

Division of Professions and Occupations

Local Officials' Guide to Landscape Architecture

November 2012



***Consumer protection
is our mission***

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FOREWORD

This guide has been prepared and published by the Colorado State Board of Landscape Architects (the “Board”). Its purpose is to aid local governments and building officials to ensure compliance with the laws and regulations governing the profession of landscape architecture in Colorado. The intent is to provide answers to questions about landscape architects – what they can or cannot do and what constitutes unlicensed practice. It encompasses general information regarding the Board’s statutes, rules, and policies. This guide is not intended to be a substitute for the specific provisions of state statutes, Board rules, and policies. Refer to them for further clarification. They may be found online at www.Dora.Colorado.gov/Professions/LandscapeArchitects.

This information is provided as part of the continuing effort of the Board to protect the life, health, safety, property, and welfare of the people of Colorado through proper enforcement of the legal requirements for landscape architecture in the state.

It is clear public policy in this state that the offering and performance of landscape architectural services must be done by Colorado licensed professionals. However, there are limited exceptions allowing unlicensed persons to provide these services, as found in section 12-45-118 of the Colorado Revised Statutes.



INTRODUCTION

Building code regulations and professional licensing laws are meant to work together. Local officials and state licensing boards each exist to protect the public against unsafe structures, incompetent practitioners, and unlicensed individuals. Though our charge to protect the public's health, safety, property, and welfare is the same, the approach is different.

The Board strives to assure the public that only those who meet minimum standards may plan, design, and prepare construction documents for non-exempt landscape improvements and structures.

Local jurisdictions promulgate, adopt, and enforce planning, land use, and building codes. These regulations are intended to protect the health, safety, property, and welfare of the general public. If local officials require all landscape architectural documents for non-exempt landscape improvements and structures to bear the appropriate signature and seal of a licensed architect, then our licensure system will share the responsibility for protecting the health, safety, property, and welfare of the public.

We rely on you, the local official, to assist in this system of checks and balances. You, in turn, rely on the Board as a source of information and support.

What resources can the Board provide to me?

We hope to help you by answering many of your questions, either here, on the Board's website, through e-mail, or on the telephone.

Website: www.Dora.Colorado.gov/Professions/LandscapeArchitects

Email: DORA_LandscapeArchitects@state.co.us

Telephone: 303.894.7775 - Board's Administrative Assistant

303.894.7792 - Board's Enforcement Supervisor

303.894.7781 - Board's Program Director



Where can I get a copy of the laws, rules, and policies dealing with landscape architects?

Go to www.Dora.Colorado.gov/Professions/LandscapeArchitects and click on the “Laws, Rules and Policies” button on the left side of the main page.

How can local officials help the Board?

In order to do our job, we need the support and assistance of local government officials, city and county engineers and surveyors, building officials, planning officials, fire marshals, etc. The following paragraphs outline a number of ways in which you can help the Board.

How to file a complaint

Consumers are much more likely to discuss issues with a local official than Board staff. As a local official, you work directly with the people who hire landscape architects, landscape contractors, architects, and engineers. You can let consumers know that if they have a complaint, they can find information and file it with the Board at www.Dora.Colorado.gov/Professions/LandscapeArchitects and click on the “File a Complaint” button the left side of the main page.

How to provide information about substandard practice

If you see substandard practice, you can file a complaint at the above link. In lieu of filing a complaint, you are welcome to bring your concerns to the attention of the Board by providing the facts of the situation, including supporting evidence, by sending the information to the Board’s email address at DORA_LandscapeArchitects@state.co.us.

How to verify if a license is active

You can also assist the Board by ensuring that those who are practicing in your jurisdiction are actively licensed professionals. You may find out if a license is active, when it was first issued, last renewed, what the license number is, and whether there are any restrictions on the license by checking the Division of Professions and Occupations’ Automated Licensure System Online ([ALISON](http://www.colorado.gov/dora/licensing/Lookup/LicenseLookup.aspx)). Locate ALISON at <https://www.colorado.gov/dora/licensing/Lookup/LicenseLookup.aspx>

Active licensure for architects, professional engineers, professional land surveyors, electricians, electrical contractors, plumbers, and plumbing contractors can be verified at the same website.



How to review a Board action against a license

If you would like to view a Board action you may use the Imaged Documents Online page. This is a place that makes certain scanned documents related to Board actions taken on licenses available to the public via the Internet. A document may be found on here or at ALISON (<https://www.colorado.gov/dora/licensing/Lookup/LicenseLookup.aspx>) if a license has been disciplined or if the Board has taken some other non-disciplinary action against a license that restricts or limits an individual's license. Stipulations, Final Agency Orders, Suspensions, Revocations, and Cease and Desist Orders, among other actions can be found at <http://www.dora.state.co.us/doraimages/>

DEFINITIONS

Landscape Architecture

As used in this guide, **Landscape Architecture Practice Act** means Article 45 of Title 12, C.R.S.

Landscape Architect means a person who engages in the practice of landscape architecture, is licensed under the provisions of the Landscape Architecture Practice Act and entitled thereby to conduct the practice of landscape architecture in the state of Colorado.

§§ 12-45-103(6) and 104, C.R.S.

The **Practice of Landscape Architecture** means the application of education, training and experience to consult, evaluate, plan, and design projects and improvements principally directed at the functional and aesthetic uses of land. It also includes collaboration with architects and engineers during the design of public infrastructure projects such as roads, bridges, buildings, and other structures, concerning the functional and aesthetic requirements of the area and project site, as well as assistance in the preparation and administration of construction documents, contracts and contract offers related to site landscape improvements.

§ 12-45-103(8), C.R.S.

TITLES

Landscape Architect

The title **Landscape Architect**, means a person who engages in the practice of landscape architecture. After January 1, 2008, a person shall not practice landscape architecture or represent himself or herself as a landscape architect unless the person has a license issued by the Board.

§§ 12-45-103(6) and 104, C.R.S.

There is no difference between “registered” and “licensed” landscape architects in Colorado. Colorado law refers to licensed landscape architects. In many states, the term used is registered landscape architect and this terminology is in wide use. Use of the term “RLA” or registered landscape architect necessitates licensure.

Board Rule 5.4.2

Effective March 17, 2013, the use of the designation Registered Landscape Architect “RLA” or Professional Landscape Architect “PLA” may constitute holding out as a licensed landscape architect.

Board Rule 5.4.2

OFFERING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES – INDIVIDUALS AND COMPANIES

Individuals

In order to offer to practice or practice landscape architectural services in Colorado, an individual must be actively licensed.

§§ 12-45-104 and 12-45-115, C.R.S.

Companies

In the case of companies that offer landscape architecture services, there are no specific provisions. Therefore, such services must be under the supervision of an actively licensed landscape architect, regardless of the licensee’s relationship to the company.



EXEMPTIONS

The Landscape Architecture Practice Act provides instances where unlicensed individuals may perform services that do not require a license as a landscape architect that includes:

- (d) Residential landscape design, consisting of landscape design services for single- and multi-family residential properties of four or fewer units not including common areas;
- (e) The design of irrigation systems by professionals qualified by appropriate experience or certification; and
- (f) Landscape installation and construction services, including, but not limited to, all contracting services not within the scope of the practice of landscape architecture.

§ 12-45-118(1), C.R.S.

The following exemptions to the Landscape Architecture Practice Act also apply:

- (a) The practice of architecture by licensed architects pursuant to part 3 of article 25 of this title;
- (b) The practice of professional engineering by registered professional engineers pursuant to part 1 of article 25 of this title;
- (c) The practice of professional land surveying by licensed land surveyors pursuant to part 2 of article 25 of this title;
- (4) Nothing in this article shall be construed to prohibit the practice of landscape architecture by any employee of the United States government or any bureau, division, or agency of the United States while discharging his or her official duties.

§§ 12-45-118(1) and (4), C.R.S.

SEALING AND SIGNING PROFESSIONAL WORK

Licensed landscape architects are, and should be, responsible for their professional services in their respective areas of expertise.

The public, as well as local officials, rely on the professional expertise of landscape architects. As a result, professional submissions such as construction documents must clearly show the identity of the licensed landscape architect who prepared them by having affixed a seal and signature and otherwise complying with the requirements of state law. Without proper identification, ultimate responsibility for any deficiencies may not be clear.



The law and applicable codes in Colorado require that professional submissions be signed and sealed by the licensed landscape architect who prepared them or has taken responsible supervision of them.

The following paragraphs reflect the laws and the rules specifying the sealing requirements for landscape architects.

12-45-117. Landscape architect's stamp.

- (1) A licensed landscape architect shall obtain a stamp of a design authorized by the board. The stamp shall bear the name, date of licensing, and license number of the landscape architect, together with the legend "Colorado - Licensed Landscape Architect".
- (2) A landscape architect's records and documents shall be prepared, recorded, and retained in the following manner:
 - (a) The stamp, signature of the landscape architect whose name appears on the stamp, and date of the landscape architect's signature shall be placed on reproductions of drawings to establish a record set of contract documents.
 - (b) The record set shall be prominently identified and shall be for the permanent record of the landscape architect, the project owner, and the regulatory authorities who have jurisdiction over the project.
 - (c) The stamp and the date the document is stamped shall be placed on the cover, title page, and table of contents of specifications and on each reproduction of drawings prepared under the direct supervision of the landscape architect.
 - (d) Subsequently issued addenda, revisions, clarifications, or other modifications shall be properly identified and dated for the record set.
 - (e) Where consultant drawings and specifications are incorporated into the record set, their origin shall be clearly identified and dated to distinguish them from stamped documents.
 - (f) Except as required for compliance with a federal contract, the landscape architect shall not stamp reproductions or copies that are transferred from the landscape architect's possession or supervision.
 - (g) A record set shall be retained by the landscape architect for a minimum of three years after beneficial occupancy or beneficial use of the project.
 - (h) One original document may be stamped, signed, and dated as required for federal government contracts.
- (3) The board, by rule, may authorize the use of an electronic stamp, an electronic seal, and recording of electronic records in a manner substantially equivalent to the requirements of subsections (1) and (2) of this section.



5.1 Sealing Requirements for Licensed Landscape Architects

5.1.1 Seal Specifications. Pursuant to Section 12-45-117(1), C.R.S., the seal authorized by the Board for licensees is of the crimp type, rubber stamp type, and/or computer generated type. Each licensee shall procure a stamp, which shall be in the form of two concentric circles. The diameter of the outer circle shall be nominally 2 inches and the diameter of the inner circle shall be nominally 1 inch. The original date that the license number was issued shall be centered in the inner area of the seal in the space occupied by "mm/dd/yyyy" and the size of the numbers shall be the same size of the letters in "mm/dd/yyyy". The letters "mm/dd/yyyy" should not appear on the seal. This stamp shall comply in all respects, including size and format, with the specimen shown below.

The original signature of the individual named on the seal and the date of the signature shall appear across the face of each original seal imprint. A public agency may require a signature (manual or electronic) of the licensee on reproductions. Exception to this Rule is allowed only as required for compliance with a federal contract.



5.1.2 Seal Application. A seal must be applied to either the final reproducible or final reproduction of all of the following.

- (a) Each sheet of landscape architectural technical drawings.
- (b) The cover, title page, and table of contents of specifications bound in book form.
- (c) The title page of details bound in book form and prepared specifically to supplement project drawings.
- (d) The title or signature page of landscape architectural technical reports.

5.1.3 Sealing Documents That Are Complete. Licensees shall sign, date, and stamp original technical drawings that are complete. Complete technical drawings are those deemed to have sufficient detail in the design to satisfy the obligation to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

5.1.4 Sealing Documents That Are Not Final. When a licensee seals landscape architectural documents that are not final, the status of the landscape architectural documents must be identified as preliminary. Further qualifying descriptors may be added (e.g., “for review,” “not for construction,” “for bid only”).

5.1.5 Limiting Scope of Responsibility. When a licensee signs and seals a document, the licensee is responsible for the entire document unless the licensee limits the seal by including a specific written statement adjacent to the seal that accurately reflects the scope of responsibility for the document. All aspects of the work shown on that document must be signed and sealed by the person(s) in responsible charge. Effective March 17, 2013, the last sentence of this rule has been deleted.

Board Rule 5.1

Electronic Seals and Signatures

In the laws and rules cited above, electronic sealing of professional work is permissible for landscape architects.

Those professionals may also sign their work electronically provided the signature meets the Board’s requirements for electronic signatures:

Signature. The term “signature” shall include the terms “manual signature” and “electronic signature” and shall be defined as follows.

(a) Manual Signature. A manual signature is the handwritten name of a person applied to a document that identifies the person, serves as a means of authentication of the contents of the document, provides responsibility for the creation of the document and provides for accountability for the contents of the document.

(b) Electronic Signature. An electronic signature is a digital authentication process attached to or logically associated with an electronic document and shall carry the same weight, authority, and effects as a manual signature. The electronic signature, which can be generated by using either public key infrastructure or signature dynamics technology, must be as follows.

(i) Unique to the person using it.

(ii) Capable of verification.

(iii) Under the sole control of the person using it.

(iv) Linked to a document in such a manner that the electronic signature is invalidated if any data in the document are changed.



PROFESSIONALS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Defining responsible control of landscape architectural work that is signed and sealed as required by law

Supervision of Landscape Architecture. The supervision of landscape architecture means the actions taken by a landscape architect in directing, personally reviewing, correcting, or approving the work performed by an employee or subcontractor of the landscape architect.

§ 12-45-103(10), C.R.S.

Direct Supervision. The Board defines direct supervision as that degree of supervision by a person overseeing the work of another, where both work in the same office in circumstances where personal contact is routine, and the supervisor has both control over and detailed professional knowledge of the work prepared under his or her supervision.

Board Rule 2.2 Definitions in Alphabetical Order – Direct Supervision

Supervision of Landscape Architecture. The Board shall interpret “supervision” of landscape architecture as follows:

“Supervision” of landscape architecture shall mean that degree of control a landscape architect is required to maintain over landscape architectural decisions made personally or by others over which the landscape architect exercises supervisory direction and control authority.

- (a) The degree of control necessary for a landscape architect to be in supervision shall be such that the landscape architect:
- (i) Personally makes landscape architectural decisions, or personally reviews and approves proposed decisions prior to their implementation, including consideration of alternatives whenever landscape architectural decisions that could affect the life, health, property, and welfare of the public are made. In making said landscape architectural decisions, the landscape architect shall be physically present or, through the use of communication devices, be available in a reasonable period of time as appropriate.
 - (ii) Judges the validity and applicability of recommendations prior to their incorporation into the work, including the qualifications of those making the recommendations.

(b) Landscape architectural decisions that are made by, and are the responsibility of, the practicing landscape architect in supervision are those decisions concerning permanent or temporary work that

could create a danger to the life, health, property, and welfare of the public, such as, but not limited to, the following:

- (i) The selection of landscape architectural alternatives to be investigated and comparison of alternatives for landscape architectural works.
- (ii) The selection or development of design standards or methods, and materials to be used.
- (iii) The selection or development of techniques or methods of testing to be used in evaluating materials or completed works, either new or existing.

(c) As a test to evaluate whether a landscape architect is in supervision, the following must be considered. A landscape architect who signs and seals landscape architectural documents must be capable of answering questions as to the landscape architectural decisions made during the landscape architect's work on the project in sufficient detail as to leave no reasonable doubt as to the landscape architect's proficiency for the work performed. It is not necessary to defend decisions as in an adversarial situation, but only to demonstrate that the landscape architect in supervision made them and possessed sufficient knowledge of the project to make them. Examples of questions to be answered by the landscape architect could relate to criteria for design, methods of analysis, selection of materials and systems, economics of alternate solutions, and environmental considerations. The individual should be able to clearly define the degree of control and how it was exercised and be able to demonstrate that the landscape architect was answerable within said degree of control necessary for the landscape architectural work done.

(d) The term "supervision" does not refer to financial liability.

(e) A practicing landscape architect who adopts, signs, and seals landscape architectural work previously produced shall perform sufficient review and calculation to ensure that all standards of practice required of licensees are met, including satisfying the relevant criteria stated in paragraphs (b) and (c) above, and shall take professional and legal responsibility for documents signed and sealed under his/her supervision.

Board Rule 2.2 Definitions in Alphabetical Order – Supervision of Landscape Architecture

Practicing within a professional's area of expertise

As required by the Landscape Architecture Practice Act and Board Rule 3.2.1, landscape architects are required to practice only within their area of expertise, as determined by their education, examination, and experience.

§ 12-45-113(2)(m), C.R.S. and Board Rule 3.2.1



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

TITLES

Is there a difference between “registered” and “licensed” landscape architects?

No. The terms are interchangeable, however, the preferred and current title is “licensed” and to use the terms, the individual must hold an active license in Colorado.

Can an unlicensed person use the title “landscape architect”?

No. It is unlawful for anyone to use the title “Landscape Architect,” “Licensed Landscape Architect,” “Registered Landscape Architect,” or “Professional Landscape Architect” unless licensed in Colorado.

§§ 12-45-113(2)(o) and 115(1), C.R.S.

Can all licensed landscape architects use the titles or abbreviations of the titles, “Landscape Architect,” “Licensed Landscape Architect,” “Registered Landscape Architect,” or “Professional Landscape Architect”?

Yes. All licensed landscape architects in Colorado may use these titles.

UNLICENSED PERSONS AND PRACTICE

Can an unlicensed person offer landscape architectural services?

An unlicensed person cannot offer to practice landscape architectural services, unless otherwise exempt.

§§ 12-45-113(2)(o) and 12-45-115(1), C.R.S.

What landscape architectural services can an unlicensed person offer and provide?

An unlicensed person may perform:

- Residential landscape design, consisting of landscape design services for single- and multi-family residential properties of four or fewer units not including common areas;
- The design of irrigation systems by professionals qualified by appropriate experience or certification; and

- Landscape installation and construction services, including, but not limited to, all contracting services not within the scope of the practice of landscape architecture.

§ 12-45-118(1)(d), (e), (f), C.R.S.

Can an unlicensed person own a landscape architectural business?

An unlicensed person can own a landscape architecture company as long as a licensed Landscape Architect is in responsible supervision for the landscape architectural work provided by the company.

§ 12-45-103(10), C.R.S. and Board Rule 2.2 Definitions in Alphabetical Order – Direct Supervision and Supervision of Landscape Architecture

Are there penalties for practicing or offering to practice landscape architecture without a current Colorado license?

Yes. The Board is authorized to issue a cease and desist order, apply for an injunction, and may be able to levy a fine up to \$5,000.

§§ 12-45-114(6)(a), (9), and (12)(a), C.R.S.

LICENSE STATUS AND PRACTICING

Am I required to verify whether an individual who prepares sealed documents has a current license?

No, you are not required to do so by law. However, the Board encourages local officials and consumers to verify the licensure of all professionals regulated by DORA. You may verify licensure online at <https://www.colorado.gov/dora/licensing/Lookup/LicenseLookup.aspx> or email the Board at DORA_LandscapeArchitects@state.co.us or call 303.894.7800 or 303.894.7775.

Can someone with an expired, lapsed, retired, or inactive license still practice landscape architecture including signing and sealing documents?

No. If the license is expired, lapsed, retired, or inactive, the person cannot practice, offer to practice, or act as a consultant. However, as with any unlicensed individual, the person may work under the responsible supervision of another licensee.

§§ 12-45-110(8) and 12-45-113(2)(o), C.R.S.



Can someone with a revoked, suspended, or surrendered license still practice landscape architecture?

No. If the license has a status of revoked, suspended, or surrendered, the person cannot practice, offer to practice, or act as a consultant. However, as with any unlicensed individual, the person may work under the responsible charge of another licensee.

§ 12-45-113(2)(o), C.R.S.

If the license expired between the time the documents were prepared and the time when the local agency’s review is performed, do the documents need to be re-sealed by a licensee with a current license?

As long as the license was current at the time the documents were prepared and sealed, the documents do not need to be re-sealed prior to review by the local agency. However, any changes (updates or modifications) to the documents that are made following review by the local agency would have to be prepared by an actively licensed individual in responsible charge or control of the work performed and those changes would have to be signed and sealed.

FIRMS

Does a landscape architectural business have to be licensed or registered with the Board?

No, but the company must be in compliance with business licensing requirements of the state of Colorado through the Secretary of State found at www.sos.state.co.us.

PROJECT PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Who can be the applicant for a permit?

The applicant can be the owner, contractor, or the licensed landscape architect, or other licensed professional, as appropriate.

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Can landscape architects prepare and seal landscape and/or irrigation plans?

Yes. Licensed landscape architects may prepare and seal landscape and irrigation plans. Architects and professional engineers may also prepare and seal landscape plans if the landscape architectural work is an incidental portion of the overall project.



Can landscape architects prepare and seal plans for storm water, site grading and drainages, erosion control, native re-vegetation, and wetland mitigation?

Yes. Such plans can be prepared and sealed by a licensed landscape architect who has the expertise to perform such work.

Can landscape architects perform planning services?

Yes. Licensed landscape architects can prepare site design and master plan documents, along with zoning applications, special use permit applications and other land use approval documents.

Can landscape architects prepare and seal site plans that incorporate a variety of site amenities and features?

Yes. Licensed landscape architects can prepare and seal plans or details that include garden pools, outdoor fountains, water falls, retaining walls, decorative walls, raised planters, fences, handicapped ramps, outdoor stairs and steps, play structures, pedestrian bridges, decks, gazebos, picnic shelters, trellises, patio covers and other similar non-dwelling structures that are incidental and necessary to a project's dominant purpose.

Can landscape architects serve as the principal design professional on multi-disciplined projects?

Yes. Licensed architects, landscape architects and professional engineers may serve as the principal design professional, as long as they are providing services in conformance with their competence and the requirements of the statutes.

In regard to structures, when should a landscape architect not seal plans?

A landscape architect should not seal plans for habitable, commercial, or public structures. A licensed architect or professional engineer is required for projects of this type.

May a Colorado professional engineer prepare, sign, and seal landscape architectural construction documents?

Yes, when the licensed engineer is practicing their profession according to the definition of the practice of engineering found in § 12-25-102(10)(a), C.R.S.

§§ 12-45-118(1)(b) and 12-25-102(10)(a), C.R.S.



May a Colorado architect prepare, sign and seal landscape architectural construction documents?

Yes, when the architect is practicing their profession according to the definition of the practice of architecture found in § 12-25-302(6), C.R.S.

§§ 12-45-118(1)(a) and 12-25-302(6), C.R.S.

May a Colorado professional land surveyor prepare, sign, and seal landscape architectural construction documents?

Yes, when the land surveyor is practicing their profession according to the definition of the practice of land surveying found in § 12-25-202(6)(a), C.R.S.

§§ 12-45-118(1)(b) and 12-25-102(6)(a), C.R.S.

How do I know if the professional is qualified to prepare, sign, and seal the construction documents?

You are authorized to require that the professional provide evidence of competence based on education, licensure examinations, or experience. Licensees are required to practice within their area(s) of expertise and the individual licensee is expected to know the limits of his or her abilities and knowledge. If you have any concerns or questions, you may contact the Board office.

SEALING DOCUMENTS

Must all plans, specifications, and reports contain a landscape architect’s seal and signature?

Only final documents – those which have been finalized, are ready for submittal for permit review, or for construction – are required to be signed and stamped. They must also include the date on which they are signed and stamped.

Sealed documents that are not final, such as drafts, preliminary documents, work-in-progress documents, or building department review documents, must be identified as preliminary. Additional descriptors, such as “for review,” “not for construction,” or “for bid only” are acceptable.

Board Rules 5.1.2, 5.1.3, and 5.1.4

Can a local agency require all documents that are submitted for review be signed and sealed?

Yes. However, sealed documents that are not final must be identified as preliminary.

Board Rule 5.1.4



Can an unlicensed person use the seal or stamp of a landscape architect?

No. It is unlawful for anyone other than the licensee to use their stamp or seal plans, specifications, reports, or documents under their supervision. An unlicensed individual cannot sign for a licensed person.

Board Rule 3.1.3

If a landscape designer or contractor prepares landscape plans for a non-exempt project and applies for a permit, should I, the building official, suggest they contact a landscape architect to have their plans and specifications sealed?

No. Such action on the part of a landscape architect would be contrary to law, and would put the professional's license in jeopardy. That is considered "plan stamping." The permit applicant should be informed that the professional services which include construction documents must be prepared by, or under the personal supervision of a licensed design professional(s). Only the licensed professional who prepared the documents, or under whose immediate personal supervision they were prepared, may seal and sign the documents. The permit application should not be processed under any other circumstances.

Board Rule 2.2 Definitions in Alphabetical Order – Supervision of Landscape Architecture

Do submittal documents signed and sealed by a landscape architect licensed in a state other than Colorado meet the requirements in Colorado?

No. Only landscape architects currently licensed in Colorado have the authority to practice in Colorado. Professionals licensed in other states must obtain licensure in Colorado in order to practice here.

§§ 12-45-104 and 115, C.R.S.

Can a Colorado licensed landscape architect "overstamp" documents prepared and stamped by a professional who is licensed in another state?

No. "Overstamping" is not appropriate. A Colorado licensee may review and modify plans prepared elsewhere, but by stamping and signing the plans, the landscape architect is taking supervision for them and in effect stating that the documents were prepared by him or her, or under his or her supervision. The licensee must comply with the Board requirement for the definition of supervision.

Board Rule 2.2 Definitions in Alphabetical Order – Supervision of Landscape Architecture



Does each sheet of construction documents have to be signed and sealed by a professional?

Yes. For landscape architectural submittals, the following must be signed and sealed by a landscape architect: each sheet of technical drawings; the cover, title page, and table of contents of specifications bound in book form; the title page of details bound in book form and prepared specifically to supplement project drawings; and, the title or signature page of landscape architectural technical reports.

Board Rule 5.1.2

Who can sign and seal for portions of the design of a project?

Licensed landscape architects designing a portion or portions of a project are required to seal and sign the documents related to that portion of the project. The licensee must indicate on all documents exactly those portions of which he or she is in supervision with a statement adjacent to the stamp that reflects the scope of responsibility. Without a limitation of the seal, a licensee is responsible for the entire document.

Board Rules 3.2.3 and 5.1.5

Do shop drawings have to be signed and sealed by a landscape architect and submitted to the building official for approval?

No. Typically, shop drawings are intended as construction or fabrication details. These are not usually part of the construction documents submitted for permit approval. However, they should be reviewed and signed by the landscape architect in charge.

Shop drawings are the subcontractor's version of the design professional's intent, drawn to show and explain fabrication and installation instructions and details to the manufacturer and the contractor.

REVIEWING SUBMITTALS

If I review plans submitted by a landscape architect and discover significant problems with the work, or I repeatedly review plans from the same professional with numerous minor problems, what can I do?

You may provide the information to the Board at DORA_LandscapeArchitects@state.co.us or file a complaint at www.dora.colorado.gov/professions/landscapearchitects (click on "File a Complaint" on the left side of the main page). It is not necessary to "prove" your case but it is important to submit examples of the kind of work that you believe falls below the standard of practice. The Board will review or investigate the situation and take action as appropriate.



Sometimes I face a lot of resentment from landscape architects when I (or my Department) question their professional judgment during the review of their submissions. It's nothing personal. We are only exercising our responsibility to properly review work to protect the health, safety, property, and welfare of the public. Is there anything the Board can do to intercede when these confrontations become really heated?

The Board does not have any authority or procedure to mediate these kinds of problems. However, the Board and its Staff are happy to assist you in answering questions and clarifying the laws and the rules. If you have encountered this problem, we encourage you to contact us to request our assistance.

Is a local official liable if he or she informs the Board of a possible violation of law which later turns out to be unfounded and the licensee takes legal action against the official?

The law grants immunity to individuals who act as a witness or lodge a complaint in good faith to this Board.

§ 12-45-105, C.R.S.

CHANGING PROFESSIONALS DURING A PROJECT

What happens when a licensee does not complete a project and a new licensee takes over?

The new licensee (successor licensee) may assume supervision of a project and complete the project as long as he or she exercises the extent of supervision required by the Board Rules and assumes professional responsibility for these decisions. Thus, this successor licensee must perform sufficient review and calculation to ensure that all standards of practice required of licensees are met, as if the successor were the original licensee.

Board Rule 2.2 Definitions in Alphabetical Order – Supervision of Landscape Architecture, Paragraph (e)

CHANGING SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS

Can an owner, builder, or contractor make changes to a licensed landscape architect's construction documents?

No. When construction documents are prepared by a licensed professional, no changes may be made except by that professional, or under certain conditions, by another appropriately licensed professional.

§ 12-45-115(1), C.R.S.



Who issues change orders and addenda to building permit construction documents that have been filed for non-exempt buildings or structures?

Change orders, additional construction documents, and addenda that alter the construction documents that are required to be filed with the building department for non-exempt buildings or structures must bear the signature and seal of the Colorado licensed landscape architect responsible for the modifications.

REUSING DOCUMENTS

If a licensed professional has prepared sealed documents for a non-exempt project, may the owner or contractor reuse or resubmit those same plans for another project at another location?

No. A set of documents is prepared by a design professional for a specific site. Documents prepared by landscape architects are instruments of service. Copyright laws may prohibit reproduction and contracts may prohibit or restrict reuse. Even if such prohibitions or restrictions do not apply, and even if the original design professional consents to reuse, the design professional must produce a completely new set of documents incorporating necessary site adaptations and code revisions or variations.

PROVIDING COPIES OF SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS

Can I make copies of signed and sealed documents submitted for review and provide them to others?

Yes. There is no restriction on this in the Landscape Architecture Practice Act.

COMPLAINTS

Who can file a complaint?

Anyone who believes there has been a violation of the Board's licensing laws may file a complaint. All complaints must be filed in writing with a description of the problem and as much identifying information as possible, such as plans, pictures, maps, etc. Although a complaint form is not necessary, such forms are available from the Board office or on the Internet at www.Dora.Colorado.gov/Professions/LandscapeArchitects (click on "File a Complaint" on the left side of the main page).



I don't really want to file a complaint, but...

If you believe there is reasonable evidence of substandard practice by a licensee, but you don't want to file a complaint against the licensee, you may submit information to the Board regarding your concerns about the licensee's work that you believe is below the minimum standard of practice. Be sure to provide sufficient information and evidence to document the basis of your concern. You may submit the documentation to DORA_LandscapeArchitects@state.co.us or by mail to the Board office at 1560 Broadway, Suite 1350, Denver, Colorado 80202.

Please contact us if you have any questions that we haven't addressed here...

Email: DORA_LandscapeArchitects@state.co.us

Telephone: 303.894.7775 - Board's Administrative Assistant

303.894.7792 - Board's Enforcement Supervisor

303.894.7781 - Board's Program Director

