty of up to \$2,500 may be levied.

### **Landscape Architecture Submissions**

Resulting site plans, plans of development, preliminary plats, drawings, technical reports, and specifications, submitted under the seal, stamp or certification of a licensee, shall be accepted for review by local and state authorities, in connection with both public and private projects.

### **Mandatory Continuing Education**

Note: Bracketed [ ] material is drawn from regulations.



Virginia requires landscape architects to complete 16 continuing education credit hours (CECH) for each biennial renewal period.

- CECH = 50 minutes of course time
- No carryover permitted

Administration: Regulations provide for a random audit of licensees.

Activities:

- Must have a clear purpose and objective that will maintain, improve, or expand the skills and knowledge relevant to the practice of landscape architecture.
- Allows subjects in areas related to business practices, including project management, risk management, and ethics, which have demonstrated relevance to landscape architecture practice.
- Successfully completing one college semester hour of credit (15 CECHs); one quarter semester hour of credit (10 CECHs).
- Self-directed study (must successfully meet assessment)
- Teaching a CE activity (2x credit; first teaching of course only)

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Recordkeeping: Licensee has responsibility for maintaining three-year record of continuing education activities.

Exemptions: Licensees experiencing illness or undue hardship, as determined by the board

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