

Before you “fish” for business in another jurisdiction, contact the specific state board directly to get current, explicit information regarding rules and regulations.

TO FISH OR NOT TO FISH (WITHOUT A LICENSE)

Architects licensed in one jurisdiction often want to “fish” for business in another jurisdiction, especially if there is a downturn in their local economy or a boom in a nearby community. However, in most states it is illegal to offer or perform architectural services without a license in that jurisdiction. These laws about “fishing expeditions” are to assure prospective clients that you—the architect—are qualified to carry out the services you are offering. This process affirms the profession’s commitment to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

A number of state registration boards have adopted NCARB’s *Legislative Guidelines* (or rules similar to them) that allow NCARB-certified architects certain “fishing rights.” According to Section IV of the Guidelines, if you are a non-resident architect, you may offer services in a jurisdiction where you are not registered if you meet three criteria:

1. You must hold a “current and valid registration issued by a registration authority recognized by the [host] state board.”

2. You must hold an *active* NCARB Certificate.
3. You must notify the state registration board, in writing, that you will be “present in the jurisdiction for the purpose of offering to render architectural services.” Additionally, you must notify every potential client that you are not currently licensed in that state, and you must apply to the board for licensure immediately if you are selected as the architect for a project in that jurisdiction.

There are similar regulations regarding participating in design competitions in jurisdictions where you are not licensed. NCARB’s *Legislative Guidelines* for competition are virtually the same as those for non-resident architects seeking a commission beyond their own state borders.

It is important to remember that you cannot enter into a verbal or written agreement without a license in that state. In fact, some states will take disciplinary action to prevent you from getting registered for several years if you seek any work on a project before

becoming registered in their jurisdiction. Also, in some states you must be licensed and have a signed contract prior to beginning work in that jurisdiction.

Before you cast your line over the border, find out the state’s requirements. You can get an overview of each jurisdiction’s requirements for “initial registration” and “reciprocal registration” on the NCARB web site at www.ncarb.org/stateboards/index.html. However, your best bet for current, explicit information regarding rules and regulations is to contact the specific state board directly.

Acquiring your NCARB Certificate before you “fish” will greatly facilitate the process of obtaining a reciprocal license. In fact, more than 50 percent of registration boards accept the NCARB Certificate as the primary method for reciprocal registration. **DC**



EARNING THE TITLE

“Architect” is a title that can only be used by someone who has received a license to practice architecture. It signifies that the person has fulfilled the licensing requirements established by their jurisdiction and can practice architecture independently. Firms that use titles like “intern architect” or “staff architect” for non-licensed staff could be putting their employees in jeopardy with their state registration board.

In the spring issue of *Direct Connection* we incorrectly referred to an intern as a “staff architect.” We regret this error.

NEWS FROM NEBRASKA

Last year Nebraska passed a regulation that allows NCARB-certified architects to apply for a temporary permit for \$300. The Nebraska Board will verify your current license and issue the temporary permit in less than a week. The expedited permit allows you to work on one project for one year, which will give you the time to obtain a Nebraska license through the reciprocal process. As Nebraska Executive Director, Melinda Pearson, AIA says, “Now there is no excuse for practicing architecture in Nebraska without a license.”