

Policy for the ARE: Exam Candidate Conduct

(Amended June 2026)

The following policy has been established by NCARB's Board of Directors to provide procedures in the event of exam candidate misconduct prior to, during, or after taking the Architect Registration Examination® (ARE®). Exam candidate misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the violations described below; any other violation of ARE policies or regulations; and any other misconduct, inappropriate behavior, or breach of examination security. The Board anticipates that these procedures will be applicable to most exam candidate misconduct. Nevertheless, the Board reserves the right to impose any sanction it believes appropriate, either more or less than those noted below. In addition, if the individual subsequently seeks NCARB certification, the matter will be considered in deciding whether to grant NCARB certification. Candidates may appeal a Board-imposed sanction as outlined in the [Professional Conduct Committee: Rules of Procedure](#).

The ARE is copyrighted and each candidate, by requesting eligibility to test, enters into the [ARE Candidate Agreement](#) and affirms, among other things, not to copy or disclose any ARE questions or other ARE content. Copying or disclosing test questions or any other test content is a violation of NCARB's copyright and the *ARE Candidate Agreement*. In addition to the sanctions described below, where warranted, NCARB may pursue all legal remedies available to recover monetary damages caused by such conduct and to enjoin violations of its rights with respect to the ARE.

Upon discovery of any exam candidate misconduct in any category below, NCARB shall have the authority to place a "hold" on pending scores and all open eligibilities to test and cancel any scheduled exam(s) pending further investigation, review by NCARB's Professional Conduct Committee (PCC), and action by NCARB's Board of Directors if applicable. If no action is taken or only a warning letter is issued, NCARB will reopen any closed eligibilities to test and assist the candidate in rescheduling any canceled exam(s) at no additional cost to the candidate.

Procedures for Exam Candidate Misconduct

Category 1: Seeking or Failing to Report Disclosed ARE Content

Simply put: A candidate may not attempt to gain access to ARE content disclosed by others. If a candidate is unwillingly exposed to exam content by others or witnesses the sharing of exam content, the candidate shall report the incident to NCARB.

A candidate may not willfully obtain or seek to obtain ARE test questions, ARE exhibits, or ARE resources disclosed by others. If a candidate unwillingly receives or discovers exam content disclosed by others or witnesses the sharing of exam content, the candidate must report all information regarding the incident, including available disclosed content, to NCARB.

Category 2: Inappropriate Conduct

Simply put: Candidates are always required to conduct themselves appropriately and civilly throughout the examination process.

Candidates shall not engage in any behavior, written, verbal, or physical, that may be considered inappropriate, disrespectful, abusive, disruptive, threatening, discriminatory, prejudicial, or harassing in nature. Candidates must conduct themselves appropriately and civilly prior to, during, and after a test appointment, while engaging with NCARB, any NCARB member jurisdiction, and/or any vendor working on behalf of NCARB. Candidates are required to follow instructions given by test administration staff and must be responsive and truthful in providing answers to any NCARB questions during a candidate misconduct investigation.

Category 3: Unauthorized Access to Devices or Materials in the Testing Room.

Simply put: Only authorized electronic devices and other approved materials are allowed in the testing room at any time during the administration.

Unapproved electronic devices or any other unapproved materials may not be accessed in the testing room at any time during the exam administration. This includes both vendor-provided and online-proctored testing rooms. Access to approved accommodated testing devices is allowed. Candidates must allow the proctor to inspect accommodated testing devices.

Category 4: Copying, Recording, or Disseminating ARE Content

Simply put: Candidates may not attempt to reproduce, record, or share the content of any ARE question, ARE exhibit, or ARE resource viewed during their exam appointment, whether through electronic or other means. If someone else discloses what they saw on the ARE, candidates may not forward, re-post, or otherwise disclose that information.

It is prohibited to record or transcribe ARE content, either from memory, electronic, or other means, regardless of whether such ARE content is subsequently disclosed. It is further prohibited to forward, re-post, or otherwise disclose any ARE content that others may have disclosed. It is also prohibited for test-takers to attempt to remove ARE content from the testing room using notes in any form, the use of devices (including cameras, audio recorders, software, or scanning or digital storage devices) to record or transmit test content at or from the testing room, or by any other means of data recording or information transmission.

Category 5: Attempting to Disrupt or Gain Unauthorized Access to the ARE

Simply put: Candidates may not attempt to disrupt the delivery of or illegally access an administration of the ARE, ARE content, or ARE results using electronic means of any sort.

It is prohibited to attempt to obtain ARE information from a computer through unauthorized access; trafficking in a computer password that can be used to access a computer; transmitting spam; and/or damaging computer data by any means, including a candidate's own ARE administration or the ARE administration of any other candidate, whether the exam was administered at a test center or through online proctoring. It is prohibited to use any technology or method for the purpose of misrepresenting a candidate's identity or circumventing exam security protocols, including by altering, manipulating, disguising, obscuring, or misrepresenting a candidate's identity, appearance, voice, testing environment, or exam activity during any portion of the exam administration. It is prohibited to attempt to intentionally disrupt any administration of the ARE, the processing of examination scoring, or the delivery of examination results in any way.

The consequences of exam misconduct may be any or all the following:

Test Administrator Action while Testing:

- Immediate dismissal from the test appointment and termination of exam.
- Ban the candidate from using that test center or online proctoring for all future examination appointments.
- Inspect and/or confiscate unauthorized materials and/or devices.

Initial NCARB Action:

- Issue warning letter to candidate and send copy to candidate's board.
- Initiate proceedings with PCC.
 - Send candidate notification of circumstances that appear to be a violation as set forth above.
 - Send copy of candidate notification to candidate's board.

NCARB PCC Action:

- Following PCC Rules of Procedures, issue, require, or recommend any or all the following sanctions:
 - Issue warning letter to candidate and send copy to candidate's board.
 - Require candidate to complete ethics education.
 - Recommend sanctions to NCARB's Board of Directors including any or all the following:
 - Cancellation of score(s) for exam division(s).
 - Suspension of test authorization for all divisions for a period of time.
 - Prohibit granting of an NCARB Certificate for a period of time.
 - Suspension or revocation of the NCARB Certificate for a period of time.
 - Public reprimand of candidate.
 - Any other sanction permitted under the [PCC Rules of Procedure](#).

NCARB Board of Directors Action:

- Review and come to a final decision on action(s) to take.

When one or more sanctions are issued by the PCC and/or Board of Directors, staff will implement such actions and inform the candidate and the candidate's board.