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Georgia Laws and Rules for Engineers

by

Mark Ludwigson



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Course Outline:

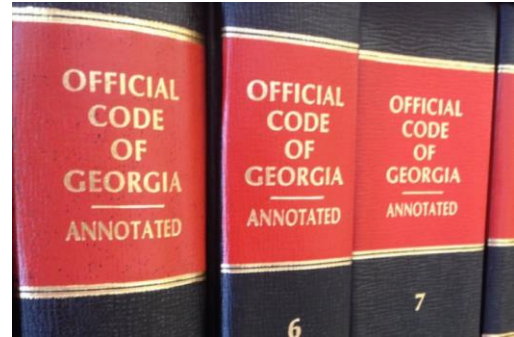
OCGA
OCGA §43-15
GA R&R 180
State Board
Practice of Professional Engineering
Structural Engineering
Continuing Education
Sign and Seal Requirements
Helpful References
Examination



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OCGA

State laws are enacted by the Georgia General Assembly, made up of the State Senate and Georgia House of Representatives. All the state laws are compiled to form the Official Code of Georgia (OCGA or O.C.G.A.). The OCGA is grouped into 53 different titles based on the area of government.



Under Title 43 called “Professions and Businesses”, is Chapter 15 called “Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors”. This important chapter is written as OCGA §43-15. An organization tree is shown on the next page and below.

See the “Helpful Resources” section for the websites to view the latest laws, rules, and the Board website.

OCGA

- **Title: 43 Professions and Businesses**
 - **Chapter: 15 Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors**
 - **Section: 1 to 31**
 - **Paragraph: Various**

OCGA - Titles:

- 1 General Provisions
- 2 Agriculture
- 3 Alcoholic Beverages

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43 Professions and Businesses

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Chapters:

- 1 General Provisions
- 1A Occupational Regulation Legislation Review
- 1B Patient Self-Referral

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15 Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors

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OCGA §43-15

Chapter 15 is entitled “Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors” and it contains general requirements for professional engineers. It also gives authority to the Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board (PELS Board) to manage licensing and conduct of professional engineers.

The following are all the sections of Chapter 15, with bold items being of particular importance for practicing professional engineers.

OCGA 43-15 Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors

43-15-1. Short title and purpose.

43-15-2. Definitions.

43-15-3. State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers; members; funding; employees.

43-15-4. Adoption of rules and regulations; meetings; seal; executive director as secretary of board; advisors.

43-15-5. Role of executive director.

43-15-6. General powers of board; injunctions; continuing education.

43-15-6.1. Fees and funding.

43-15-7. Unlawful practice as a professional engineer or land surveyor.

43-15-8. Engineer-in-training certificate; eligibility.

43-15-9. Professional engineer certificate of registration; eligibility.

43-15-9.1. Minimum requirements for professional structural engineers.

43-15-10. Evaluation of engineering experience.

43-15-11. Professional engineer’s examination.

43-15-12. [Reserved] Surveyor intern certificate; eligibility. [Repealed]

43-15-13. Licensure as a professional land surveyor; land surveyor intern certification.

43-15-13.1. Requirements for professional land surveyors engaged in design of storm-water management plans, facilities, water distribution lines, and sanitary sewer collection systems.

43-15-14. Examinations.

43-15-15. Applications for certificates, certificates of registration, and licenses.

43-15-16. Registration and licensure by comity.

43-15-17. Issuance, expiration, and renewal of certificates and certificates of registration.

43-15-18. Effect of certificate of registration or license.



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- 43-15-19. Revocation, suspension, or denial of certificates, certificates of registration, or licenses; reprimands.
- 43-15-20. Reissuance of certificates, certificates of registration, and licenses; fee.
- 43-15-21. Temporary permit.
- 43-15-22. Registrant or licensee required to obtain seal; inscription; purpose; fraudulent use of seal.**
- 43-15-23. Practice of professional engineering by or through firm, corporation, or other entity.
- 43-15-23.1. Land surveying firms, corporations, or other entities; application; fee; certificate of authorization.
- 43-15-24. Construction of structures jeopardizing health, safety, or welfare; exceptions; record of building permits.**
- 43-15-25. Procedure for filing charges against holder of certificate, certificate of registration, or license.
- 43-15-26. Cease and desist orders; civil penalties for violation of order.
- 43-15-27. Enforcement of chapter.
- 43-15-28. Applicability of the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act."
- 43-15-29. Exceptions to operation of chapter.
- 43-15-30. Unlawful acts.
- 43-15-31. [Repealed] Termination.



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GA R&R 180

State laws are often high-level and lack details required for implementation. The general assembly delegates state agencies to manage the implementation of laws and to create rules and regulations that complement the laws. The compilation of such rules is called the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia (GA R&R or Ga. Comp. R. & Regs.). These rules are enforceable the same as state laws.



Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia

GA R&R is a collection of “departments”, each in a different area of government. Department 180 is “Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board”. It contains many important details to guide the regular practice of engineering in Georgia. The following are all the chapters of GA R&R 180, with bold items being of particular importance for practicing professional engineers.

GA R&R 180. GEORGIA PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND LAND SURVEYORS BOARD

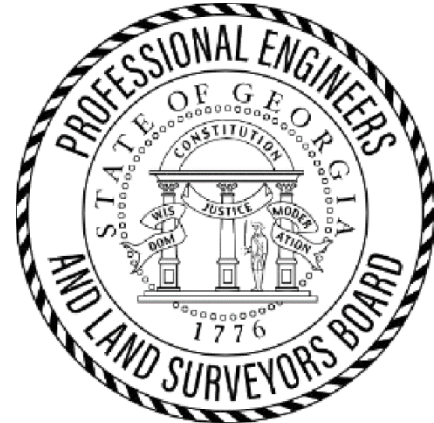
- 180-1. ORGANIZATION
- 180-2. APPLICATIONS
- 180-3. QUALIFICATIONS: PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER AND ENGINEER-IN-TRAINING
- 180-4. QUALIFICATIONS: LAND SURVEYOR AND LAND SURVEYOR-IN-TRAINING
- 180-5. FEES
- 180-6. RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**
- 180-7. TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR PROPERTY SURVEYS
- 180-8. RENEWAL OF LICENSE**
- 180-9. PROCEDURAL RULES
- 180-10. COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**
- 180-11. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY**
- 180-12. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**
- 180-13. REPEALED (180-13-.01)



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State Board

The state agency for professional engineering is the “Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board” (PELS Board) hereafter referred to as the Board. The Board oversees thousands of Professional Engineers and is given authority to manage and further regulate professional engineering in OCGA 43-15 and GA R&R 295. The board falls under the Licensing Division of the Secretary of State Office.



The Board can make modifications to GA R&R 180.

Policy Statements

The board also issues and updates a list of policy statements that complement the laws and rules. Currently there are 28 statements, which all related to the topics of obtaining licensure and continuing education. The policy statement document is available on the board website:

<https://sos.ga.gov/sites/default/files/forms/09%20Policy%20Statements.pdf>

Engineer and Land Surveyor Policy Statements

- 03-02** All materials required to satisfy the application requirements will be submitted by the applicant in a single package, and received prior to the published deadline. (effective 2/5/02)
- 03-03** A maximum of six months of Co-op experience may be granted by the board for experience prior to graduation. (effective prior to 2000)
- 03-04** All foreign education not accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of [ABET](#) at the time of graduation shall be evaluated by NCEES Credential Evaluations to receive any educational credit. You can access Credentials Evaluations [here](#).

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Practice of Professional Engineering

Definition

The following is a copy-paste of the relevant statutes and regulations that define the practice of professional engineering:

OCGA §43-15-2

(9) “Professional engineer” means an individual who is qualified, by reason of knowledge of mathematics, the physical sciences, and the principles by which mechanical properties of matter are made useful to mankind in structures and machines, acquired by professional education and practical experience, to engage in the practice of professional engineering and who possesses a current certificate of registration as a professional engineer issued by the board.

(10) “Professional engineering” means the practice of the arts and sciences, known as engineering, by which mechanical properties of matter are made useful to mankind in structures and machines and shall include any professional service, such as consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, designing, or responsible supervision of construction or operation, in connection with any public or private utilities, structures, buildings, machines, equipment, processes, works, or projects, wherein the public welfare or the safeguarding of life, health, or property is concerned or involved, when such professional service requires the application of engineering principles and data and training in the application of mathematical and physical sciences. An individual shall be construed to practice or offer to practice professional engineering, within the meaning of this chapter, who by verbal claim, sign, advertisement, letterhead, card, or in any other way represents or holds himself or herself out as a professional engineer or engineer or as able or qualified to perform engineering services or who performs any of the services set out in this paragraph. Nothing contained in this chapter shall include the work ordinarily performed by individuals who operate or maintain machinery or equipment.

Surveying

There are separate and distinct licenses for professional engineers and professional land surveyors. A professional engineer may also be a professional land surveyor (dual-licensed).



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Disciplines

The State of Georgia has a separate licensure for a Professional Structural Engineer (SE), as covered in the next section. Other than structural, the Georgia laws and rules do not indicate licensures or special requirements (other than indicating branch on the exam) for specific engineering disciplines (civil, electrical, mechanical, etc.). Engineering discipline names (other than structural) are not listed on seals or certificates.

Responsible Charge

Professional engineering work should have one or more professional engineers in “responsible charge” of the design. This phrase is defined below in the official rules and in a National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) reference document.

GA R&R 180-10-.01 Corporate Practice: Professional Engineering

(1) As used in O.C.G.A. § 43-15-23(c), the phrase "**responsible charge**" means the independent control, direction and supervision, by the use of initiative, skill and independent judgment of the practice of professional engineering as defined in O.C.G.A. § 43-15-2.

GA R&R 180-12-.02 Sealing of Documents

(3)...The sealing of documents by the registrant shall certify that the work was performed by the registrant or under the direct supervisory control of the registrant on a daily basis.

NSPE Position Statement No. 10-1778

- Defines “**responsible charge**” as the direct control and personal supervision of engineering work.
- The professional engineer in **responsible charge** is actively engaged in the engineering process, from conception to completion.
- Engineering decisions must be personally made by the professional engineer or by others over which the professional engineer provides supervisory direction and control authority.
- Reviewing drawings or documents after their completion without involvement in the design and development process appears not to satisfy the definition of **responsible charge**.



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Structural Engineering

A professional structural engineer (SE) license is required for the design and analysis of “Designated Structures”, as defined in the laws and rules below. Per OCGA §43-15-7, it is unlawful for any person other than a professional structural engineer to practice or to offer to practice structural engineering in Georgia.

Any of the following building qualities result in a “Designated Structure” qualification and require an SE, per GA R&R 180-2-.04:

- Risk Category III or IV
- Covered gross area $\geq 100,000$ square feet
- Occupied floor elevation $\geq 45'$ above grade
- Height to least width aspect ratio ≥ 7
- Designed using nonlinear time history analysis
- Includes a seismic energy dissipation systems
- “Complex bridges” as defined by Georgia Department of Transportation

The following is a copy-paste of the relevant statutes and regulations:

OCGA §43-15-2. Definitions.

(12) “Professional structural engineer” means a professional engineer with specialized knowledge and expertise in the practice of structural engineering. Such person shall be qualified by reason of knowledge of mathematics, physical sciences, and principles by which mechanical properties of matter are made useful to man in structures, acquired through professional education and practical experience, to engage in the practice of structural engineering. Such persons shall further possess a current certificate of registration as a professional structural engineer issued by the board.

(13) “Structural engineering” means the practice of a specialized branch of professional engineering involving the design or analysis of designated structures as defined by the board, and shall include any professional service, such as consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, designing, analyzing, or responsible supervision of construction or operation, in connection with any public or private designated structures, wherein the public welfare or the safeguarding of life, health, or property is concerned or involved, when such professional service requires the



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application of structural engineering principles and data and training in the application of mathematical and physical sciences. A person shall be construed to practice or offer to practice structural engineering, within the meaning of this chapter, who by verbal claim, sign, advertisement, letterhead, card, or in any other way represents or holds himself or herself out as a professional structural engineer or as able or qualified to perform structural engineering services or who does perform any of the services set out in this paragraph.

OCGA §43-15-7. Unlawful practice as a professional engineer or land surveyor.

- (a) It shall be unlawful for any person other than a professional engineer to practice or to offer to practice professional engineering in this state.
- (b) It shall be unlawful for any person other than a professional land surveyor to practice or to offer to practice land surveying in this state.
- (c) It shall be unlawful for any person other than a professional structural engineer to practice or to offer to practice structural engineering in this state.

GA R&R 180-2-.04 Examinations, General

- (2) If the Applicant designates that he/she will engage in the branch identified as structural engineering or the Applicant's experience is deemed to be within the branch of structural engineering, the Applicant shall be directed to take the NCEES 16 hour Structural Engineering Exam.

For purposes of this rule, "structural engineering" shall be defined as engaging in the design or analysis of "Designated Structures." "Designated Structures" are defined as follows:

- a. For buildings and other structures requiring a building permit as required by the *International Building Code, adopted edition, with Georgia Amendments* in current effect in the state of Georgia, a Designated Structure is any building or other structure which meets any one of the following criteria:
 - I. Any building structure which has risk Category of III or IV in accordance with Table 1604.5 of the International Building Code, adopted edition, with Georgia Amendments.
 - II. Any building structure which has a covered gross area of 100,000 square feet or greater, or has an occupied floor



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elevation that is 45 feet or more above the average ground level of the building.

- III. Any building structure which with height to least width aspect ratio of the structural lateral load resisting system greater than or equal to seven.
- IV. Any building structure which is designed using nonlinear time history analysis or with special seismic energy dissipation systems.

b. For bridges and other related transportation structures, a Designated Structure is one that is considered to be a "complex bridge", as described in the *Georgia Department of Transportation Consultant Prequalification Manual*, which includes the following:

- I. Bridges of spans longer than 300 feet
- II. Tunnels
- III. Cable-stayed bridges
- IV. Suspension bridges
- V. Movable bridges
- VI. Trusses with spans longer than 300 feet
- VII. Arch bridges
- VIII. Segmental bridges
- IX. Balance-cantilever bridges
- X. Other bridges requiring unique analytical methods or design features not commonly addressed in standards set forth by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

(3) Civil Engineering applicants who engage in the design of structural elements, but will not perform Structural Engineering as defined in Paragraph (2), will be directed to take the 8 hour Civil Breadth and Structural Depth exam.



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Continuing Education

Per OCGA § 43-15-17 and GA R&R 180-11, the following continuing education is required every 1-year renewal period, where a PDH is a professional development hour:

- Total 15 PDH
- The Board does NOT pre-approve providers or specific courses
- Courses must have a clear purpose and objective which will maintain, improve, or expand the skills and knowledge relevant to the engineer's field of practice
- For dual licensees (engineer & surveyor), at minimum of 5 PDHs shall be in engineering and a minimum of 5 PDHs in surveying
- A maximum of 7.5 PDH can be carried forward
- Use the Board provided continuing education summary log form
- Retain PDH records for 4 years
- Renews December 31 of each year

Statutes and Regulations

Here is a copy-paste of the relevant statutes and regulations:

43-15-17. Issuance, expiration, and renewal of certificates and certificates of registration.

(a) Certificates, certificates of registration, or licenses shall be issued to applicants who successfully complete the respective requirements therefor upon the payment of fees prescribed by the board.

(b) Certificates of registration or licenses shall be renewable annually. Renewal may be effected for the succeeding year by the payment of the fee prescribed by the board. Certificates of registration or licenses may be renewed subsequent to their expiration upon the payment of accumulated unpaid fees and of a penalty in an amount to be determined by the board. A certificate of registration or license that has been expired for a period of greater than four years shall be automatically revoked.

(c) The executive director shall give notice to each individual holding a certificate of registration or license under this chapter of the date of the expiration of the certificate of registration or license and the amount of the fee required for renewal, at least one month prior to the expiration date; but the failure to receive such notice shall not avoid the expiration of any certificate of registration or license not renewed in accordance with this Code section.



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180-11 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY

Rule 180-11-.01 Introduction

Beginning January 1, 1997, as stated in O.C.G.A. 43-15-6(b), ". . . which begins after the 1996 renewal cycle," every registrant shall meet the continuing professional competency requirements of these rules for professional development as a condition for licensure renewal.

Rule 180-11-.02 Definitions

Terms used in this section are defined as follows:

- (a) Professional Development Hour. A contact hour (nominal) of instruction or presentation. The common denominator for other units of credit. The numerical unit of measure used in calculating compliance with this Chapter is a Professional Development Hour or PDH. All units and hours attributed to the courses and activities acceptable in satisfying this Chapter's requirement are translated into PDH's by operation of Rule 180-11-.04 of this Chapter.
- (b) Course/Activity. Any qualifying course or activity with a clear purpose and objective which will maintain, improve, or expand the skills and knowledge relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.
- (c) Continuing Education Course/Unit.
 - 1. Continuing Education Course. A course, seminar, workshop or other professional or technical presentation or activity taken or attended for the purpose of maintaining, improving, or expanding the skills and knowledge relevant to the registrant's practice.
 - 2. Continuing Education Unit. The unit of measure attributed to Continuing Education Courses is a Continuing Education Unit or CEU. Ten (10) hours of class in a Continuing Education Course equals one (1) Continuing Education Unit.
- (d) College Courses/Unit Measure.
 - 1. College Course. When used in this Chapter, a College course is a technical course in a curriculum which has been accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, or a technical course that is specifically relevant to engineering or surveying, which is offered by a college, university, or other institution.
- (e) College/Unit Semester/Quarter Hour. A College/Unit Semester/ Quarter Hour is a unit of measure attributed by the offering college, university, or



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institution, to a particular course, which is translated into PDH's by operation of Rule 180-11-.04 of this Chapter.

- (f) Registrant. When used in this Chapter, a person who is licensed as either a professional engineer or a land surveyor is deemed to be a registrant.
- (g) Dual Registrant. When used in this Chapter, a person who is licensed as both a professional engineer and a land surveyor is deemed to be a dual registrant.
- (h) Board. The State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors.
- (i) Sponsor. A sponsor is an organization, college, university, institution, or individual which provides a course/activity for which the professional engineer or land surveyor seeks to obtain Professional Development Hour credit.
- (j) Successful Completion of a Course/Activity. Satisfactory completion of a course/activity taken for the purpose of obtaining PDH's means fulfilling the course or activity's requirements and obtaining a certificate of completion or its equivalent.

Rule 180-11-.03 Requirements

- (1) Professional Engineers. Every professional engineer is required to obtain fifteen (15) PDH's each twelve (12) month (Annual) renewal period. If a professional engineer exceeds the requirements in any annual renewal period, a maximum of seven and one half (7.5) PDH's may be carried forward into the subsequent renewal period.
- (2) Land Surveyors. Every land surveyor is required to obtain seven and one half (7.5) PDH's each twelve (12) month annual renewal period. In addition, every land surveyor must ensure that, once every two (2) years, at least three (3) PDH's in "Minimum Technical Standards" be included in their PDH's acquired. The "Minimum Technical Standards" material shall include a review of all board rules and applicable state laws pertaining to the practice of land surveying specific to the state of Georgia. If a land surveyor exceeds the requirements in any annual period, a maximum of three and three quarters (3.75) PDH's may be carried forward into the subsequent renewal period.
- (3) Dual Registrants. The person with a dual license is required to obtain fifteen (15) PDH's each twelve (12) month (Annual) renewal period. If a dual registrant exceeds the requirement in any annual renewal period, a



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maximum of seven and one half (7.5) PDH's may be carried forward into the subsequent renewal period. At least one-third (1/3) of the PDH's in a renewal period must be obtained in engineering, and one-third (1/3) in surveying. The remaining units may be in either field, at the discretion of the registrant.

- (4) PDH's may be earned as follows:
- (a) Successful completion of college courses.
 - (b) Successful completion of continuing education courses.
 - (c) Successful completion of correspondence, televised, videotaped, audiotaped, and other short courses/tutorials taken for the purpose of maintaining, improving, or expanding the skills and knowledge relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.
 - (d) Presenting or attending seminars, in-house courses, workshops, or professional or technical presentations made at meetings, conventions or conferences which are relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.
 - (e) Teaching or instructing in any area relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.
 - (f) Authoring published papers, articles, or books in any area relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.
 - (g) Active participation in professional or technical societies. (For professional engineers only).
 - (h) Receiving patents in any area relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.

Rule 180-11-.04 Units

The conversion of other units of credit to Professional Development Hours is as follows:

- (1) One (1) college or unit semester hour: 45 PDH
- (2) One (1) college or unit quarter hour: 30 PDH
- (3) One (1) Continuing Education Unit: 10 PDH
- (4) One (1) Hour of professional development in coursework, seminars, or professional or technical presentations made at meetings, conventions, conferences, or examination preparation.



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- (5) For teaching of professional development coursework as in 180-11-.04, apply a multiple of two (2). Teaching credit valid for teaching a course or seminar for the first time only. Teaching does not apply to full-time faculty.
- (6) Authorizing published papers, articles, or books in any area relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice: 10 PDH
- (7) Active participation in professional and technical society (for professional engineers only): 2 PDH
- (8) Each patent in any area relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice: 10 PDH

Rule 180-11-.05 Determination of Credits

The Board has the final authority regarding:

- (a) Approval of courses, classes, seminars, meetings, and all other methods of satisfying the requirements of this Chapter; and
- (b) The number of PDH's allocated to each course, class, seminar, meeting, and any other method of satisfying the requirements of this Chapter.

Rule 180-11-.06 Recordkeeping

To ensure compliance of continuing education, the Board shall randomly audit a number of registrants. Registrants licensed by way of examination or comity, shall be exempt from continuing education requirements for their first renewal period. Maintaining records to be used to support PDH's Claimed, is the responsibility of the registrant. Records required include:

- (a) A log showing the type of activity, sponsoring organization, location, duration, instructor's or speaker's name, and PDH's earned.
- (b) Attendance verification records in the form of completion certificates, or other documents supporting evidence of attendance; or records as maintained by professional organizations, or other similar repositories designated by the Board.
- (c) The log and records described in Rule 180-11-.06(a) and (b) must be maintained for a period of four years and copies may be requested by the Board for audit verification purposes.

Rule 180-11-.07 Exemptions

A registrant is exempt from the professional development education requirements under any of the following circumstances:

- (1) Registrants licensed by way of examination or comity, shall be exempt for their first renewal period.



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- (2) A professional engineer serving on temporary duty in the armed forces of the United States for a period of time exceeding one hundred twenty (120) consecutive days shall be exempt from obtaining 15 of the professional development hours required during that biennial period in which the majority of the days of duty fall. Likewise, a land surveyor shall be exempt from obtaining 7.5 professional development hours during that biennial period.
- (3) Registrants experiencing physical disability, illness, or other extenuating circumstances as approved by the Board may be exempt. Supporting documentation must be furnished to the Board.
- (4) Registrants over the age of 65 who have applied for an inactive license, who list their occupation as "Retired" or "Inactive" on the Board-approved renewal form, and who further certify that they are no longer receiving any remuneration from providing professional engineering or land surveying services shall be exempt from professional development hours. In the event such a person elects to return to active practice of professional engineering or land surveying, professional development hours must be earned as described in " 180-11-.08 Reinstatement" before returning to active practice.
- (5) Individuals who qualify for exemption by way of paragraph (4) above may continue to use the words Professional Engineer (or P.E.), or Land Surveyor (or L.S.) as appropriate, after their names as long as they continue to fall under the restrictions specified and are not actively practicing engineering or land surveying.
- (6) Registrants over the age of 65 who are engaged in the active practice of their profession and who have held a valid Georgia license for the previous 25 consecutive years shall be exempt from professional development requirements.

Rule 180-11-.08 Reinstatement

A registrant may bring an inactive or suspended (provided all other conditions of the suspension are filled) license to active status by obtaining all delinquent PDH's. A MINIMUM OF 15 PDH's are required for each year in an inactive or suspended status for professional engineers and 7.5 PDH's for land surveyors, up to a maximum of 30 PDH's for professional engineers and 15 PDH's for land surveyors.

Rule 180-11-.09 Comity/Out-of-Georgia Resident

The Board shall recognize the continuing education requirements imposed by other states to the extent that such continuing education courses meet the requirements imposed by the Board. Comity/Out-of-Georgia residents will be required to keep recordkeeping as listed under Rule 180-11-.06.



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Rule 180-11-.10 Forms

Included with all license renewal applications will be a continuing education summary log form that the registrant must use to summarize the professional development hours for which he/she has requested credit during the current biennial period. In order to ensure compliance with O.C.G.A. 43-15-6(b), the Board shall audit some registrants at a later date and will instruct them to submit this form to the Board office, signed and certified. The form must supply sufficient detail relevant to continuing education hours claimed in order to permit the Board to complete its audit.



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Sign and Seal Requirements

Georgia engineering seal and signature requirements are found in OCGA § 43-15-22 and GA R&R 180-12. Here are a few highlights that may differ from requirements in other states:

- Typical seal features are shown on right
- Outer diameter should be approximately 1.5”
- Sign and date immediately under the seal
- Acceptable forms of signatures:
 - Hand signed with crimp or rubber stamp seal
 - Digital/electronic signature
 - Verifiable with an authentication procedure
 - 3rd party verification NOT required
 - Scanning a hand signed document is acceptable
- For a large number of drawings/sheets, instead of signing each sheet, a summary sheet can be used with seal, signature, date, company info, a narrative with elements of responsible work, and list of sheets with revision numbers.



Statutes and Regulations

The following is a copy-paste of the relevant statutes and regulations:

43-15-22. Registrant or licensee required to obtain seal; inscription; purpose; fraudulent use of seal.

(a) Every professional engineer and professional land surveyor registered or licensed, as applicable, under this chapter shall, upon receipt of a certificate of registration or license, obtain a seal of the design authorized by the board, bearing the registrant’s or licensee’s name, certificate or license number, and the legend “Professional Engineer,” “Registered Professional Structural Engineer,” or “Professional Land Surveyor,” in accordance with the certificate of registration or license.

(b) Plans, specifications, plats, and reports issued by a registrant or licensee shall be stamped or sealed and countersigned by the registrant or licensee; but it shall be unlawful for the registrant or licensee or any other person to stamp or seal any document with such seal after the certificate of the registrant or license of the licensee named thereon has expired, or has been revoked, or during the period of any suspension imposed by the board. No plans, specifications, plats, or reports shall be stamped with the seal of a registrant or a licensee unless such registrant or



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licensee has personally performed the engineering or land surveying work involved or, when the registrant or licensee has not personally performed the engineering or land surveying work reflected in any plan, specification, plat, or report, such registrant or licensee has affixed his or her seal thereto only if such document has been prepared by an employee or employees under the registrant's or licensee's direct supervisory control on a daily basis and after the registrant or licensee has thoroughly reviewed the work embodied in such document and has satisfied himself or herself completely that such work is adequate.

(c) No registrant or licensee shall affix his or her seal to any plan, specification, plat, or report unless he or she has assumed the responsibility for the accuracy and adequacy of the work involved.

(d) Any registrant or licensee who has affixed his or her seal to any plan, specification, plat, or report prepared by another individual not under the registrant's or licensee's direct supervisory control on a daily basis, and without having thoroughly reviewed such work, shall be deemed to have committed a fraudulent act of misconduct in the practice of professional engineering or land surveying.

GA R&R 180-12 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

Rule 180-12-.01 Description

The seal authorized by the State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors for registrants may be of the crimp type and/or rubber stamp facsimile or may be computer generated. The seal design is to be circular in form, the diameter of the outer circle being 1 1/2 inches, and the diameter of the inner circle being one inch. The registration seal design will be furnished to each registrant as part of the licensure process.

Rule 180-12-.02 Sealing of Documents

- (1) The term, "documents," as used herein shall mean engineering and/or land surveying work issued in the form of plans, drawings, maps, surveys, reports, specifications, design information, and calculations, including such work issued in digital form.
- (2) The term "issued" as used herein shall mean documents in the final form which bear the seal, signature and date of the registrant and the entity's Certificate of Authorization Name, Authorization Number and Expiration date of the COA (as required by GA Law 43-15-23. Practice of professional engineering by or through firm, corporation, or other entity for COA requirements.)



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- (3) The registrant shall seal, sign and date and provide COA name, Authorization Number and expiration date of the COA all original final documents which are issued to a client or any public agency. The sealing of documents by the registrant shall certify that the work was performed by the registrant or under the direct supervisory control of the registrant on a daily basis. For engineering documents, the date of signature shall be placed immediately under the seal and signature.
- (4) No registrant shall issue or allow to be issued draft, incomplete, preliminary, in-progress, or for-review document or any type that contains the seal of the registrant unless such document does not contain a signature. Further, any such draft shall display the date of issue and a notation under or adjacent to the seal in bold lettering, such as "PRELIMINARY", "DRAFT", "NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION" or "FOR REVIEW ONLY," which clearly identifies the purpose for which the document is issued. Any document containing a seal, signature, date and COA information as required in (2) above shall be considered to be issued.
- (5) Seals, signatures, dates, COA Information and/or other notations required by this Rule shall be placed on original documents such that the seal, signature, date, COA Information and/or notations, will be reproduced when copies or scans are made. A "facsimile signature" that is to be placed on a property survey map or plat in accordance with O.C.G.A. [15-6-67](#) may be a scanned image of an actual signature or a computer generated signature, and must be kept in the strict control of the land surveyor.
- (6) Each drawing sheet, whether bound or unbound, shall be sealed, signed and dated by the registrant(s) responsible for the work on that sheet and contain the entity's COA information. If necessary due to number of sheets, in lieu of providing a seal, signature, date, and COA information on each drawing sheet, a summary sheet may be included in the form of a clearly drafted table or other format that identifies each registrants seal, signature, date, and COA information and which includes a narrative that clearly describes the element of work for which each registrant is responsible and indicates the most current version of each sheet. This summary sheet shall be included within the final documents. If a document is sealed, signed and dated and contains the entity's COA information by more than one registrant, the portion of the work for which each registrant is responsible shall be clearly noted.
- (7) Each document that is sealed, signed and dated by a registrant shall contain the name, address, and contact information of the firm or sole



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practitioner certifying the work. Each document shall have the entity's COA information included.

- (8) Documents as defined in Paragraph (1) that are transmitted electronically beyond the direct control of the licensee shall have the computer-generated seal removed from the original file, unless signed with an electronic signature as defined in Paragraph (9) of this Rule. After removal of the seal the electronic media shall have the following inserted in lieu of the signature and date: "This document originally issued and sealed by (name of sealer), (license number), on (Date of sealing) and the entity's COA Information. This medium shall not be considered a certified document." Hardcopy documents containing the original seal, signature, date and entity's COA information of the licensee may be duplicated by photocopy or electronic scanning processes and distributed either in hardcopy or electronic medium. The scanned digital files of certified documents are not subject to the requirements of this Paragraph. The electronic transmission beyond the direct control of the licensee of CAD, vector or other files subject to easy editing are subject to the requirements of this paragraph. Easy editing is based on the file consisting of separate elements that can be individually modified or deleted.
- (9) Documents to be electronically transmitted beyond the direct control of the licensee that are signed using an electronic signature shall contain the authentication procedure in a secure mode and a list of the hardware, software and parameters used to prepare the document(s). Secure mode means that the authentication procedure has protective measures to prevent alteration or overriding of the authentication procedure. This paragraph does not apply to property survey maps and plats governed by O.C.G.A. 15-6-67 which may be submitted in an electronic file format that is regulated by the Georgia Superior Court Clerks Cooperative Authority. The term "electronic signature" shall be an electronic authentication process that is attached to or logically associated with an electronic document. The electronic signature shall be:
- (a) Unique to the licensee using it;
 - (b) Capable of verification;
 - (c) Under the sole control of the licensee; and
 - (d) Linked to a document in such a manner that the electronic signature is invalidated if any data in the document is changed.



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Helpful References

Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board

General website:	https://sos.ga.gov/georgia-professional-engineers-and-land-surveyors-board
License renewal:	https://gapelsb.evokeplatform.com/
Laws & Rules:	https://sos.ga.gov/page/rules-and-regulations-georgia-professional-engineers-and-land-surveyors-board
OCGA §43-15	http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/gacode/
GA R&R 180	http://rules.sos.ga.gov/gac/180

Structural Engineers Association of Georgia (SEAOG)

Georgia's PE and SE Licenses <https://seaog.org/articles/se>