Hi there,

NCARB is excited to share a new Competency Standard for Architects that will serve as the foundation of our programs in the years to come. Developed with input from thousands of practicing architects, the new Competency Standard defines the level of knowledge, skill, and ability necessary to demonstrate competency at the point of initial licensure as an architect.

What does the Competency Standard mean for you?

Over the next two years, NCARB will use the NCARB Competency Standard for Architects to develop and implement updates to the Architectural Experience Program® (AXP®) and Architect Registration Examination® (ARE®). These updates will focus on aligning the AXP and ARE with the competencies defined in the Competency Standard. The changes will likely include clarifying the descriptions of the AXP's six experience areas and updating some of the ARE's test objectives. However, the updates will **not** include changes to the AXP's experience area structure or hours requirement, and they will not include changes to the ARE's divisional structure or length.

In the years ahead, the Competency Standard will become the foundation for the next iteration of NCARB's programs.

Learn More

When will these updates happen?

There will be no changes to NCARB programs for the next 12 months. **NCARB anticipates making updates to the AXP in early 2026, and updates to the ARE in summer 2026.** More details on the expected launch timeline will be provided in early 2025, so be sure to subscribe to our newsletters to receive the latest information.

The next iteration of the path to licensure is still in development—we don't expect to launch new programs until 2028 at the earliest.

Currently working on the AXP and/or ARE? Don't worry.

The updates to the AXP and ARE won't affect the current AXP experience areas or ARE divisions, and **you'll retain full credit for all your existing AXP hours and passed ARE divisions**. If you have ARE 5.0 credits from passed ARE 4.0 divisions, those credits will **not** be impacted by the 2026 updates.

Why create the Competency Standard?

As NCARB works to envision the future of licensure, it is essential that our programs share a core expectation of what competency looks like at the point of initial licensure. The NCARB Competency Standard for Architects provides that foundation and lays the groundwork for a flexible, accessible path to licensure. The Competency Standard is based on the findings of the 2022 Analysis of Practice, as well as additional research and input from practicing architects. Learn how the Competency Standard was developed.

What's in the New Competency Standard?

The NCARB Competency Standard for Architects establishes 16 knowledge areas, skills, abilities, and behaviors—called competencies—that describe the capabilities necessary at the point of initial licensure for an individual to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare as a practicing architect.

Where can you find more information?

For more information about the NCARB Competency Standard for Architects, including how these changes fit within our ongoing Pathways to Practice initiative, visit www.ncarb.org/pathways.

Questions about the Competency Standard? Join our staff experts for a live webinar at 3:30 p.m. (ET) on October 29. During the webinar, we'll review the new Competency Standard and answer your questions about the upcoming program updates. Register now.