



# IDFPR

Illinois Department of  
Financial and Professional Regulation

Division of Professional Regulation

# ILLINOIS CODE ENFORCEMENT MANUAL

**To Comply with the:**

Illinois Architecture Practice Act  
Illinois Professional Land Surveyor Act  
Illinois Professional Engineering Practice Act  
Illinois Structural Engineering Practice Act

Revised: April 2023

## FOREWORD

This manual has been prepared and published by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (Department) with the assistance of the design professions Boards.

The purpose of this manual is to provide guidance to building code enforcement officials and design professionals for implementing and understanding practical application of the Acts regulating the practices of architecture, professional land surveying, professional engineering, and structural engineering.

The information is provided as part of a continuing effort of the Department to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Illinois through proper enforcement of the legal requirements of the design professions licensing and practice Acts.

**NOTE:** This manual is not law itself and is not intended to expand or change the meaning or intent of any state laws but is intended to provide guidance as to the Department's interpretation and enforcement of the existing laws. The current Acts as amended and published by the Secretary of State in the "Laws of Illinois" govern over any information in this manual. Copies of the Acts and Administrative Rules are available on the Department's web site at [www.idfpr.illinois.gov](http://www.idfpr.illinois.gov)

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## INTRODUCTION

The regulation of Illinois design professionals and the enforcement of building codes have a common goal: protection of public health, safety, and welfare. The consequences of lapses may be tragic. Consider, for example, the loss of lives in the collapse of several porches in Chicago, the destruction by fire and loss of 100 lives at a nightclub in Rhode Island, and the collapse of a football training facility in Dallas. The safety and quality of such facilities can be enhanced by careful coordination among licensed design professionals and code enforcement officials.

The responsibility of the Department and the Licensing Boards is to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of Illinois citizens by assuring the adequacy of buildings, structures, engineering works, and land surveys of property in this State. These guidelines, which have been developed by the Department and the Licensing Boards, are being provided to code enforcement officials and design professionals as an aid to understanding the requirements of the laws and regulations governing the practice of architecture, land surveying, professional engineering and structural engineering in Illinois and to better enable them to carry out their difficult jobs.

**This document it is not intended to expand or change the meaning or intent of any state laws, but is intended to provide guidance as to the Department's interpretation and enforcement of existing laws. A local jurisdiction's laws must conform to the applicable state laws.**

Building codes and professional licensing laws are meant to work together. Although the charge is much the same, the approach differs. Code enforcement officials review construction documents and monitor construction of new and existing buildings and structures for code compliance. The Department, with the assistance of the Licensing Boards, attempts to ensure that all who practice architecture, land surveying, professional engineering, and structural engineering are licensed and qualified to practice. Only those who have met recognized professional qualifications through education, professional experience, examination and licensure may plan, design and administer the contracts for construction of buildings, structures and facilities affecting the public. In the spirit of service to the public, this Manual has been prepared to assist the code enforcement official in better understanding the critical role of design professionals by ensuring performance standards have been met through compliance with the laws regulating the design professions in Illinois. Code enforcement officials may, in turn, rely on the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation as a source of information, support and enforcement.

The Department has the power, duty and authority to investigate violations of the design professions Acts and to discipline violators accordingly. Code enforcement officials, on the other hand, enforce building and safety code requirements. So, while the code enforcement officials rely on the Department to ensure that licensed design professions are competent, the Department relies on the code enforcement officials to ensure that only properly licensed professionals design, prepare, seal and sign technical submissions.

## DEFINITIONS

### **Address of Record**

"Address of record" means the designated address recorded by the Department in the applicant's or licensee's application file or license file maintained by the Department's licensure maintenance unit.

### **Construction Documents**

"Construction documents" are technical submissions. See definition of technical submissions.

### **Contract Documents**

"Contract documents" are documents between the parties to the contract and may include technical submissions. See the definition of technical submissions.

### **Design Professional/Profession**

"Design professional" means an architect, professional land surveyor, professional engineer, or structural engineer licensed in conformance with the respective Acts.

### **Department**

"Department" means the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

### **Shop Drawings**

Drawings and descriptions of components or systems supplied by contractors or manufacturers for inclusion in the project or building which generally do not meet the requirements for technical submissions are considered shop drawings. Shop drawings should not be accepted by the Code Enforcement Official in lieu of technical submissions, but only as support documents to supplement the technical submissions.

### **Technical Submissions**

"Technical submissions" are the designs, drawings, specifications, studies, and other technical reports and calculations that establish scope and include, but are not limited to, studies, analysis, calculations and other technical reports prepared in the course of practice of a design professional or under the direct supervision and responsible charge of a licensed professional engineer and the standard of quality for materials, workmanship, equipment, and the systems, and are prepared, signed and sealed in the course of a design professional's practice in conformance with all applicable laws, codes and ordinances. Technical submissions may include manufacturer's/contractor's fabrication details of components/systems which require the design and seal of a licensed design professional. Technical submissions intended for use in construction in the State of Illinois shall be prepared and administered in accordance with standards of reasonable professional skill and diligence.

(a) Technical submissions are the designs, drawings, and specifications that establish the scope of the project, the standard of quality for materials, workmanship, equipment, and constructions systems, and the studies and other technical reports and calculations prepared. All technical submissions prepared by or under the personal supervision of a

licensed design professional shall bear that licensee's seal, signature, and license expiration date. The licensee's written signature and date of signing, along with the date of license expiration, shall be placed adjacent to the seal.

(b) All technical submissions intended for use in the State of Illinois shall be prepared and administered in accordance with standards of reasonable professional skill and diligence. Care shall be taken to reflect the requirements of State statutes and, where applicable, county, and municipal ordinances in such submissions. In recognition that design professionals are licensed for the protection of the public, health, safety, and welfare, submissions shall be of such quality and scope, and be so administered, as to conform to professional standards.

(c) No officer, board, commission, or other public entity that receives technical submissions shall accept for filing or approval any technical submissions relating to services requiring the involvement of a design professional that do not bear the seal and signature of that licensee as required based on the respective Act.

(d) It is unlawful to affix one's seal to technical submissions if it masks the true identity of the person who actually exercised responsible control of the preparation of such work. A design professional who seals and signs technical submissions is not responsible for damage caused by subsequent changes to or uses of those technical submissions where the subsequent changes or uses, including changes or uses made by State or local governmental agencies, are not authorized or approved in writing by the design professional who originally sealed and signed the technical submissions.

(e) The design professional who has contract responsibility shall seal a cover sheet of the technical submissions, and those individual portions of the technical submissions for which the design professional is legally and professionally responsible. The design professional practicing as the support design professional shall seal those individual portions of technical submissions for which the design professional is legally and professionally responsible.

## REFERENCES

### Illinois Architecture Practice Act

- Illinois Compiled Statutes - 225 ILCS 305
- Administrative Rules - 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1150
- <https://idfpr.illinois.gov/profs/architect.html>

### Professional Engineering Practice Act

- Illinois Compiled Statutes - 225 ILCS 325
- Administrative Rules - 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1380
- <https://idfpr.illinois.gov/profs/profengineer.html>

### Structural Engineering Practice Act

- Illinois Compiled Statutes - 225 ILCS 340
- Administrative Rules - 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1480
- <https://idfpr.illinois.gov/profs/se.html>

### Illinois Professional Land Surveyor Act

- Illinois Compiled Statutes - 225 ILCS 330
- Administrative Rules - 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1270
- <https://idfpr.illinois.gov/profs/landsurv.html>

### Illinois Capital Development Board

- Illinois Accessibility Code
- Architect/Engineer Services
- Administrative Codes
- <https://cdb.illinois.gov/>

### Illinois Office of the State Fire Marshall

- <https://sfm.illinois.gov/>

### Illinois Department of Transportation

- Doing Business with IDOT (Design and Construction References)
- <https://idot.illinois.gov/>

### American Institute of Architects – Illinois Council

- <http://www.aiaill.org/>

### Illinois Society of Professional Engineers

- <http://www.illinoisengineer.com/>

### Structural Engineers Association of Illinois

- <http://www.seaoi.org/>

### Illinois Professional Land Surveyors Association

- <http://www.iplsa.org/>

## SCOPES OF PRACTICE

### **Practice of Architecture**

The “practice of architecture” within the meaning and intent of the Architecture Practice Act includes the offering or furnishing of professional services, such as consultation, environmental analysis, feasibility studies, programming, planning, aesthetic and structural design, technical submissions consisting of drawings and specifications and other documents required in the construction process, administration of construction contracts, project representation, and construction management, in connection with the construction of any private or public building, building structure, building project, or addition to or alteration or restoration thereof.

- In the offering or furnishing of professional services set forth in this Section, a licensee shall adhere to the standards of professional conduct enumerated in 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1150.90, and any amendments or changes thereto.
- Nothing contained in this Section imposes upon a person licensed under this Act the responsibility for the performance of any of the services set forth in this Section unless such person specifically contracts to provide such services.

### **Practice of Land Surveying**

Any person who practices in Illinois as a professional land surveyor who renders, offers to render, or holds himself or herself out as able to render, or perform any service, the adequate performance of which involves the special knowledge of the art and application of the principles of the accurate and precise measurement of length, angle, elevation or volume, mathematics, the related physical and applied sciences, and the relevant requirements of applicable boundary law principles and performed with the appropriate standard of care, all of which are acquired by education, training, experience, and examination. Any one or a combination of the following practices constitutes the practice of land surveying:

- (a) Establishing or reestablishing, locating, defining, and making or monumenting land boundaries or title or real property lines and the platting of lands and subdivisions;
- (b) Determining the area or volume of any portion of the earth's surface, subsurface, or airspace with respect to boundary lines, determining the configuration or contours of any portion of the earth's surface, subsurface, or airspace or the location of fixed objects thereon, except as performed by photogrammetric methods by persons holding certification from the American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing or substantially similar certification as approved by the Department, or except when the level of accuracy required is less than the level of accuracy required by the National Society of Professional Surveyors Model Standards and Practice;
- (c) Preparing descriptions for the determination of title or real property rights to any portion or volume of the earth's surface, subsurface, or airspace involving the lengths and direction of boundary lines, areas, parts of platted parcels or the contours of the earth's surface, subsurface, or airspace;
- (d) Labeling, designating, naming, preparing, or otherwise identifying legal lines or land title lines of the United States Rectangular System or any subdivision thereof on any plat, map, exhibit, photograph, photographic composite, or mosaic or photogrammetric map of any portion of the earth's surface for the

- purpose of recording and amending the same by the issuance of a certificate of correction in the Office of Recorder in any county;
- (e) Any act or combination of acts that would be viewed as offering professional land surveying services including:
    - (1) setting monuments which have the appearance of or for the express purpose of marking land boundaries, either directly or as an accessory;
    - (2) providing any sketch, map, plat, report, monument record, or other document which indicates land boundaries and monuments, or accessory monuments thereto, except that if the sketch, map, plat, report, monument record, or other document is a copy of an original prepared by a professional land surveyor, and if proper reference to that fact be made on that document;
    - (3) performing topographic surveys, with the exception of a licensed professional engineer knowledgeable in topographical surveys who performs a topographical survey specific to his or her design project. A licensed professional engineer may not, however, offer topographic surveying services that are independent of his or her specific design project;
    - (4) locating, relocating, establishing, reestablishing, retracing, laying out, or staking of the location, alignment, or elevation of any existing or proposed improvements whose location is dependent upon property, easement, and right-of-way boundaries;
    - (5) providing consultation, investigation, planning, mapping, assembling, and authoritative interpretation of gathered measurements, documents, and evidence in relation to the location of property, easement, and right-of-way boundaries; or
    - (6) measuring, evaluating, mapping, or reporting the location of existing or proposed buildings, structures, or other improvements or their surrounding topography with respect to current flood insurance rate mapping or federal emergency management agency mapping along with locating of inland wetland boundaries delineated by a qualified specialist in relation to the location of property, easement, and right-of-way boundaries.
  - (f) Determining the horizontal or vertical position or state plane coordinates for any monument or reference point that marks a title or real property line, boundary, or corner, or to set, reset, or replace any monument or reference point on any title or real property;
  - (g) Creating, preparing, or modifying electronic or computerized data or maps, including land information systems and geographic information systems, relative to the performance of activities in items (a), (b), (d), (e), (f), and (h) of this Section, except where electronic means or computerized data is otherwise utilized to integrate, display, represent, or assess the created, prepared, or modified data;
  - (h) Determining or adjusting any control network or any geodetic control network or cadastral data as it pertains to items (a) through (g) of this Section together with the assignment of measured values to any United States Rectangular System corners, title or real property corner monuments or geodetic monuments;
  - (i) Preparing and attesting to the accuracy of a map or plat showing the land boundaries or lines and marks and monuments of the boundaries or of a map or plat showing the boundaries of surface, subsurface, or air rights;



- (j) Executing and issuing certificates, endorsements, reports, or plats that portray the horizontal or vertical relationship between existing physical objects or structures and one or more corners, datums, or boundaries of any portion of the earth's surface, subsurface, or airspace;
- (k) Acting in direct supervision and control of land surveying activities or acting as a manager in any place of business that solicits, performs, or practices land surveying;
- (l) Boundary analysis and determination of property, easement, or right-of-way lines on any plat submitted for regulatory review by governmental or municipal agencies;
- (m) Offering or soliciting to perform any of the services set forth in this Section.

In the performance of any of the foregoing functions, a licensee shall adhere to the standards of professional conduct enumerated in 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1270.57. Nothing contained in this Section imposes upon a person licensed under this Act the responsibility for the performance of any of the foregoing functions unless such person specifically contracts to perform such functions.

### **Practice of Professional Engineering**

"Professional engineering practice" means the consultation on, conception, investigation, evaluation, planning, and design of, and selection of materials to be used in, administration of construction contracts for, or site observation of, an engineering system or facility, where such consultation, conception, investigation, evaluation, planning, design, selection, administration, or observation requires extensive knowledge of engineering laws, formulae, materials, practice, and construction methods. A person shall be construed to practice or offer to practice professional engineering, within the meaning and intent of this Act, who practices, or who, by verbal claim, sign, advertisement, letterhead, card, or any other way, is represented to be a professional engineer, or through the use of the initials "P.E." or the title "engineer" or any of its derivations or some other title implies licensure as a professional engineer, or holds himself or herself out as able to perform any service which is recognized as professional engineering practice.

Examples of the practice of professional engineering include, but are not limited to, transportation facilities and publicly owned utilities for a region or community, railroads, railways, highways, subways, canals, harbors, river improvements; land development; stormwater detention, retention, and conveyance, excluding structures defined under Section 5 of the Structural Engineering Practice Act of 1989; irrigation works; aircraft and airports; traffic engineering; waterworks, piping systems, sewers, sewage disposal works, storm sewer, sanitary sewer and water system modeling; plants for the generation of power; devices for the utilization of power; boilers; refrigeration plants, air conditioning systems and plants; heating systems and plants; plants for the transmission or distribution of power; electrical plants which produce, transmit, distribute, or utilize electrical energy; works for the extraction of minerals from the earth; plants for the refining, alloying or treating of metals; chemical works and industrial plants involving the use of chemicals and chemical processes; plants for the production, conversion, or utilization of nuclear, chemical, or radiant energy; forensic engineering,

geotechnical engineering including, subsurface investigations; soil and rock classification, geology and geohydrology, incidental to the practice of professional engineering; geohydrological investigations, migration pathway analysis (including evaluation of building and site elements), soil and groundwater management zone analysis and design; energy analysis, environmental risk assessments, corrective action plans, design, remediation, protection plans and systems, hazardous waste mitigation and control, and environmental control or remediation systems; recognition, measurement, evaluation and control of environmental systems and emissions; control systems, evaluation and design of engineered barriers, excluding structures defined under Section 5 of the Structural Engineering Practice Act of 1989; modeling of pollutants in water, soil, and air; engineering surveys of sites, facilities, and topography specific to a design project, not including land boundary establishment; automated building management systems; control or remediation systems; computer controlled or integrated systems; automatic fire notification and suppression systems; investigation and assessment of indoor air inhalation exposures and design of abatement and remediation systems; or the provision of professional engineering site observation of the construction of works and engineering systems. In the performance of any of the foregoing functions, a licensee shall adhere to the standards of professional conduct enumerated in 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1380.300. Nothing contained in this Section imposes upon a person licensed under this Act the responsibility for the performance of any of the foregoing functions unless such person specifically contracts to provide it. Nothing in this Section shall preclude an employee from acting under the direct supervision or responsible charge of a licensed professional engineer.

### **Practice of Structural Engineering**

A person shall be regarded as practicing structural engineering within the meaning of this Act who is engaged in the design, analysis, or supervision of the construction, enlargement or alteration of structures, or any part thereof, for others, to be constructed by persons other than himself or herself. Structures within the meaning of this Act are all structures having as essential features foundations, columns, girders, trusses, arches, or beams, with or without other parts, and in which safe design and construction require that loads and stresses must be computed, and the size and strength of parts determined by mathematical calculations based upon scientific principles and engineering data. Nothing in this Section imposes upon a person licensed under this Act the responsibility for the performance of any acts or practice unless such person specifically contracts to provide it. Nothing in this Section precludes an employee from acting under the direct supervision or responsible charge of a licensed structural engineer.

## LICENSE REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

Design professionals are licensed persons who have demonstrated to the State through the respective Boards that their qualifications meet the standards of professional competence to practice their profession. Qualifications are based on completion of a required level of professional education, a training or experience period as an intern practicing the profession under the direct supervision and control of a design professional, and passage of a comprehensive examination to assure the public of their ability to practice the profession and meet the standards of care necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Licenses are renewed periodically. Code enforcement officials should verify current licensure status by checking the expiration date shown adjacent to the seal and accessing "License Look-up" on the Department's web site at [www.idfpr.illinois.gov](http://www.idfpr.illinois.gov).

Design professionals who elect to place their license on "inactive" status may use the title "Retired" adjacent to the title of their profession. For example, "Professional Land Surveyor, Retired." However, anyone without an active license cannot practice the profession. A retired design professional cannot sign and seal any drawings. Doing so would constitute unlicensed practice and would be grounds for disciplinary action.

## **REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PROFESSIONAL DESIGN FIRMS**

The design professions Acts require any business that offers and/or provides professional design services to be registered with the Department as a Professional Design Firm. The only exception to this statutory requirement is a sole proprietorship offering services in his/her name as licensed, and not employing other individuals for which licensure is required. The Department's "License Lookup" on the Department's web site may be used by the code enforcement official to verify the type of business entity, the firm registration number, and the expiration of registration. Each Professional Design Firm is authorized to provide specific types of work, namely architecture, professional engineering, structural engineering and/or land surveying. A code enforcement official may request a copy of the firm's Professional Design Firm license or may contact the Department for verification that the firm is authorized to provide a specific type of work. It is a violation of the design profession Acts to solicit or provide services if the firm is not authorized to offer that type of work.

Any sole proprietorship who holds an active license to practice architecture, professional engineering, structural engineering or land surveying and who transacts business under the real name of the sole proprietor, as reflected on the licensee issued by the Department, is not required to be registered with the State as a professional design firm beyond that individual's license. However, any sole proprietorship, owned and operated by an Illinois licensed design professional, conducting or transacting business (as a design professional) under an assumed name is required to register as a professional design firm. Any sole proprietorship not owned by an Illinois licensed design professional is prohibited from offering professional design services to the public.

All technical submissions prepared by the Professional Design Firm shall contain the design firm registration number issued by the Department.

Registration requirements and the application for a Professional Design Firms can be found here:

<https://idfpr.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idfpr/renewals/apply/forms/f1419lt.pdf>

## DESIGN/BUILD

The design/build project delivery process is a method whereby an entity signs a single contract to provide a combination of professional design services and construction services. As used in the design profession Rules, design/build does not refer to contractual requirements for a subcontractor to retain a design professional to provide services related to performance of the contract. For example, the design/build rules do not apply to a steel fabricator who retains a structural engineer to design the stairs for a project.

A design/build entity shall not offer to provide or provide professional design services, unless it is registered as a professional design firm or it complies with specific requirements below from the Rules for the design profession Acts. Offering to provide professional design services includes, but is not limited to, displaying any sign, card, letter, advertisement or other device that might indicate to the public that the design/build entity is entitled to provide professional design services.

A design/build entity does not need to register as a professional design firm when:

- a design professional or a professional design firm registered in Illinois independently contracts with the design/build entity and participates substantially in all material aspects of the offering and providing of services relating to any bid process, contract negotiations, design, consultation, development, preparation and coordination of technical submissions, and verification of adherence to technical submissions and completion; and,
- at the time of offering services, a written disclosure shall be given to the client by the design/build entity identifying the Illinois licensed design professional(s) who will be engaged by, and is contractually responsible to, the design/build entity; and,
- the appropriate design professional will have direct supervision of the design work. The design/build entity also agrees that the professional design services will not be terminated on the project without replacement within 30 days by another Illinois licensed design professional.

## LICENSE EXEMPTIONS

Licensed design professionals may practice only within the scope of practice as defined by their Act and within their competency. A project may be exempt from one of the Acts, but not exempt under another Act or applicable local ordinances.

### **Illinois Architecture Practice Act**

Architects cannot practice land surveying or professional engineering in Illinois unless licensed as a land surveyor or professional engineer. Architects can practice structural engineering, ancillary to an architecture project and when properly qualified to do so but may not use the title “structural engineer.”

The Architecture Practice Act does not apply to:

- A. Buildings or structures outside the corporate limits of any municipality used for farm purposes.
- B. Detached single family homes on a single lot.
- C. Wood-framed, two-family homes on a single lot not more than two stories and basement in height.
- D. Interior design services that do not involve life safety or structural changes.

Exemptions from the Architecture Act are not exemptions from the Professional Land Surveying, Professional Engineering or Structural Engineering Acts.

Where when an ordinance of a unit of local government requires the involvement of a licensed architect for any buildings included in the preceding paragraphs (A) through (D), the requirements of this Act shall apply.

A building that was exempt under the provisions of A, B or C above, but due to a change in occupancy or use no longer meets the exemption, is subject to all the provisions of the Architecture Act. For example, an exempt farm building that becomes a commercial machine shop would not be exempt. If it subsequently becomes a farm building, it would become exempt. Interior alterations which result in life safety or structural changes of the building are subject to the requirement of this Act.

### **Illinois Professional Land Surveyor Act**

Professional land surveyors cannot practice professional engineering, structural engineering or architecture in Illinois unless licensed as a professional engineer, structural engineer or architect in Illinois.

### **Illinois Professional Engineering Practice Act**

Professional engineers cannot practice land surveying, structural engineering or architecture in Illinois unless licensed as a land surveyor, structural engineer or architect in Illinois.

The Professional Engineering Act does not prevent:

1. Services performed by employees of a business organization engaged in utility, industrial or manufacturing operations, or by employees of laboratory research affiliates of such business organization which are rendered in connection with the fabrication or production, sale, and installation of products, systems, or nonengineering services of the business organization or its affiliates.
2. Inspection, maintenance and service work done by employees of the State of Illinois, any political subdivision thereof or any municipality.

Exemptions from the Professional Engineering Act are not exemptions from the Architecture, Professional Land Surveying or Structural Engineering Acts.

### **Illinois Structural Engineering Practice Act**

Structural engineers cannot practice professional engineering or land surveying in Illinois unless licensed as a professional engineer or land surveyor in Illinois. Structural engineers can practice architecture, ancillary to a structural project and when properly qualified to do so but may not use the title “architect.”

The Structural Engineering Practice Act does not exempt single-family or multiple-unit residences. Exemptions from the Structural Engineering Act are not exemptions from the Architecture, Professional Land Surveying or Professional Engineering Acts.

# PROFESSIONAL SEAL AND SIGNATURE REQUIREMENTS

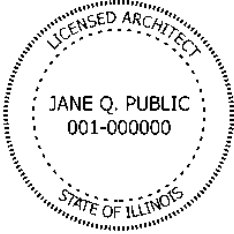
Design Profession	Required Text on Seal	Signature Requirements
Architect	Licensee name, license number, "Licensed Architect, State of Illinois"	Any means
Professional Engineer	Licensee name, license number, "Licensed Professional Engineer of Illinois"	Any means
Structural Engineer	Licensee name, license number, "Licensed Structural Engineer," "State of Illinois"	Any means
Professional Land Surveyor	Licensee name, license number, "Professional Land Surveyor, State of Illinois", place of business	Any means

- The Acts do not specify the size, shape, or design of the seal. The image of the seal must be reproducible. (Embossed seals do not fulfill the requirements of the Acts.)
- The licensee’s signature must appear with the seal. Architects and structural engineers may place their signature adjacent to the seal, on the same sheet as the seal, or the seal may be placed over the signature. Professional engineers and land surveyors must place their signature adjacent to the seal.
- The current date and license expiration date must appear with the signature and seal.
- The seal, signature and dates may be placed by any means, including electronically.
- The licensee shall affix the signature, current date, date of license expiration and seal to the first sheet of any bound set or loose sheets prepared by the licensee or under that licensee’s immediate supervision.
- All documents or technical submissions prepared by a professional design firm shall additionally contain the design firm registration number.

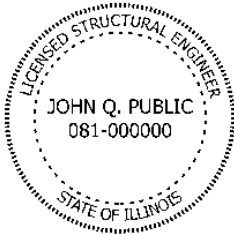
**The examples below are suggestions for seals.**



[Signature]  
[Date Signed]  
License Expires: [Date]



[Signature]  
[Date Signed]  
License Expires: [Date]



[Signature]  
[Date Signed]  
License Expires: [Date]



[Signature]  
[Date Signed]  
License Expires: [Date]



## GUIDELINES FOR TECHNICAL SUBMISSIONS

The following guidelines for technical submissions are oriented toward a typical commercial or institutional building project and are directed toward the usual submissions submitted to a code enforcement official for the purpose of obtaining a construction permit. Special use facilities, such as industrial plants, large multi-story buildings, amusement park rides, etc., will require different types of technical submissions. In any case, the following guidelines must not be construed as the complete set of documentation required to implement a typical construction project.

Code officials shall not issue a construction permit unless the technical submissions have been signed and sealed by appropriate design professionals.

### **Technical Submissions Reviews**

Technical submissions for construction projects filed for approval for buildings, structures, or engineering works and plats of survey are to be prepared under the direct supervision and control of the design professional sealing and signing the documents. Such documents are generally reviewed by the code enforcement official to assure conformance with local laws, zoning, deed restrictions, codes and regulations, as well as applicable State and Federal laws. Technical submissions for all non-exempt (regulated) buildings or works are to have the seal(s) and original signature(s) of the design professional(s) with a current valid license who prepared or caused the submissions to be prepared. Seals shall be affixed in accordance with the respective Acts. When required by the local jurisdiction, technical submissions for exempt projects shall also comply with all standards and codes, as well as the respective Act, and shall be signed and sealed by the responsible licensed design professional.

In most cases, plans and specifications for buildings, structures or engineering works must be prepared by Illinois licensed design professionals. In some instances, plans and specifications for exempt buildings may not require the services of a licensed architect. However, local jurisdictions may require the services of a licensed architect even for exempt buildings. Local jurisdictions have the right to enact ordinances more stringent than those of the State.

Technical submissions submitted to the code enforcement official should be sufficient to clearly show the project in its entirety with emphasis on the following:

1. Scope of the work;
2. Building code compliance;
3. Structural integrity;
4. Life safety assurance;
5. Architectural and environmental barriers;
6. Electrical and mechanical system design details;
7. Industrial process design details including analysis of operational hazards.

The minimum required technical submissions will depend upon the size, nature and complexity of the project. All technical submissions must comply with the design professionals Acts and Rules, and follow a reasonable standard of care. They should contain sufficient information about the design basis and assumptions to permit review and reproduction of the design solution.

## **Technical submissions include (but are not limited to):**

### **1. Drawings**

(Some of the data may be included in other technical submissions such as specifications, studies, or calculations)

#### **a. Cover Sheets**

- (1) Project shall be identified.
- (2) Project address.
- (3) The Professional Design Firm(s) and the firm registration number(s) issued by the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation shall be shown.
- (4) All applicable codes utilized on the project shall be listed.
- (5) Index of all drawings shall be included.
- (6) Seal(s) and signatures(s) of responsible design professional(s) and indication as to which of the indexed drawings the seal applies, the expiration date of the license, and registration number of the Professional Design Firm shall be affixed.
- (7) Other items required by the local enforcement agency shall be included.

It is common for technical submissions to contain drawings prepared by several professionals (i.e. architect, structural engineer, professional engineer, and professional land surveyor). Each design professional will seal and sign that portion of the technical submissions for which they are responsible. Therefore, one set of technical submissions may contain drawings that bear the seal and signature of more than one licensed design professional and professional design firm

#### **b. Land Surveys**

##### **(1) Boundary Survey**

A boundary survey establishes the location of property lines in relation to well recognized and established points of reference, adjoining properties, and rights of way. It shows angles, bearings or azimuths, linear dimensions and curves. Typically, boundary surveys may also show improvements (buildings, roadways, utilities, etc.), rights of way, easements, vegetation, FEMA flood plain designations, and required set-backs. Boundary surveys can only be prepared by professional land surveyors.

##### **(2) Topographic Survey or Map**

A topographic survey or topographic map is a delineation of horizontal and/or vertical locations of the existing natural or man-made features of a portion of the earth's surface, subsurface or airspace and the graphic representation of the results of such delineation. They are defined as below:

##### **A) Topographic Survey**

A topographic survey made using accepted terrestrial or GPS surveying methods or using indirect surveying methods such as photogrammetry, light detection and ranging (LIDAR) or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs or drones) performed in conjunction with a boundary survey or ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey depicting land boundaries shall be entitled "Boundary and Topographic Survey" or

"ALTA/NSPS Land Title and Topographic Survey", and shall be subject to the current minimum standards established for the ALTA/NSPS Land Title Surveys or Boundary Surveys by this Part, except where differing federal, State or local laws, ordinances or rules may be more stringent.

B) Topographic Map

When topography is acquired using accepted terrestrial or GPS surveying methods, or using indirect surveying methods such as photogrammetry, light detection and ranging (LIDAR) or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs or drones) and is not performed in conjunction with a boundary survey or ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey; boundary lines and boundary data shall be shown as needed/or as deemed necessary by the surveyor. The source of the land boundary information along with the statement that "this professional service does not constitute a land survey" shall be shown on the topographic map and placed near the surveyor's certificate and seal.

- i) When the position and/or extent of a topographic map is not defined by land boundaries, enough information must be shown on the survey to enable the client to locate the topographic map on the ground.
- ii) A licensed professional engineer knowledgeable in topographical mapping may perform a topographic map specific to his/her design project. A licensed professional engineer may not, however, offer topographic mapping services independent of his/her specific design project.

c. Site Plan

A site plan shows the proposed building location as it relates to the property. It may also show existing and proposed utilities, roadways, topography, drainage and other improvements. If a site plan shows any technical information, such as dimensions or bearings, relating to boundaries, the site plan must be signed and sealed by a professional land surveyor, as well as the design professional responsible for the proposed conditions. This includes the case where a boundary survey of existing conditions is used as an underlay or background for the proposed conditions.

d. Floor, Roof and Reflected Ceiling Plans

e. Exterior Elevations

f. Building Sections and Wall Sections

g. Foundation Plan

Geotechnical reports must be prepared by or under the supervision of a licensed professional engineer.

h. Floor and Roof Framing Plans

- i. Mechanical System/Mechanical Arrangement Drawings  
No part of the mechanical design may be delegated by the design professional via a “performance specification” to a mechanical contractor who is not a licensed design professional.
- j. Plumbing System
- k. Fire Protection
- l. Fire Suppression System  
No part of the fire suppression system may be delegated by the design professional via a “performance specification” to a contractor who is not a licensed design professional.
- m. Electrical System  
No part of the electrical design may be delegated by the design professional via a “performance specification” to an electrical contractor who is not a licensed design professional.

## **2. Structural Calculations**

When required by the code enforcement official, provide calculations for the structural system of the project for both vertical and lateral loads. For computer analyses, sufficient input, output, design assumptions and other information should be submitted to permit review and reproduction of the calculations.

## **3. Specifications**

## **4. Addenda and Changes**

## **5. Quality Standards**

### **Sealing and Signing Plans and Specifications**

By affixing the design professional’s seal and signing the technical submissions, the design professional affirms that the technical submissions submitted to the code enforcement official for review and permit issuance have been prepared by or under the direct supervision and control of that licensed design professional and to the best of the design professional’s knowledge and belief those documents comply with applicable laws, codes and ordinances. Design professionals can affix their seal and signature only to work that they have prepared themselves or was prepared under their supervision. Code enforcement officials may question the licensee or request documentation to ensure that the work was legitimately provided by or under the supervision of the licensee, and that the design professional did not engage in illegal “plan stamping.” (“Plan stamping” is affixing a seal and signature to work not performed by the licensee or under their supervision, for which the licensee has little or no personal knowledge.)

In addition to the drawings and project manuals which are sealed and signed, all loose individual copies of drawings or specifications, change orders that alter technical submissions, and other documents utilized as technical submissions to the code enforcement official shall also bear the design professional’s seal and signature.

**Permit Issuance**

Permits for construction should be issued only for projects which comply with the above requirements. Before a permit can be issued by the local jurisdiction, special permits may be required from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the U.S. or Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. or Illinois Department of Transportation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Coast Guard, Federal Aviation Administration, or other federal, state or local agencies and jurisdictions. The owner or design professional(s) should investigate fully what codes and regulations pertain to the project and the site.

**Modifications of Technical Submissions**

No modifications to technical submissions shall be made except by the design professional(s) of Record who signed and sealed the documents. The code enforcement official may require that such modifications be filed with the approving jurisdiction. All modifications shall be treated the same as the original documents and shall bear the seal and signature of all pertinent design professionals.

## DISCIPLINES AND PENALTIES

The design professional Acts are State law. Violations of these Acts or their associated Rules are violations of State law that may result in civil penalties and could subject a person to criminal prosecution. The following are some of the offenses:

- Using the title professional land surveyor, architect, structural engineer or professional engineer or any of the derivations of those titles, without holding an active license in this State as such.
- Attempting to use the seal of another.
- Affixing a seal to technical submissions that have not been prepared under the licensee's supervision.
- Aiding or assisting another to violate an Act.
- Negligence, incompetence or misconduct in the practice of a profession.
- Dishonorable, unethical or unprofessional conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud or harm the public.
- Making a false statement of compliance pursuant to the Environmental Barriers Act.
- Making a false or misleading statement to the Department.

Each Act provides that the first offense is a Class A misdemeanor; any subsequent offense constitutes a Class 4 felony. In addition to the possibility of criminal prosecution, the Department has the authority to levy fines, up to \$10,000 per offense, for violations of these Acts or their associated Rules. The Attorney General's office has additional fines and equitable remedies that may be imposed for violations of the Environmental Barriers Act and the Accessibility Code.

### **VIOLATION REPORTING PROCESS**

In order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public, code enforcement officials are requested to report all violations of the respective design professionals licensing Acts by making a formal complaint with the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

Under the Rules for each respective Act, all licensed design professionals are required to report violations of the respective Acts. This includes violations by design professionals as well as unlicensed practice.

If you have a question regarding legal interpretations of the design Acts, contact the IDFP General Counsel's office in Chicago at 312-814-4500, and request to speak with the attorney handling the design profession in question. Hours are normally Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

If you wish to report a possible violation of the design Acts, you may file a complaint via the Internet at [www.idfpr.illinois.gov](http://www.idfpr.illinois.gov), or you can contact the Complaint Intake Unit in the Chicago office at 312-814-6910 or by a letter to Complaint Intake Unit, Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, 555 West Monroe Street, 5th Floor Chicago, IL 60661. Hours are normally Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Department has prepared a form to assist you in filing your complaint, which may be obtained from the Department or the Department's website at [www.idfpr.illinois.gov](http://www.idfpr.illinois.gov). Complaints can also be submitted via the Department's website. However, a phone call or letter will suffice.

Be sure to retain copies of drawings or other documents submitted to the code enforcement office that may form the basis of the complaint (even though the violator may wish to recover them to avoid your filing of the complaint). Processing a complaint can be expedited by providing copies of relevant documents with the complaint.

Complaints may be filed anonymously if the complainant feels intimidated or at risk in any manner.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following responses are based upon the State statutes; however, local ordinances may be more stringent.

**1. Can architects sign and seal technical submissions prepared by unlicensed consultants?**

No. This would constitute illegal “plan stamping,” and subject the architect to disciplinary action. Ref: Section 305/6.

**2. May architects sign and seal drawings prepared by others?**

An architect may sign, and seal drawings prepared by his/her employees and drawings prepared by employees of other Illinois licensed architects when prepared under the architect’s responsible control. An architect may also sign, and seal drawings prepared by the architect’s Illinois licensed consultants which the architect intends to integrate into his/her work. The architect is obligated to have control over and detailed professional knowledge of the content of the technical submissions during their preparation as is ordinarily exercised by architects applying the required professional standard of care. Merely reviewing or reviewing and correcting the technical submissions prepared by others, even if they are licensed, does not constitute “responsible control” by the architect.

Licensed professional engineers and structural engineers are also required to sign and seal any technical submissions they prepare even though they may be signed and sealed by the licensed architect into whose work the technical submissions are integrated. Ref: Section 305/14 and 68 Ill. Adm. Code Section 1150.90(e).

**3. Are professional engineers and structural engineers required to seal all technical submissions they prepared even though they are sealed by an architect?**

Yes. All portions of technical submissions prepared by or under the personal supervision of a professional engineer or structural engineer shall bear that engineer’s seal, signature, and license expiration date. Ref: Section 325/14 and Section 340/12.

**4. Is an architect required to sign and seal the construction documents that the architect has prepared for a project that is exempt from the Architecture Act and is not located within a jurisdiction that requires the architect to do so?**

No. However, if the architect has engaged in activities in connection with the exempt project that would constitute the practice of architecture on a non-exempt (regulated) project, the architect will be held to the standards of practice otherwise set forth in the Act. While it is not required, it is recommended that the architect sign and seal the documents for construction.



**5. Must each page of a set of technical submissions be sealed and signed by the licensed design professional who prepares them?**

No. A design professional is required to seal and sign the cover or first sheet with an index of the bound set of the technical submissions which may include any calculations. In addition, professional engineers and structural engineers must sign and seal individual portions of technical submissions for which they are legally responsible. Local jurisdictions may require each sheet to be signed and sealed by the design professional responsible for the work. All loose sheets of any kind, including change orders that alter technical submissions and all other documentation or technical submissions are to be individually sealed and signed by the design professional.

**6. May code enforcement officials require the design professional of record to seal and sign the drawings of a licensed consultant?**

No. Design professionals are required to seal and sign what they have personally prepared or what others have prepared under their direct supervision and control. Design professionals acting as consultants must seal and sign their own technical submissions.

**7. Do all components of a building or structure have to be shown on the design drawings?**

The design drawings submitted to the code enforcement official must provide all components that affect the health, safety and welfare of the public. The technical submissions must provide sufficient information for the code enforcement official to evaluate the application for a permit. A code enforcement official may require additional design drawings before a permit is granted.

**8. May a design professional show items on technical submissions that require a contractor to provide professional design services?**

A design professional can schematically show a component or system that a contractor or manufacturer is to provide with properly sealed and signed documentation. However, if the design professional shows specific information related to the design, the design professional of record must ensure that the information and design is complete.

**9. Is a design professional responsible for everything shown the drawings they have signed and sealed?**

Yes. A design professional is responsible for all information shown on technical submissions they have signed and sealed, even if technical submissions delegate design responsibility to another design professional retained by the contractor.

**10. Can an owner, builder, contractor, or code enforcement official make changes to a design professional's plans?**

No. Plans prepared by an Illinois licensed design professional can only be changed

by that design professional.

**11. Who may issue change orders and addenda to technical submissions?**

Change orders, additional drawings, and/or addenda that alter technical submissions for structures or buildings must bear the seal and signature of the licensed design professional of record responsible for the modifications, including the design firm registration number, if applicable, and should be submitted to the code enforcement official.

**12. May code enforcement officials require a design professional to certify that the construction of a project is in conformance with the design documents?**

The design professional is not statutorily required under the practice Acts to certify that the construction work is in conformance. However, local ordinances may require a statement that to the best of the design professional's knowledge and belief, the condition of the project is in conformance with the design documents and applicable building codes. Some jurisdictions require such a statement before a Certificate of Use or Occupancy will be issued.

**13. May a structural engineer sign and seal drawings which have been prepared by others?**

A structural engineer may seal and sign drawings, with the exception of professional engineering technical submissions, prepared by others, provided that the technical submissions have been sufficiently reviewed to ensure that they have met the standards of professional skill and diligence. In reviewing the work of others, the licensed structural engineer shall, where necessary, do calculations, redesign, or any other work necessary to meet such standards. The structural engineer shall retain evidence of having completed such review. The documents sealed by the licensed structural engineer should be of no lesser quality than if they had been produced by that licensed structural engineer. The licensed structural engineer who seals the work of others is obligated to provide sufficient supervision and review of such work so that the public is protected. Ref: SE Act Section 340/12

**14. May a profession engineer sign and seal drawings which have been prepared by others?**

Yes. The Act does permit professional engineers to sign/seal designs that they did not personally prepare but were prepared under their direct supervision and control. Ref. PE Act Section 325/14.

**15. Are there limitations on the types of technical submissions a design professional may prepare, seal and sign?**

Yes. The design professional may only prepare, seal, and sign technical submissions that are within the scope of the licensee's competency and prepared under their personal supervision. Ref: 68 Ill. Adm. Code Section 1150.90(a)(1), 1270.57(d), 1380.300(b), 1480.210(b).

**16. I have a set of plans sealed and signed by a design professional licensed in a state other than Illinois. Does the plan submittal meet the requirements for a design professional in Illinois?**

No. Subject to the exceptions on page 11 only design professionals currently licensed by the State of Illinois may offer services, design, and seal technical submissions for projects to be constructed in Illinois. Professionals licensed in other states must obtain licensure in Illinois prior to initiation of any services offered or provided for a project within Illinois. The out-of-state design professional would be considered practicing in Illinois without a license and may be subjected to disciplinary action, including civil and criminal penalties. Ref: 305/23.5, Section 305/3, Section 325/39, Section 325/24 Section 330/43, and Section 340/20.5.

**17. What procedure should a code enforcement official follow when the original design professional is no longer the design professional of record and design changes, or corrections are required?**

The code enforcement official should notify the owner of the project that the design professional has withdrawn his certification from the project, and it is the owner's responsibility to hire another licensed design professional. Multiple seals may be required with clear delineation of the portions of the documents for which each has responsibility.

**18. Can design professionals of record withdraw or rescind their seals for monetary reasons?**

No. It would be unprofessional conduct. Design professionals may withdraw their seals if they discover that the construction of the project could adversely affect the public's health, safety, or welfare.

**19. In the event that a design professional dies or becomes incapacitated during preparation of the technical submissions, must the owner hire a new design professional and prepare all new documents?**

In the event of the death or incapacity of a design professional, a subsequent design professional shall be engaged. The subsequent design professional may utilize the drawings, specifications, reports or other professional work produced by the deceased or incapacitated design professional.

**20. May an unlicensed individual prepare plans and specifications for interior space planning and/or remodeling of non-exempted (regulated) buildings?**

Exceptions to the design professions' licensure laws allow alterations that do not result in changes affecting life-safety or structural changes in certain instances. Quite often "interior space planning" involves mechanical/electrical systems and other areas requiring expertise beyond the capabilities of an unlicensed individual. Those systems requiring the application of engineering principles and data must be designed and the documents prepared by an Illinois licensed professional engineer, structural engineer or architect, as appropriate.

**21. If an unlicensed individual prepares plans for a non-exempt (regulated) building or structure and applies for a permit for construction, should the code enforcement official suggest the individual seeking a permit contact an architect or engineer to have the plans and specifications reviewed and sealed?**

No. This constitutes unlicensed practice, and the code enforcement official should notify the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Furthermore, architects, professional engineers and professional land surveyors can only sign and seal technical submissions that were prepared under their supervision. Affixing their seal to technical submissions not prepared under their supervision would constitute “plan stamping”, and subject the licensee to disciplinary action.

**22. When is a farm building considered a non-exempt building that requires an architect’s seal?**

Buildings constructed on farmland for the express use in the storage and/or processing of the farmer’s livestock and crops are considered exempt buildings. It is recognized that it may be necessary for farmers to work on a reciprocal basis, and therefore, they might occasionally store or process each other’s livestock or crops. However, if a building is constructed for the express purpose of occupancy by the general public and is clearly being used for a commercial venture, the building is then subject to the requirements of the Architecture Practice Act. Examples of buildings that are non-exempt are grain elevators, produce stores, and horse stables and riding arenas open to the public.

**23. Are there any limitations imposed by the Architecture Practice Act as to an architect’s structural design capabilities?**

Yes. Administrative Rules for the implementation of the Act require the architect to only undertake those services for which the architect is qualified by education and training in the area of structural design. An architect may not use the title of structural engineer unless licensed as a structural engineer. Ref: 68 Ill. Adm. Code Section 1150.90(a)(1)

**24. May architects prepare, seal and sign structural calculations and structural drawings?**

An architect may seal and sign structural calculations and structural drawings only if prepared by the architect or if the architect has reviewed such portion of the professional work prepared by the architect’s licensed consultant and has coordinated its preparation and intends to be responsible for its adequacy. Ref: 68 Ill. Adm. Code Section 1150.90(e)(1)

**25. May structural engineers prepare, seal and sign architectural drawings?**

Yes. Structural engineers may prepare, seal and sign technical submissions for buildings or structures. These may include site plans, elevations, floor plans, and other submissions used in the construction process. Licensed structural engineers may practice only within the scope of practice of structural engineering and the

licensee's competency. Structural engineers may not use the title architect and may not offer architectural services unless licensed as an architect. Ref: 68 Ill. Adm. Code Section 1480.210

**26. May a professional engineer prepare, seal and sign architectural drawings?**

No. Ref: Section 325/47

**27. May a professional engineer prepare seal and sign structural calculations and structural drawings?**

No. Ref: Section 325/47

**28. May a professional engineer prepare, seal, and sign drawings to add or modify supported equipment such as roof-top-air-handling units or electrical switchgear?**

If the addition or modification of the equipment requires additions or modifications to the supporting components, a structural engineer or architect must prepare, seal, and sign appropriate drawings for the supporting components.

**29. Do "shop drawings" have to be sealed and signed?**

Shop drawings, as defined under definitions, are intended as contractor or fabricator details and are not required to be sealed and signed unless otherwise required by the technical submissions. The design professional may specify that certain shop drawings or other contractor compliance submittals be submitted to the design professional for review; in such case, the permit holder must assure the design professional's continued involvement in the project as necessary for such reviews.

**30. Can shop drawings be used in lieu of design drawings for technical submissions?**

No. The design professional of record must ensure that the design drawings provide sufficient information for the code enforcement official to evaluate the application for a permit. (Refer to Guidelines for Reviewing Technical Submissions).

**31. Are structural connection and erection drawings required to be prepared, sealed, and signed by the design professional of record?**

The design professional of record is not required to prepare, seal, and sign structural connection and erection drawings. These are considered shop drawings for the contractor's use only. When required by a contract, only a licensed structural engineer or architect may prepare, seal, and sign these drawings. A professional engineer may not seal such drawings.

**32. Who may prepare, seal and sign electrical, mechanical, plumbing, or fire protection drawings?**

Professional engineers may design, seal and sign electrical, mechanical, plumbing

and fire protection systems. Architects may prepare, seal and sign such drawings and specifications provided that such design is within the competency of the architect and is incidental to the specific architectural project. An architect may not sign and seal technical submissions not prepared under the architect's responsible control. An architect may not perform "stand-alone" mechanical or electrical design. For complex mechanical or electrical designs, a professional engineer is recommended.

**33. Are licensed design professionals required for design of building utilities such as electrical service, steam systems, or refrigeration systems where no changes or additions to the buildings are necessary?**

Yes. The intent of the law is that licensed professional be involved in design work pertaining to the lawful practice of architecture, engineering, or land surveying. Use of an architect, professional engineer or structural engineer in this case is not precluded simply because a general contractor is not involved in modifications or alterations to a building or structure. Safe design of these systems requires the application of engineering knowledge and analysis. For the protection of the public, which includes employees, these plans must be prepared, sealed and signed by the applicable licensed design professional (architect, professional engineer, or structural engineer).

**34. May a licensed design professional prepare landscape drawings without a landscape architect registration?**

Yes. Although seal responsibility is not required for such drawings, landscape drawings prepared by design professionals to be utilized as technical submissions shall be signed and sealed by the design professional.

**35. Can a professional engineer or landscape architect design retaining walls?**

No. Retaining walls, regardless of height, must be designed by a structural engineer.

**36. May code enforcement officials require that only a professional engineer prepare, seal and sign the site grading and site drainage drawings required by the code enforcement official as a condition for permit issuance even though an architect has prepared the site, grading, and drainage plans as part of the technical submissions?**

Local jurisdictions may require a licensed professional engineer to seal and sign the site grading and site drainage drawings.

**37. Which design professionals are permitted to design above or below grade swimming pools which are utilized by the public?**

Only architects and structural engineers are permitted to design the structural portions of a swimming pool. Professional engineers are required for the design of the mechanical and electrical systems.

**38. May a professional engineer prepare, seal and sign a boundary survey?**

No. Only a licensed professional land surveyor may seal and sign a boundary survey. Section 330/16

**39. Are licensed architects, structural engineers, or professional engineers authorized to perform land surveys, establishing and reestablishing property boundaries, without a professional land surveyor's license?**

No. Only licensed professional land surveyors are authorized to perform boundary surveys. A licensed professional land surveyor or licensed professional engineer may perform surveys of topographic data and elevations. Ref: Section 330/5.

**40. Who is allowed to revise Plats of Survey prepared by an Illinois professional land surveyor?**

Only the licensed professional land surveyor that prepared the Plat of Survey is allowed to revise or amend the Plat of Survey. No other government agency or professional surveyor may alter a plat.

**41. Who can record a plat of subdivision?**

Only the professional land surveyor who signs the plat or anyone presenting written authorization from the professional land surveyor.

**42. When an owner has separate contracts with an architect, structural engineer, and professional engineer, who has responsibility for the coordination of the project?**

It is the owner's responsibility to arrange for proper coordination. The licensed design professionals of record will only be required to seal and sign and take responsibility for work prepared by that design professional. If a change is made that may affect another design professional's work, the design professional should notify the owner. A code enforcement official should notify the owner that coordination may be required for design changes.

**43. Is a design professional required to provide construction administration services during the construction phase of a proposed project?**

No. design professionals are not statutorily required to provide construction administration services. However, an agreement between the owner and a design professional for construction administration services is desirable. The design professional should participate throughout construction to resolve design questions or to approve any requested design modifications. If technical submissions specify that shop drawings or other compliance submittals are to be reviewed by the design professional, then the design professional must be involved in all the phases of the project involving shop drawings.

**44. Who may use the title of architect, professional land surveyor, professional engineer, or structural engineer?**

Only individuals who are licensed by the State of Illinois and hold valid professional design licenses may use the title of architect, professional land surveyor, professional engineer or structural engineer.

**45. May an unlicensed person or entity advertise or offer architectural, professional land surveying, professional engineering, or structural engineering services?**

No. An individual or entity not licensed or registered by the State of Illinois may not advertise or offer professional services, prepare, affix a seal or sign technical submissions. An individual or entity not licensed or registered by the State of Illinois cannot put out any sign or card or other device which might indicate to the public that the individual or entity is a design professional or that the individual or entity is qualified to engage in the practice of architecture, professional land surveying, professional engineering or structural engineering unless exempt in the respective Acts or Administrative Rules. Ref: Section 305/36, Section 330/43, Section 325/39, and Section 340/34.

**46. May companies without any licensed architects, land surveyors, professional engineers or structural engineers on their staff use the words “architect,” “architects,” “land surveyor,” “land surveyors,” “engineer,” “engineers,” “engineered” or “engineering” in the company name, slogan, or advertising?**

No. Only those entities that employ licensed architects, land surveyors, professional or structural engineers who are licensed with the State of Illinois may use the terms in their company name, slogan or advertising. In addition, entities, including sole proprietorships owned and operated by Illinois licensed design professionals transacting business under an assumed name, offering professional design services must register with the Department as a professional design firm. Ref: Section 305/21, Section 330/25, Section 325/23, and Section 340/19.

**47. What action should a design professional take if the design professional becomes aware of a decision taken by the design professional’s employer or client, against the design professional’s advice, which violates applicable State or municipal laws and regulations and which will, in the design professional’s judgment, materially and adversely affect the safety of the public?**

The design professional shall report the decision to the local inspector or public official charged with the enforcement of the applicable State or municipal laws and regulations, and refuse to consent to the decision, and withdraw the professional’s services with respect to the project.

If the decision was made by unlicensed or unqualified individuals, the design professional should file a complaint with the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

**48. Do design/build projects require a design professional to participate?**



Yes. Licensed design professionals must be engaged to provide professional services to an owner, contractor, developer or any other participant in the project delivery process. The licensed design professionals must participate in all material aspects from the offering to completion.

**49. Are professional design firms or individual design professionals required to have liability insurance or to be bonded?**

No, not unless required by contract with the owner of the project or by local ordinance.

**50. Is a separate registration required for entities which offer design services?**

Yes. Any business which includes the practice of architecture, land surveying, professional engineering, and/or structural engineering within its stated purpose, practices, or holds itself out as available to practice architecture, land surveying, professional engineering, and/or structural engineering shall register with the Department as a Professional Design Firm. Authority also must be obtained from the Illinois Secretary of State/Corporate Division to transact business in Illinois for corporations, professional service corporations, professional limited liability companies, limited liability partnerships, and limited partnerships.

Any sole proprietorship conducting or transacting business under a name other than that reflected on the licensee's license, under an assumed name in accordance with the provisions of the Assumed business Name Act, shall comply with the registration requirements of a professional design firm. For example, a sole proprietorship doing business as "John Doe Architects," "Jane Doe & Associates," or "Bill Smith Engineering" must be licensed as a professional design firm.

Any sole proprietorship NOT owned and operated by an Illinois licensed design professional shall be prohibited from offering that professional design service to the public.

**51. Must a complaint against a design professional be filed in writing?**

No. Complaints may be filed in writing, by telephone or via the Department website and may be made anonymously. If you wish to report a possible violation of the design Acts, you may file a complaint via the Internet at <https://idfpr.illinois.gov/admin/complaints.html> or you can contact the Complaint Intake Unit in the Chicago office at 312-814-6910 or by a letter to Complaint Intake Unit, Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, 555 West Monroe Street, 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60661. Hours are normally Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Copies of all documentation (plans, contracts, business cards, correspondence, etc.) should be submitted with the complaint, or retained for future use. Use of the Department's form helps to ensure that the Department has the basic information necessary to determine if a potential violation has occurred.