

Continuing Professional Development for Licensure

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) supports documented continuing professional development, including ethics training, as a condition for maintaining status as a licensed Professional Engineer. ASCE also supports uniformity of continuing professional development requirements among licensing jurisdictions.

This position is established in [ASCE Policy Statement 425](#).

Why It's Important to Civil Engineers:

It is essential that practicing civil engineers remain current with issues and advancements in technology. In recent years, state boards and their state legislatures have also placed increasing importance on continuing professional development to assist practicing professionals maintaining and enhancing their competence.

With many civil engineers licensed in multiple states, and with the common objectives of continuing professional development, there are practical reasons for uniform continuing professional development requirements among licensing jurisdictions.

Ethics training is part of professional development. Adherence to the ASCE Code of Ethics encourages engineers to practice in areas in which they are competent and to hold the public health, health, and welfare as their highest duty. Many of the complaints referred to state boards of licensure for investigation and possible penalty action involve ethics and, often, a lack of understanding of the Fundamental Canons of Professional Conduct.

Background:

ASCE has a Fundamental Canon in its Code of Ethics that states engineers shall continue their professional development throughout their careers, and shall provide opportunities for the professional development of those engineers under their supervision.

ASCE is dedicated to the advancement of the profession of engineering to enhance the welfare of mankind. Continuing professional development maintains and enhances the competence of practicing professional engineers. ASCE is committed to providing leadership, encouragement, and opportunities to achieve this continuing professional development. Uniform continuing professional development requirements will advance the goal of this policy.

The National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing professional licensure for engineers and surveyors, has developed Model Rules that endorse continuing professional competency requirements as a condition for licensure.

The NCEES model language requires every licensee to obtain 15 professional development hours (PDHs) per year (Section 240.30). NCEES members are the engineering and surveying licensure boards from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

State Activity:

The trend continues to be for states to move towards requiring continuing education for licensed professional engineers with the majority using the 15 PDHs per year model established by NCEES. Since 2009, **Delaware, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia** and **Wisconsin** have all moved to implement continuing education requirements for professional engineers. Delaware was the most recent state to enact this provision, do so in 2013. Legislation was also considered in Connecticut and Washington in 2013. Currently, 41 states require continuing education for engineers.