



# Mandatory Qualification Program

## Qualification of Building Officials

Under [the Building Act](#), all building officials, which include plumbing officials, must hold qualifications to decide whether a matter conforms to building regulations on behalf of a local authority. Additional background information about the implementation of this legislation can be found on the Association [website](#).

Under the [Building Act General Regulation](#), the Minister designated the Building Officials' Association of B.C. (Association) to administer the mandatory qualification program. The Province and Association have also entered into an administrative agreement to set out details of the governance model and programs that the Association will deliver and maintain to achieve the goals of increasing the competency and professionalism of code officials in B.C.

The FAQs below provides more information about the overall structure of mandatory qualification program.

## Qualification of Officials – FAQs

[What's the difference between certification and qualification?](#)

Qualification requirements for code officials are set out under sections 11-13 of the *Building Act*. To be qualified as a building or plumbing official, you must:

- be a member of the Association in good standing;
- pass the required qualification exams;
- submit an application to the Association and pay the \$50 application fee;
- pay the \$75 annual registration fee and submit an annual report;
- be entered into the register;
- complete professional development;
- submit an annual report; and
- any other requirements set out in regulation.

Please note that qualification as a building or plumbing official is different than being certified. For more information about voluntary certification and designation programs offered under the [Building Officials' Association Act](#).

The register of qualified code officials is maintained on the [Association website](#).



## Mandatory Qualification Program

Do I need to be qualified and certified?

Under section 10(3) of the *Building Act*, an individual needs to hold qualifications to decide whether a matter conforms to building regulations on behalf of a local authority.

What are the 'qualification exams'?

Under the *Building Act*, an individual is 'qualified' as a building or plumbing official once they have passed the required exams and met the other legislative requirements. Exam requirements are established by the Minister, not the Association.

The Association partners with the International Code Council (ICC) to make the exams available 24/7 anywhere that has a sufficient internet connection. There are a few steps required to set up your code exam in Pronto, the online exam software used by the ICC. Please go to the Association [website](#) for more information.

What happens if I pass or fail the qualification exam?

Exam candidates receive results by email shortly after completing an exam. Once a student passes all exams required for a particular class of qualification, they can submit an application through the member portal on the Association website. Once an application is approved, the applicant's qualifications will be entered into the register of qualified code officials, and they will be able to make compliance decisions for matters that fall within the scope of practice for their new qualifications.

Students can re-write exams if they are not successful in their initial attempt. There is no limit to rewriting an exam, but you will need to pay the exam fee for every attempt.

Is there anything I need to do to maintain my qualifications?

Yes. Once qualified, a code official needs to further their experience and expertise by completing 10 points (or the pro-rated portion thereof;) of eligible continuing professional development (CPD) every calendar year. Eligible activities must fall within one of the [established categories](#) or be related to competencies identified in the National Occupational & Training Standard for Building Officials.

You need to self-report on your CPD activities through the member portal on the Association website by December 31 of each year. As part of this reporting, you will need to submit the following information about CPD activities that you are claiming towards your annual requirements:

- the title and description of the CPD activity;
- the date of the CPD activity;
- the name of the provider of the CPD activity (if applicable); and
- evidence of successfully completing or attending the CPD activity.

All qualified building officials must also submit an annual report before December 31 of each year. Submission of annual reports occurs through the member portal. Please note that submission of CPD information and the annual report are separate requirements and code officials must satisfy both requirements by the end of each calendar year to maintain their qualifications.



## Mandatory Qualification Program

What are the different types of qualifications for building officials?

There are currently two types of building official qualifications: standard and building-official in-training. The Minister has authority to establish additional qualifications as required.

There are five classes of standard qualification: Building Levels 1, 2, and 3 and Plumbing Levels 1 and 2. In addition, there are five classes of building official in-training – one for each class of standard qualification (e.g. Building Level 1 In-Training or Plumbing Level 2 In-Training).

Further specific information about the building official in-training classification can be found on the Association [website](#).

What are the standard classes of building qualifications?

Scopes of practice for standard classes of qualification can be summarized as follows:

Building Types:			Plumbing Systems:	
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 1	Level 2
Single-family dwellings and basic building types (Simple Part 9)	Small industrial and multi-family dwellings (Complex Part 9)	Large or complex industrial and public buildings (Part 3)	<i>Simple</i> plumbing matters. Some kinds of buildings, such as hospitals, are excluded.	<i>Advanced</i> plumbing matters which can be found in any kind of building.
<i>E.g.</i> Houses, duplexes, rowhouses under 4 storeys.	<i>E.g.</i> Low-rise apartments and townhouses, small industrial, mercantile.	<i>E.g.</i> High-rise apartments, industrial and mercantile, public buildings.		
<i>Note that it is possible for an official to be registered in both a building and a plumbing class. Also, classifications are sequential and must be completed in order.</i>				

Specific details about the scopes of practice for building and plumbing officials can be found in Tables 1 and 2 of the [Building Act General Regulation](#).

Do I need building and plumbing qualifications?

Being a qualified building official does not qualify you to make compliance decisions about plumbing systems and, conversely, being a qualified plumbing official does not allow you to make decisions about matters that are governed by other sections of the building code. If you are asked to do both building and plumbing in the course of your work, you must be qualified to do both.

The only exception to this is Level 3 Building Officials can make compliance decisions about matters governed by the Plumbing Code if those decisions are based solely on receiving letters of assurance for a registered professional.