



North Carolina Code Officials Qualification Board

Staffed by the NC Department of Insurance

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October 29, 2018

TO: All Code Officials

SUBJECT: Certification Changes

The NC General Assembly passed HB 948 which encompasses many items impacting the execution of code enforcement and the certification of code officials across the state. One provision of this Bill impacts comity. Comity is a one-way acceptance of a credential or license by a regulatory board. In this case, the regulatory board is the NC Code Officials Qualification Board. The Board, in no way, wants to be a barrier to employment for those from out-of-state or even abroad, but does have the responsibility to assure the public that competency is maintained.

Currently, the staff uses a matrix as part of the evaluation process when determining the level of certification ability in NC for the out-of-state applicant. This matrix was developed in partnership with ICC and is shown below.

Previous ICC Comity Table

NC Certificate	Required ICC Certificates	Minimum # of Years of Inspection Experience Required
Level I	Residential and Commercial	2 yrs on at least two Level I projects
Level II	Residential and Commercial	4 yrs on at least two Level II projects
Level III	Residential, Commercial & Plans Examiner	5 yrs on at least two Level III projects.

At the October 23, 2018 quarterly meeting, the Board voted to amend the above matrix for Level III comity applicants and is shown below. The main difference is the second option for Level III which negates the requirement for ICC Plans Examiner certification but increases the number of years in which a code official has performed inspections. Staff will work diligently to assure that all out-of-state applicants meet the same minimum experience standards as NC code officials.

New ICC Comity Table

NC Certificate	Required ICC Certificates	Minimum # of Years of Inspection Experience
Level I	Residential and Commercial	2 yrs on at least two Level I projects
Level II	Residential and Commercial	4 yrs on at least two Level II projects
Level III	Residential, Commercial & Plans Examiner OR	5 yrs on at least two Level III projects.
Level III	Residential and Commercial	8 yrs on at least two Level III projects

As a point of clarification, HB 948 amended General Statute 143-151.14 by adding the following paragraphs and now reads in part as:

“(b) The Board may, without requiring an examination, grant a standard certificate as a qualified Code-enforcement official for a particular type of position and level to any person who, at the time of application, is certified as a qualified Code-enforcement official in good standing by the International Code Council where standards and examination are acceptable to the Board and not lower than those required by this Article for a type of position and level in this State.

(c) The certificates granted under subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall expire after three years unless within that time period the holder completes a short course, as prescribed by the Board, relating to the State Building Code regulations and Code-enforcement administration.”

The significance of this General Statute change provides the comity recipient with a standard certificate without completion of the required Law and Administration course and the technical course for the trade. The comity recipient has three years from the date of certificate issuance to complete the required courses. If the courses aren't completed within the three-year period, the certificate expires. If the standard certificate expires, then the applicant is no longer eligible for comity and will need to go through the probationary and testing path to maintain certification as a code enforcement official.

The final change in HB 948 affects General Statute 143-151.13A(d). The number of extra CE hours required for reactivation of a standard or limited certificate has been decreased as follows: 12 to 6, 6 to 3 and 4 to 2. The rehired code official has a year to complete the extra CE hours required to maintain the active status of each certificate. If the extra CE isn't performed within the one-year window, the certificate becomes suspended until the extra CE requirement is fulfilled.

If you have questions about the information contained in this memo, please feel free to contact me by email at terri.tart@ncdoi.gov or by phone at 919-647-0031.