



Building Official In-Training Information

Building Officials In-Training

The 'Building Official In-Training' (BOIT) or trainee classification of building official was established to help municipalities and other local authorities meet the mandatory qualification requirements for building and plumbing officials that come into force under the [Building Act](#) on February 28, 2021.

Some local authorities have expressed concerns about the lack of qualified building or plumbing officials, particularly at higher levels of qualification, or difficulties with recruiting and retaining qualified officials. The trainee class helps address these concerns by providing a way for individuals to start their career as a building or plumbing official. It can also help existing building and plumbing officials who want to achieve higher levels of qualification or require some additional time to complete their final qualification exams after February 28, 2021.

[Building Official In-Training Class: FAQ](#)

[How does the building official in-training class work?](#)

There is a trainee class associated with each of the five 'standard' classes, Building Levels 1, 2, 3 and Plumbing Levels 1-2. Being registered as a trainee allows individuals to temporarily work as building or plumbing officials at a level above their current standard classification. This enables individuals to learn the skills and knowledge needed to pass the qualification exam(s) and achieve standard qualification.

The scope of work for each trainee class is the same as the standard class, and the trainee official can make all of the same decisions as an official in the standard class.

Those interested in entering a trainee class must apply to the Building Officials' Association of B.C. (Association), meet all applicable qualification criteria, and maintain their eligibility throughout their training program.

Before the end of the training period, the trainee must pass the necessary qualification exam(s) and apply to the Association for standard qualification. If they have not passed the exams, they will be de-registered from the trainee class and will no longer be able to practice according to the scope of work of their trainee class. For those without qualifications, this will mean they can no longer make decisions on behalf of a local authority about whether a matter conforms to provincial building regulations.

[What are the requirements to register as a building official in-training?](#)

To be registered as a building official in-training, an individual must:

- be employed by a local authority as defined by the *Building Act*;
- complete the trainee exam;
- submit an application to the Association;
- provide regular progress reports to the Association; and
- any other requirements set out in regulation.



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The requirements and program outlined area summarized in the following table:

Class	Building Official Classes			Plumbing Official Classes	
	Level 1 Trainee	Level 2 Trainee	Level 3 Trainee	Level 1 Trainee	Level 2 Trainee
Scope of Work	Same as a Level 1 official	Same as a Level 2 official	Same as a Level 3 official	Same as a Level 1 official	Same as a Level 2 official
Prerequisites	----- Employment with a local authority ----- ----- Successfully pass the trainee qualification exam ----- ----- Have a joint training plan between trainee and local authority ----- ----- Complete a certain number of training activities every 6 months -----				
	No BO qualification needed	Level 1 BO qualification	Level 2 BO qualification	No PO qualification needed	Level 1 PO qualification
Max. Length of Program	12 months	18 months	24 months	12 months	12 months
At the end of the Program	Must pass L1 BO exams	Must pass the L2 BO exams	Must pass the L3 BO exams	Must pass L1 PO exam	Must pass L2 PO exam
Consequence if not passed	Cannot work as a Building Official	Will continue to work as a Level 1	Will continue to work as a Level 2	Cannot work as a Plumbing Official	Will continue to work as a Level 1
¹ Note that these prerequisites are the same for all trainee classes.					

What employers qualify as a local authority under the *Building Act*?

Trainees must work for employers that are defined as local authorities under the *Building Act*: a municipality; a regional district; the Nisga'a Lisims Government; a treaty first nation; the board of governors of the University of British Columbia; or any other authority prescribed by regulation of the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

What is the trainee qualification exam and where can I learn what I need to know to pass it?

The building official in-training exam will be ready in January 2021. It will be a multiple-choice, open book and online exam.

The Association worked with the Province and Local Government Management Association of B.C. to develop a course to prepare people for the exam. The course introduces students to a range of topics and helpful resources while providing a broad overview of the building regulatory system. Others in the building industry or building officials moving to B.C. from other jurisdictions will find the course of interest and it can be taken by already qualified building officials for CPD points.



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I'm a trainee, how will I learn what I need to know?

Before registering as a trainee, you must develop a training plan with your employer. This plan will establish the professional development activities you will complete and how your employer will support you to prepare for the qualification exam(s).

The Association will provide a template training plan to ensure a minimum level of consistency, but it is recognized that the content of these plans will vary by trainee and employer. The training plan for an inexperienced trainee might prioritize formal code education or having a mentor while a trainee attempting higher qualifications might prioritize peer reviews of work by more experienced officials.

Your employer will need to report on your progress towards completing the approved training plan at specified intervals.

How long can I work as a building official in-training?

The trainee classification was developed to be a temporary way of allowing individuals to work at a higher level of building or plumbing classification than their qualifications would otherwise allow.

The length of time that you can work as a building official in-training depends on which trainee class you are working under. The maximum length of a trainee program for a trainee classification is:

- Building Level 1 – 12 months
- Building Level 2 – 18 months
- Building Level 3 – 24 months
- Plumbing Level 1 – 12 months
- Plumbing Level 2 – 12 months

Can I be a trainee for building and plumbing at the same time?

Yes, you can register as a building official in-training for one building and one plumbing class at the same time. Being in the two classes are independent from one another, so you will not get extra time just because you are registered in more than one class.

Can I be registered as a trainee in more than one classification of building or plumbing official at the same time?

No. You can only be registered as a trainee in one building class and one plumbing class at the same time.



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Do I have to be a trainee in order to become qualified or gain higher qualifications?

No. The trainee class is an *optional* way for unqualified people to enter the profession or for qualified people to gain higher qualification levels while working. You can still study for and take the qualification exam without being in the trainee class.

If I pass my qualification exam, can I enter a new training program right away?

This depends on you and your employer. Some will want you to move as quickly as possible to the higher qualification levels, and some will want you to work at your new classification level for a while before attempting higher levels. Working for a time at your new level may provide you the opportunity to become certified at that level, as well as being qualified.