



California Architects Board
Regulatory and Enforcement Committee
January 15, 2026
Teleconference Via WebEx





BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES, AND HOUSING AGENCY • GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS • CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD
2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105, Sacramento, CA 95834
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Committee Members

Robert C. Pearman Jr., Chair
Leonard Manoukian, Vice Chair
Robert Chase
Nilza Serrano
Steven Winkel

NOTICE OF TELECONFERENCE MEETING

The Regulatory and Enforcement Committee (Committee) of the

**California Architects Board will hold a meeting at the
meeting location below and via Webex Events
pursuant to Government Code section 11123.5(b)**

1:00 p.m., on Thursday, January 15, 2026

Department of Consumer Affairs
2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105
Front Conference Room
Sacramento, CA 95834

NOTICE AND AGENDA

1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
(or until completion of business)

DISCUSSION AND ACTION MAY BE TAKEN ON ANY ITEM LISTED ON THIS AGENDA.

- A. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of a Quorum
- B. Chair's Procedural Remarks and Committee Member Introductory Comments
- C. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

The Committee may not discuss or act on any item raised during this public comment section, except to decide whether to refer the item to the Committee's next Strategic Planning session and/or place the matter on the agenda of a future meeting (Government Code sections 11125 and 11125.7(a)).

- D. Review and Possible Action on May 8, 2025, Committee Meeting Minutes
- E. Enforcement Program Update

(Continued)

F. Update on 2025-2028 Strategic Plan Objectives which may result in a recommendation to the Board:

1. Evaluate the Board's fine structure and update regulations as necessary to increase fines to discourage practice violations.
2. Determine whether statutory changes are necessary to clarify licensed architects are required to submit plans for local approval and what architects can do to eliminate confusion and protect consumers.
3. Research and amend regulations as necessary to ensure relevancy with current technologies and practices.
4. Pursue legislation to update the Business Entity Report Form (BERF) to include more information about the management control of businesses.
5. Provide additional training to subject matter experts (SMEs), board members, and staff to strengthen enforcement decisions and recommendations.

G. Adjournment

The time and order of agenda items are subject to change at the discretion of the Committee Chair and may be taken out of order. The meeting will be adjourned upon completion of the agenda, which may be at a time earlier or later than posted in this notice. In accordance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, all meetings of the Committee are open to the public.

The Committee plans to webcast the meeting on its website at www.cab.ca.gov. Webcast availability cannot be guaranteed due to limitations on resources or technical difficulties. The meeting will not be cancelled if webcast is not available. Meeting adjournment may not be webcast if it is the only item that occurs after a closed session.

Government Code section 11125.7 provides the opportunity for the public to address each agenda item during discussion or consideration by the Committee prior to it taking any action on said item. Members of the public will be provided appropriate opportunities to comment on any issue before the Committee, but the Committee Chair may, at their discretion, apportion available time among those who wish to speak. Individuals may appear before the Committee to discuss items not on the agenda; however, the Committee can neither discuss nor take official action on these items at the time of the same meeting (Government Code sections 11125 and 11125.7(a)).

This meeting is being held via WebEx Events. The meeting is accessible to the disabled. A person who would like more information about the meeting or needs a disability-related accommodation or modification to participate in the meeting may ask questions about the meeting or make a disability-related accommodation request by contacting:

Person: Katie Wiley
Telephone: (916) 471-0762
Email: katie.wiley@dca.ca.gov
Telecommunications Relay Service: Dial 711

Mailing Address:

California Architects Board
2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105
Sacramento, CA 95834

Providing your request at least five (5) business days before the meeting will help to ensure availability of the requested accommodation.

Protection of the public shall be the highest priority for the Committee in exercising its licensing, regulatory, and disciplinary functions. Whenever the protection of the public is inconsistent with other interests sought to be promoted, the protection of the public shall be paramount (Business and Professions Code section 5510.15).

The California Architects Board, (CAB) will hold a meeting in person at the location above and via WebEx Events. Information to Register/Join Meeting for Members of the Public via WebEx: To access the WebEx event, attendees will need to click the following link. Instructions to connect to the meeting can be found at the end of this agenda.

To access the Webex event, attendees will need to click the following link and enter their first name, last name, email, and the event password listed below:

<https://dca-meetings.webex.com/dca-meetings/j.php?MTID=m53cc0ff034ff9bdf1e52b600faf135a4>

If joining using the link above
Webinar number: 2482 310 9200
Webinar password: CAB115

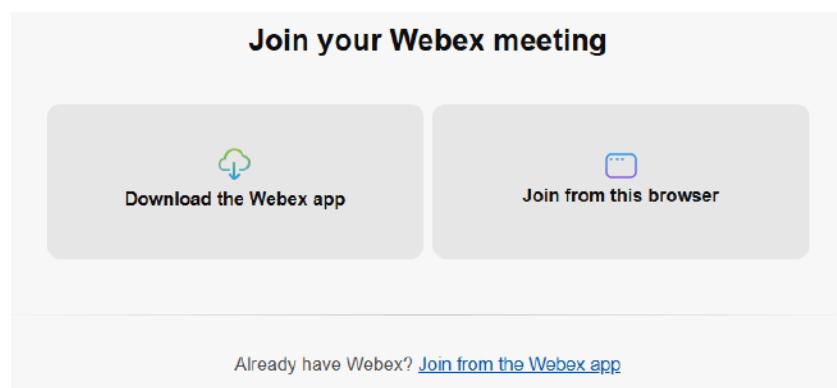
If joining by phone
+1-415-655-0001 US Toll
Access code: 2482 310 9200
Passcode: 222115

Members of the public may, but are not obligated to, provide their names or personal information as a condition of observing or participating in the meeting. When signing into the WebEx platform, participants may be asked for their name and email address. Participants who choose not to provide their names will be required to provide a unique identifier, such as their initials or another alternative, so that the meeting moderator can

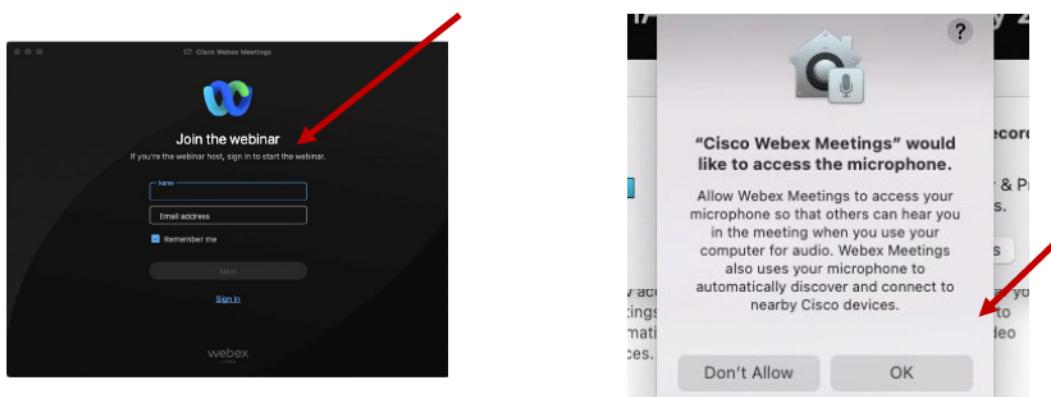
identify individuals who wish to make a public comment. Participants who choose not to provide their email address may utilize a fictitious email address in the following sample format: XXXXX@mailinator.com.

Recommended: Join using the meeting link.

- 1 Click on the meeting link. This can be found in the meeting notice you received and is on the meeting agenda.
- 2 If you already have Webex on your device, click the bottom instruction, "Join from the Webex app." If you have **not** previously used Webex on your device, your web browser will offer "Download the Webex app." Follow the download link and follow the instructions to install Webex.



- 3 Enter your name and email address*. Click "Next." Accept any request for permission to use your microphone and/or camera.



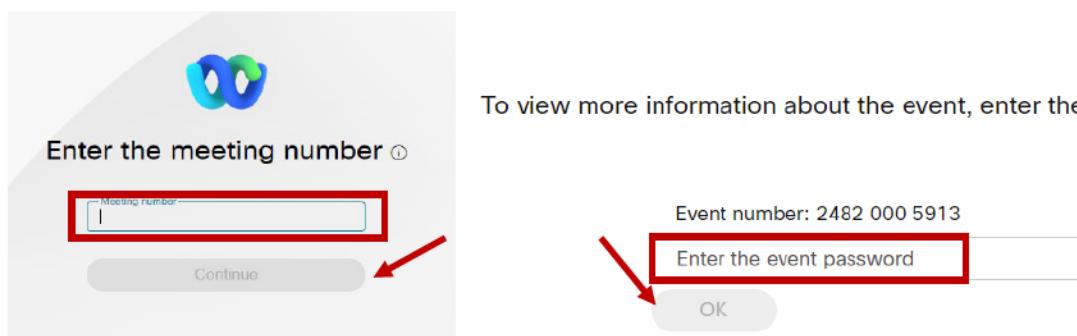
*Members of the public are not obligated to provide their name or personal information and may provide a unique identifier such as their initials or another alternative as well as a fictitious email address like in the following sample format: XXXXX@mailinator.com.

Alternative 1. Join from Webex.com

- 1 Click on “Join a Meeting” at the top of the Webex window.



- 2 Enter the meeting/event number and click “Continue.” Enter the event password and click “OK.” This can be found in the meeting notice you received or on the meeting agenda.



- 3 The meeting information will be displayed. Click “Join Event.”

[Back to List](#)

Meeting Name

Jones, Shelly@DCA | 9:45 AM - 9:55 AM | Thursday, Oct 14 2021 |
(UTC-07:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)

[Join Event](#) [+ Add](#)



OR

Alternative 2. Connect via Telephone



You may also join the meeting by calling in using the phone number, access code, and passcode provided in the meeting notice or on the agenda.

Microphone control (mute/unmute button) is located at the bottom of your Webex window.



Unmute



Start video



Share



Mute

Green microphone = Unmuted: People in the meeting can hear you.



Unmute

Red microphone = Muted: No one in the meeting can hear you.

Note: Only panelists can mute/unmute their own microphones. Attendees will remain muted unless the moderator invites them to unmute their microphone. Only panelists will be offered starting their video camera.

Attendees/Members of the Public

Joined via Meeting Link

The moderator will call you by name and indicate a request has been sent to unmute your microphone. Upon hearing this prompt:

Click the Unmute me button on the pop-up box that appears.



Joined via Telephone (Call-in User)



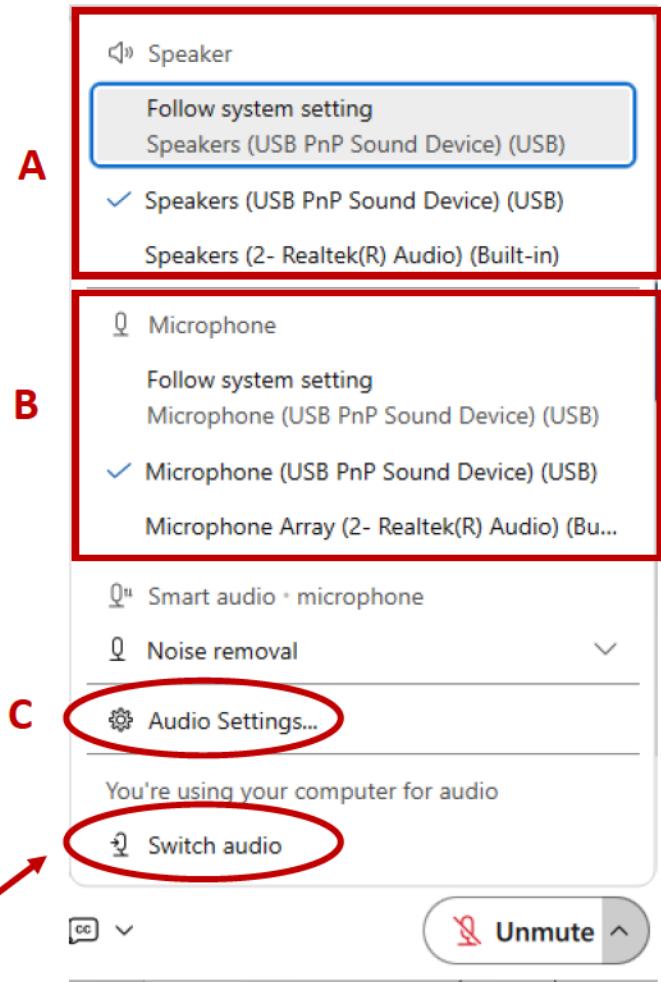
- When you are asked to unmute yourself, press *6.
- When you are finished speaking, press *6 to mute yourself again.

If you cannot hear or be heard

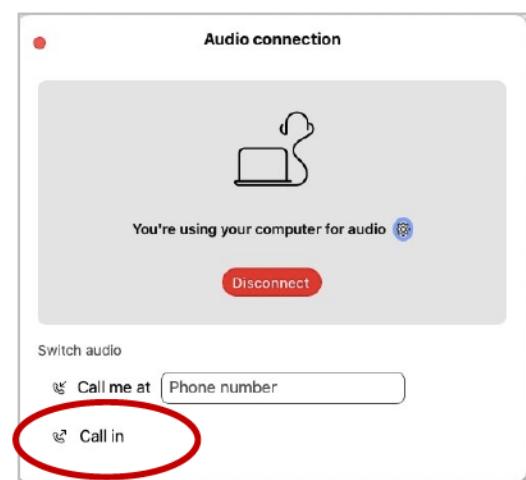
- 1 Click on the bottom facing arrow located on the Mute/Unmute button at the bottom of the Webex window.



- 2 From the drop-down menu, select different:
 - A. Speaker options if **you can't hear** participants.
 - B. Microphone options if **participants can't hear you**.
 - C. Audio settings will offer testing of your devices, and let you choose a different device.



- 3 To link your phone to your Webex session, enabling your phone to become your microphone and speaker source:
 - Click on "Switch audio".
 - Select "Call in", which will show the phone number to call and the meeting login information.



Joined via Meeting Link

- Locate the hand icon at the bottom of the Webex window.
- Click the hand icon to raise your hand.
- Repeat this process to lower your hand.



The moderator will call you by name and indicate a request has been sent to unmute your microphone.

Upon hearing this prompt:

Click the Unmute me button on the pop-up box that appears.



Joined via Telephone (Call-in User)

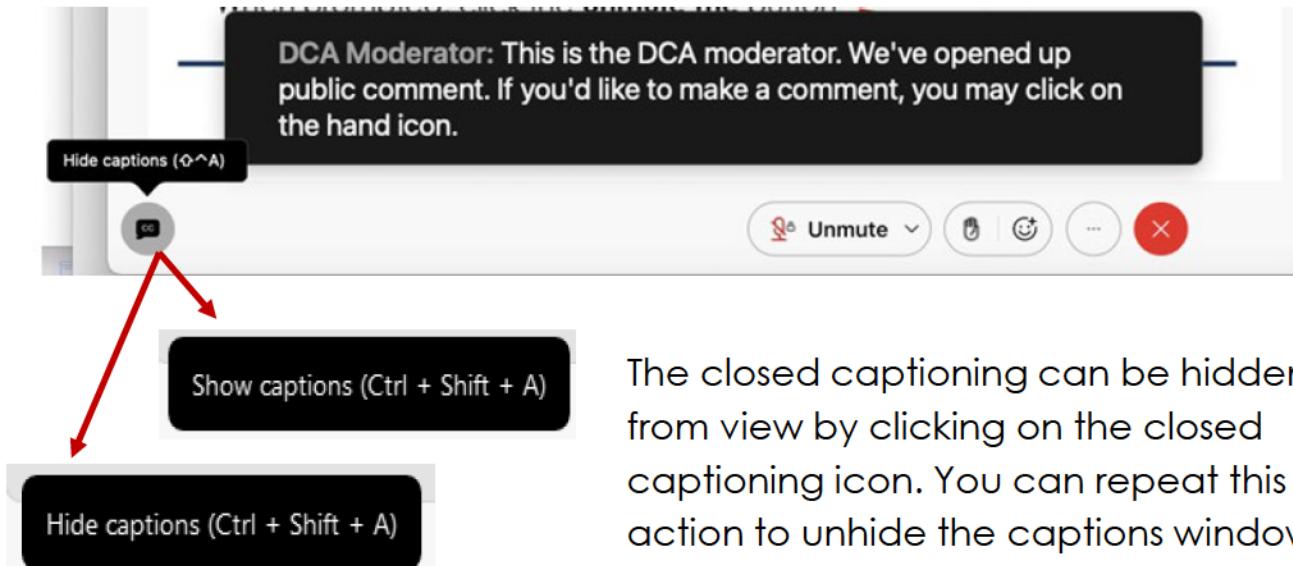


Press *3 to raise or lower your hand.

- When you are asked to unmute yourself, press *6.
- When you are finished speaking, press *6 to mute yourself again.

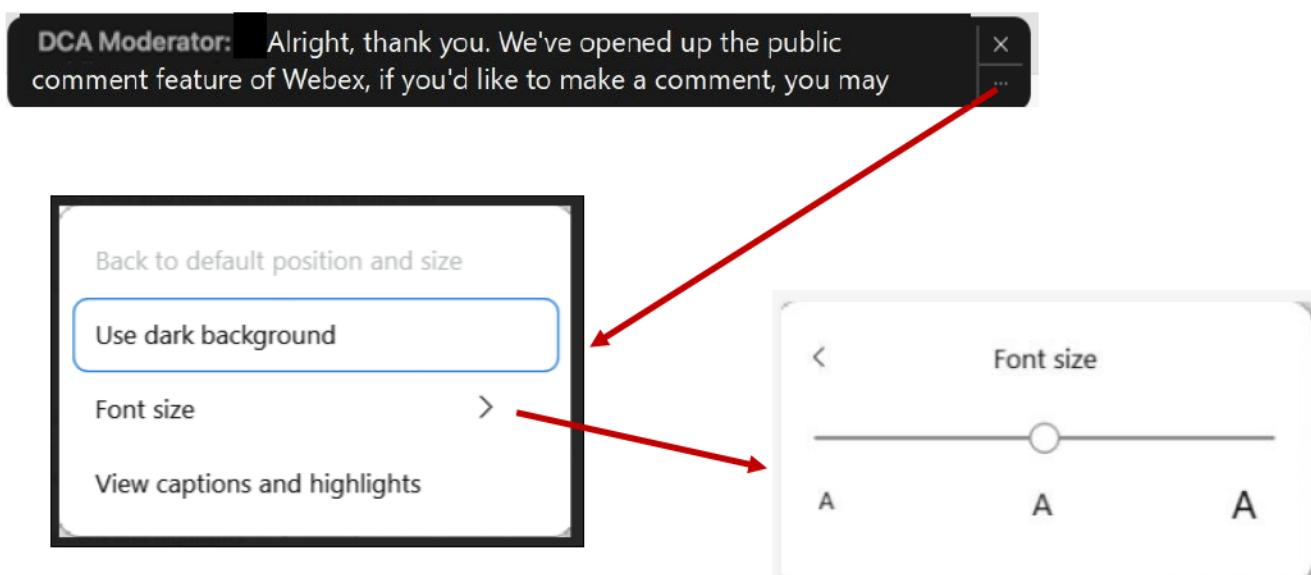


Webex provides real-time closed captioning displayed in a dialog box in your Webex window. The captioning box can be moved by clicking on the box and dragging it to another location on your screen.



The closed captioning can be hidden from view by clicking on the closed captioning icon. You can repeat this action to unhide the captions window.

You can view the closed captioning dialog box with a light or dark background or change the font size by clicking the 3 dots on the right side of the dialog box.



AGENDA ITEM A: CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

Roll will be called by Vice Chair, Leonard Manoukian

Three members of the Committee constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The concurrence of three members in attendance during a duly held meeting at which a quorum is established shall be necessary to constitute an act or decision of the Committee.

Committee Members

Robert C. Pearman Jr., Chair
Leonard Manoukian, Vice Chair
Robert Chase
Nilza Serrano
Steven Winkel

AGENDA ITEM B: CHAIR'S PROCEDURAL REMARKS AND COMMITTEE MEMBER INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Committee Chair Robert C. Pearman Jr. will review scheduled actions and make appropriate announcements.

AGENDA ITEM C: PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Members of the public may address the Committee at this time.

The Committee may not discuss or act on any item raised during this public comment section, except to decide whether to refer the item to the Board's next Strategic Planning session or place the matter on the agenda of a future meeting (Government Code sections 11125 and 11125.7(a)).

Public comments will also be taken on agenda items at the time an item is heard and prior to the Committee taking any action. Total time allocated for public comment may be limited at the discretion of the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM D: REVIEW AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MAY 8, 2025, COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Action Requested

Members are asked to approve the minutes from the May 8, 2025, committee meeting.

Attachments

May 8, 2025, Regulatory and Enforcement Committee Draft Meeting Minutes



**MEETING MINUTES
CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD
REGULATORY AND ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE**

May 8, 2025
Teleconference Meeting
Physical Location:
2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105
Sacramento, California 95834

Committee Members Present

Robert C. Pearman, Jr., Chair
Leonard Manoukian, Vice Chair
Robert Chase
Nilza Serrano
Steven Winkel

Board Staff Present

Laura Zuniga, Executive Officer
Timothy Rodda, Regulations Manager
Kourtney Fontes, Program Manager, Administration
Alicia Kroeger, Program Manager, Enforcement
Michael Sganga, Lead Enforcement Analyst
Jasmine Steinwert, Enforcement Analyst
Katie Wiley, Enforcement Analyst
Natalia Diaz, Enforcement Technician
Ryan Riddell, Enforcement Technician
Bethany Butori, Office Technician

Guests Present

Brian Clifford
Glenn Gall
GV Ayers
Pamela Brief
So Young Lee

A. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of a Quorum

Regulatory and Enforcement Committee (REC) Chair Robert C. Pearman, Jr., called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Katie Wiley called the roll. There being five members present at the time of roll, a quorum was established.

B. Chair's Procedural Remarks and Committee Member Introductory Comments

Chair Pearman announced the meeting is being held by teleconference and physical location at 2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105, Sacramento, California, 95834.

Chair Pearman advised the Committee of the voting requirements: 1) all motions and seconds will be repeated for the record; and 2) votes on all motions will be taken by roll call.

C. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

Chair Pearman opened the floor for public comment regarding items not specified on the meeting agenda. Pamela Brief, Chair with the Landscape Architects Technical Committee (LATC) commented that it was good to see everyone. No other comments were received.

D. Review and Possible Action on October 26, 2023 REC Meeting Minutes

Chair Pearman asked if there were any changes proposed to the October 26, 2023, Committee Meeting minutes. No changes were suggested.

Robert Pearman moved to approve the October 26, 2023 REC Meeting Minutes. Robert Chase seconded the motion. Members Pearman, Chase, Serrano and Winkel voted in favor of the motion. Member Manoukian abstained. The motion passed 4-0-1.

E. Enforcement Program Update

Alicia Kroeger delivered an Enforcement Program Update, highlighting staffing levels and the ongoing efforts to recruit architects for the Subject Matter Expert (SME) program due to the technical nature of their cases.

She presented Enforcement Program Data, showing a significant increase in cases for fiscal year 2023-24, primarily driven by Continuing Education (CE) Audits that followed the lifting of the CE Waiver. This influx of quicker-closing CE cases led to a decrease in average case closure time, though overall pending cases increased due to staff vacancies. Disciplinary cases are projected to rise in the upcoming fiscal year, with a return to lower numbers expected by 2025-26 as staffing stabilizes.

Michael Sganga provided an overview of citations issued, detailing both unlicensed practice examples and various egregious violations by licensees of the Architects Practice Act (Act).

An update on pending legislation that impacts the Board was provided, including proposed "Architects-in-Training" legislation (AB 759), the status of the Commercial

Interior Designer Title Act (SB 816), and new bills related to expedited restaurant tenant improvements (AB 671) and the CSLB's ability to discipline their licensees for Architects Practice Act violations (AB 1341). The Board staff also addressed questions regarding the AIA's stance on legislation, the designation of Commercial Interior Designers, and the Board's role in disciplining architects for violations handled by other professional practices.

F. Update on the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan Objectives

- 1. Evaluate the Board's fine structure and update regulations as necessary to increase fines to discourage practice violations.**

The Board is concerned that current fines are insufficient to deter practice violations and aims to research increasing the fine structure. While Class "A" violations currently range from \$2,500 to \$20,000, the Board seeks to update these amounts, which have not been adjusted in years, and potentially recover rising operating costs and staff salaries. To achieve this, Board staff will contact other boards under the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to gauge collective interest in increasing fines, as this would necessitate a change to the Business and Professions Code (BPC). Public comments were not received on this objective.

- 2. Determine whether statutory changes are necessary to clarify licensed architects are required to submit plans for local approval and what architects can do to eliminate confusion and protect consumers.**

The Board is concerned that planning departments are not verifying licensure for designers submitting non-exempt projects, leading to consumer protection issues. While BPC section 5500.1 defines "practice of architecture" to include planning, BPC section 5536.2, which mandates licensure verification, is currently interpreted as applying only to building departments. Enforcement staff are asking the Committee to confirm our interpretation that this should apply to planning departments who are reviewing non-exempt projects, then Board staff can address it appropriately. One way it could be addressed would be sending out bulletins to planning departments. Enforcement staff have been sending bulletins to specific planning departments where they have found unlicensed practice, and when they are citing the designers. The Committee seeks to clarify this inconsistency and has recommended outreach to the American Planning Association to explore potential solutions. While statutory changes have not been proposed at this time, staff are evaluating whether such changes may be necessary. The Committee also suggests updating Board guidebooks to improve clarity around licensure verification for non-exempt projects.

- 3. Research and amend regulations as necessary to ensure relevancy with current technologies and practices.**

Given the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) in building design, the Board is considering developing a policy statement on the ethical use and disclosure of AI by architects. Concerns include the lack of formal AI education in architecture schools and potential consumer apprehension. Committee members discussed the liability implications and the role of licensed architects in stamping AI-generated designs. They also touched upon Governor Newsom's initiative to use AI for expediting building permit approvals, viewing it as a pre-screening tool that could significantly impact the traditional plan-checking process and potentially reduce the need for human plan checkers. The Committee aims to bring this issue to the full Board, suggesting a cross-committee effort to address the complexities of AI integration in architecture.

Mr. Sganga proposed regulatory changes for enforcement that aimed to address consumer harm that could result from the use of AI. Key proposals include defining "client" in BPC section 5536.22 to ensure consumers are protected when architects are hired by developers or third parties, as current loopholes allow clients to be unaware of their architect and lack recourse for design flaws. The Committee also discussed clarifying the BPC section 5536.22(b)(2) exemption from written contracts to prevent its misuse and to ensure prior compliant contracts existed. Additionally, with Mr. Sganga's comments and direction, the Committee discussed the need to clarify California Code of Regulations (CCR) section 151(a)(2) regarding "immediate and responsible direction" for plans prepared by independent or offshore drafters, given concerns about architects maintaining responsible control. Chair Pearman says he understands the concerns about the language, but the term "immediate" might have been a compromise years ago that everyone said they could agree on. Pearman noted that he thinks "immediate" doesn't apply to terms of time or distance. The dictionary definition of immediate is "of a relationship without intervening medium or agent", and Chair Pearman believes this is what the language implies in CCR 151(a)(2). But with the tertiary definitions of "immediate", it might be appropriate to change that actual word with something different. Steven Winkel agreed with Chair Pearman that the word "immediate" may need to be changed. Lastly, the discussion included clarifying CCR section 136 to include more secure electronic stamps, suggesting the use of digital signatures with security protocols to prevent fraudulent use of PDF/JPEG images of stamps. The Enforcement Unit is working with our counsel to determine the possibilities of adding cost recovery provisions to citations. Enforcement will give an update of the findings at the next committee meeting.

4. Pursue legislation to update the Business Entity Report Form (BERF) to include more information about the management control of businesses.

The Board is seeking to update the BERF to better inform architects of their responsibilities when allowing an unlicensed company to use "architect" in their business name or advertise architectural services. Under CCR, Title 16, Section 134, an architect designated in such a capacity is in responsible control of all the

company's professional services and in management control of the company. Enforcement has observed architects backing out when they realize this broad responsibility, as current informational bulletins are often overlooked. The proposal is to add a clear notification on the BERF itself, detailing these obligations by referencing the relevant code section, which is believed to be achievable without significant legislative or regulatory changes.

5. Provide additional training to subject matter experts (SMEs), board members, and staff to strengthen enforcement decisions and recommendations.

To enhance enforcement decisions, the Board aims to provide additional training to SMEs, Board members, and staff on critical interpretations of the Act and enforcement actions. While SMEs currently receive guidance on standard of care issues, the goal is to equip them with deeper knowledge of contract requirements and exemptions. A primary focus is to inform Board members, who review administrative law judge rulings. It was suggested that Mr. Sganga could introduce new topics or legal provisions during Board meetings to facilitate ongoing education.

Chair Pearman asks for public comment on all of the Strategic Plan Objectives. No public comment was given.

Chair Pearman called for a ten-minute break with the meeting resuming at 12:20PM.

Committee Members Robert Pearman, Nilza Serrano, Robert Chase and Steven Winkel are present after the break.

G. Discussion of complaints received, complaint processing, and related enforcement matters

Mr. Sganga presented an overview of the Enforcement's complaint process, detailing the scope of complaints handled. He emphasized the challenge of determining negligence, where SMEs play a crucial role in assessing whether a licensee's conduct meets the standard of care. Mr. Sganga also clarified the definition of "Willful Misconduct" as defined by the Act (CCR section 150, BPC section 5584). As an example of their work, he referenced a currently pending accusation against a licensee facing charges of negligence, willful misconduct, contract violations, incompetence, and recklessness.

Chair Pearman asks for public comment on public item G. No comments were given.

H. Discussion of unlicensed practice issues and related enforcement authority

Mr. Sganga and Ryan Riddell discussed ongoing investigations into unlicensed practice issues, specifically addressing rampant email spamming where fraudulent use of license numbers and stamps from out-of-state architects is occurring. They also highlighted the challenge of unlicensed advertising on internet platforms like Yelp. Mr. Riddell's inquiry to Yelp regarding their general category listings, which can mislead consumers about a business's licensed status, revealed that Yelp's moderators assign these categories, and Yelp claims no liability for third-party content. The investigation into Yelp's practices is ongoing, and Chair Pearman suggested collaborating with other DCA Boards to collectively address this issue with large internet companies, acknowledging that a higher authority might be needed to effect change.

Chair Pearman then asked if anyone had any questions about this agenda item. There were none.

Chair Pearman then asked if anyone wished to make public comments on agenda item H. There were no comments.

I. Fire Victim Support (Southern California)

Enforcement is actively supporting 2025 Pacific Palisades fire victims by addressing unlawful advertising by unlicensed designers. Mr. Riddell reported that two companies advertising to fire victims without a licensed architect are now compliant. Robert Chase stressed the need for building departments in affected areas to be vigilant against unlicensed fraud, especially for non-wood frame construction and commercial rebuilds, which require licensed architects. The committee discussed creating a public service announcement (PSA) to educate consumers on when an architect is required and to help them identify licensed professionals, with landscape architects also expressing interest in participating. The Board plans to coordinate efforts with AIA chapters in fire-affected areas and will follow up with the DCA regarding previously proposed communications.

Chair Pearman asked for any other information on the topic. There were no other comments.

Chair Pearman then asked for public comment on agenda item I. Raymond Marentette raised his hand and commented about individuals calling themselves an "architect" in the Silicon Valley in the Information Technology Industry. Bob Chase replied that this has come up many times before and is there any intent that the use of the word is related to the build environment. Timothy Rodda mentioned this was a common issue in the early to mid-2000s. They can use titles related to the software industries where such titles as "Software Architect" or "Systems Architect" where it was clear the title was not part of the design-build model.

Chair Pearman asked for any further public comment. There were no other requests.

Chair Pearman saw no more agenda items for the meeting.

J. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:07 PM.

DRAFT

AGENDA ITEM E: ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

Summary

Attached is the Enforcement Program Update, which is a synopsis of Board and Enforcement Program activities and projects of interest to the Regulatory and Enforcement Committee.

Also included in this item are summaries of the Final Citations and Final Disciplinary Actions that have become effective since the last meeting. The Enforcement Unit will identify and discuss selected examples of relevant investigations.

Assembly Bill 759 Architect-In-Training was enacted and will be effective starting January 1, 2027. Staff will provide an update and respond to questions, including identifying items requiring follow-up or additional research.

Attachment(s)

- Enforcement Program Update
 - Enforcement Program Data
 - Enforcement Action Summaries (December 2024-October 2025)
- Architect-In-Training Assembly Bill 759

ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

Personnel Update

Tirzah Phipps accepted an Associate Governmental Program Analyst position in the Enforcement Unit, effective November 17, 2025. Ms. Phipps is responsible for oversight of the fingerprinting program and is assigned an enforcement caseload.

Enforcement Subject Matter Expert (SME) Program

In November 2019, the Board began using a pool of qualified SMEs to provide case review, technical evaluation, and courtroom testimony. This process has enabled a more efficient use of the Board's Staff resources. The Board currently has a small pool of SMEs, some of which have completed numerous expert opinion reports. With the success of the SME Program the Board has decided to renew a few of the original SME contracts and has begun the recruitment process to obtain a new pool of SMEs for the new year.

Website Updates

Video Tutorials

The Enforcement staff created two video guides on avoiding common mistakes for both architects and consumers with examples and case studies. These videos were posted to the [Video Tutorials](#) page on the California Architects Board website. These tutorials are called *Avoiding Common Mistakes: A Guide for Architects* and *Avoiding Common Mistakes: A Guide for Consumers*.

Form and Informational Bulletin

The Enforcement staff updated the Architect's Business Entity Report Form and Informational Bulletin which is used to report the name and address of the entity through which licensees provide architectural services. This form and bulletin were posted to the [Forms page under the Licensee section](#) on the California Architects Board website.

Regulatory & Legislation Updates

Assembly Bill (AB) 759 (VALENCIA) Architect-In-Training

[AB 759](#) was enacted and starting next year will authorize the California Architects Board to allow eligible licensure candidates who have passed at least one exam division to use the title "architect-in-training" (AIT) under the supervision of a licensed architect. Supervising architects would be required to accept responsibility for the AIT's work, and changes in supervision would need to be reported to the Board.

The bill limits use of the title, prohibits independent practice, and allows the Board to disclose AIT status to the public. Authorization would be time-limited, subject to renewal under specific conditions, and would end for new applicants after January 1, 2033.

AB 759 also expands the Board's authority to investigate and discipline AITs and supervising architects for violations. The bill becomes operative January 1, 2027, and sunsets January 1, 2037.

Enforcement Program Data		
Complaints	Fiscal Year 2024/25	Fiscal Year 2023/24
Received	336	385
Opened	336	385
Closed	329	323
Average Days to Close	162	174
Pending	220	215
Conviction/Arrest	Fiscal Year 2024/25	Fiscal Year 2023/24
Conviction Received	20	21
Conviction Closed without Referral for Investigation	0	0
Conviction Referred to Investigation	20	21
Conviction Pending (Close of FY)	0	0
Citations	Fiscal Year 2024/25	Fiscal Year 2023/24
Issued	130	93
Final	131	69
Disciplinary Cases	Fiscal Year 2024/25	Fiscal Year 2023/24
Attorney General Cases Initiated	3	1
Final	1	2

Enforcement Action Summaries

December 2024-October 2025

Tuan J. Nguyen (Westminster) - The Board issued a one-count citation that included a \$2,500 administrative fine to Tuan J. Nguyen, dba Do Green, an unlicensed individual, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code (BPC) section 5536(a). The action alleged that in or around February 2023, Nguyen offered and provided architectural services without a license.

Nguyen advertised "architectural services" through an online Vietnamese newspaper, Nguoi Viet, despite not being a licensed architect. Mr. C.P. (Client) found the advertisement and contacted Nguyen to design an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) for his property located in Garden Grove, California. On February 19, 2023, the Client entered a contract with Nguyen, under which Nguyen agreed to provide "architectural services." Nguyen billed the Client specifically for "architecture," and later abandoned the project.

Nguyen failed to respond to the Board's inquiries regarding these allegations.

A citation with an aggravated fine was warranted because Nguyen has a prior history of violations, having been previously cited by the Board for using the term "architectural" in a proposal and in his business name (Citation #19-23). Additionally, Nguyen's actions caused consumer harm, evidenced by the Client's small claims court judgment against him.

The facts established that Nguyen represented himself as an architect through advertising, contract language, and invoicing, in violation of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a). The citation became final on December 6, 2024.

Ali R. Pourhassan-Zonouz (Irvine) – The Board issued a one-count citation that included a \$1,000 administrative fine to Ali R. Pourhassan-Zonouz, dba A2Z Architectures and ZonouZ-deZine & Construction, an unlicensed individual, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or around October 31, 2023, the Board received a complaint alleging that Pourhassan-Zonouz had been hired to prepare plans to convert a garage into an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) for F.S. (client) for a residential project located in Lake Forest, California for fees totaling \$14,730.15.

Pourhassan-Zonouz used the business name A2Z Architectures on his contract and on the title block for the project plans. His company website offered commercial design services which require a license, displayed a picture of 7-story building and included a blog entitled "Innovative Architecture Design Trends in New Construction."

Pourhassan-Zonouz's claimed company Manta profile, doing business as A2Z Architectures, included "Architectures" in the business name. Pourhassan-Zonouz's company Home Advisor profile, doing business as A2Z Architectures, offered Architect under *Areas of Expertise*. Pourhassan-Zonouz's personal World Architecture profile used the title of "Architect" and offered architecture. Pourhassan-Zonouz's Data Lead profile gave him the title of "Principal Architect" at A2zarchitectures. Pourhassan-Zonouz's company Facebook profile stated that Pourhassan-Zonouz is an "Architectural Designer."

Pourhassan-Zonouz's company Yelp profile was categorized under "Architects" and offered architectural design and architectural project management and stated, "Our team of experienced architects, designers, and builders work closely with you to bring your vision to life..."

Pourhassan-Zonouz's business name, title block, website, and online profiles, wherein Pourhassan-Zonouz used the titles of "Architect," "Principal Architect," and "Architectural Designer" and described his services as "Architecture," "Architectures," and "Architectural" are devices that might indicate to the public that Pourhassan-Zonouz is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a). The citation became final December 7, 2024.

Milad B. Oueijan (Hacienda Heights) – The Board issued a two-count citation with a \$3,000 administrative fine to Milad B. Oueijan, an unlicensed person, dba B Hive Design Group, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536(a) and 5536.1(c).

On or about September 29, 2023, the Board received a complaint alleging Oueijan misrepresented himself as a licensed architect. The Complainant, Mr. J.E.M., witnessed Oueijan giving a presentation at a public City Planning Commission meeting in Corona, California on September 25, 2023, regarding a planned senior housing development. Oueijan introduced himself as the "architect of the project."

The plans for the project prepared by Oueijan included a residential building consisting of 62 units. This project is not exempt from licensing requirements under Business and Professions Code section 5537.

Oueijan's recorded presentation, wherein he described himself as an architect is a device that might indicate to the public that Oueijan is licensed or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes a violation of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a).

His design of a 62-unit residential building constitutes the practice of architecture as defined in Business and Professions Code section 5500.1 and a violation of Business and

Professions Code sections 5536(a) and 5536.1(c). The citation became final February 2, 2025.

George Grigorian (Glendale) – The Board issued a one-count citation with a \$1,000 administrative fine to George Grigorian, an unlicensed person, dba Grigorian Architects, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536(a).

Between April 9, 2024, and July 25, 2024, Grigorian represented himself as an architect and his company as an architectural firm through the following advertisements: Grigorian's business name, email address, and two websites used the word "Architects." The websites stated, "experienced in every aspect of Architecture, worked in the best Architecture firms in Los Angeles," "wide range of experience and knowledge in Architecture." and "Complete Architectural Services and Green Building Designs by licensed professionals." The websites further indicated that Grigorian provided "Complete Architectural Services" and states, "Our team of designers and architects work collaboratively to create innovative designs."

Grigorian's Archinect profile stated that he sought "To obtain a position as an Architect with Lead Performances," claimed experience as an "Architect," "Junior Architect," and providing "Architectural design of residential and commercial from the ground up." It indicated that he specialized in "Architecture" and had skills in "Autodesk Revit Architecture."

Grigorian's Instagram profile advertised "grigorian_architects," and indicated that he is both an "Architectural Designer," and a "Master of Architecture."

Grigorian's Yelp profile for "Grigorian Architects" was categorized under "Architects" and offered "Architectural design," "Architectural site analysis," and "Architectural project management." It claimed that he was "Highly Professional and experienced in every aspects of Architecture, worked in best Architectural firms in Los Angeles" and had a "Wide range of experience and knowledge in Architecture."

Grigorian's YouTube profile for "Grigorian Architects" advertised footage of him practicing and engaging in architectural services.

Grigorian's online advertising and profiles are devices that might indicate to the public that Grigorian is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes a violation of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a). The citation became final on March 12, 2025.

Tony Jones (Clements) – The Board issued a three-count citation with a \$3,750 administrative fine to Tony Jones, an unlicensed person, dba Architenders, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536(a), 5536(b) and 5536.1(c), and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

Between May 2, 2024, and July 1, 2024, Jones represented himself as an architect and his company as an architectural firm through the following advertisements:

His LinkedIn profile stated that his skills included “Architectural Drawings.” His company website included advertising of commercial projects, used the phrase “Inspiring Architecture Designs,” and referred to his company name ARCHITENDERS. Jones also used his Associate, American Institute of Architects (AIA) number in his company profile, adding to the public perception that he is a licensed architect.

Jones’ online advertising devices might indicate to the public that he is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes a violation of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or about March 20, 2023, Jones executed a contract for commercial design services for a Boba store in Sacramento, California. Jones used the business name Architenders on the contract and on the plan’s title block. The title of the contract was “AGREEMENT BETWEEN OWNER AND ARCHITECT/DESIGNER,” it offered “architectural designs,” and Jones was referred to as “Architect/Designer.” The contract also included a section regarding the architect’s responsibilities, and used the “ARCHITENDERS INC” logo. Jones is referred to as the “architect” in the contract document multiple times. By executing a contract for commercial architectural services which are not exempt from licensing requirements, Jones violated Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and 5536.1(c).

Finally, Jones used a circular stamp with his name and signature, and included his Associate, AIA number, the initials “AIA” which is an abbreviation for American Institute of Architects, and “NCARB,” which is an abbreviation for National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. The use of this stamp was misleading as it has a design similar to those used by licensed architects and represented or implied that Jones was licensed to prepare plans, specifications, or instruments of service. Such conduct constitutes a violation of Business and Professions Code section 5536(b).

A citation with an aggravated fine was warranted based on the following, according to CCR 152 subsections (d)(4)(7): Jones had received a letter of advisement on March 10, 2023, for a similar advertising violation (CAB #22-11-258A).

Jones paid the fine, satisfying the citation. The citation became final on March 14, 2025.

Hanif Daud (Diamond Bar) – The Board issued a one-count citation with a \$1,000 administrative fine to Hanif Daud, an unlicensed person, dba Icon Atelier, Inc., for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536(a) and 5536.1(c).

On or about January 30, 2023, Daud executed a “Consultnacy [sic] Proposal for Proposed Truck Wash and Repair Facility” with Mr. B.D.S. (client) for architectural services for a new truck wash bay and workshop facility measuring a total of about 6,100 square feet. The scope of work for the preliminary review included “Architectural Design” for a fixed fee of \$200,000.

The project is not exempt from licensure requirements under Business and Professions Code (BPC) section 5537 as it includes plans for a new commercial building. Daud’s business name and initials were on the plans, and the contract for the plans confirmed his responsibility. Such conduct constitutes the practice of architecture as defined in BPC section 5500.1 and a violation of BPC sections 5536(a) and 5536.1(c). Daud paid the fine, satisfying the citation. The citation became final on April 3, 2025.

Edgar Vidal (Upland) - The Board issued a two-count citation that included a \$3,000 administrative fine to Edgar Vidal, dba Dream Design Build LLC, an unlicensed individual, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536(a) and 5536.1(c) and California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or about February 11, 2021, Vidal executed an “ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AGREEMENT” with Mr. L.B. (client) to provide design services for a project located in San Fernando, California. The description of services stated “NEW BUILDING STRUCTURE FOR NEW 7 UNIT APARTMENT COMPLEX PER CITY OF SAN FERNANDO MUNICIPAL CODE & CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE” for a planning fee of \$34,600 and building fee of \$33,200. This document offered “ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS.”

The project plans dated November 11, 2024, listed “DREAM DESIGN BUILD” as the “Architectural Designer.” Vidal’s company website stated, “Dream Design Build // Architectural Planning & Design” and “UNLIKE MOST ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN FIRMS, WE DESIGN WITH THE BUILDER IN MIND. THIS MAKES THE HAND-OFF TO THE BUILDERS AS SEAMLESS AS POSSIBLE. RELIEVING YOU OF HEADACHES, & RESULTING IN PROJECTS THAT ARE ON TIME & ON BUDGET.”

Vidal’s personal Instagram profile included a rendering for a three-story building which is not exempt from licensing requirements, suggesting his company could provide this type of design. His company Linktree profile offered “Architecture Design.”

Vidal’s contract, title block, website, and online profiles, wherein Vidal used the title of “Architectural Designer,” described his services as “Architectural” and “Architecture,” and offered non-exempt services are devices that might indicate to the public that Vidal is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

A six-unit apartment complex is not exempt from licensing requirements under BPC 5537(a)(2). Vidal designed the plans and signed them, and “DREAM DESIGN BUILD” is listed as the “Architectural Designer,” in violation of BPC section 5536.1(c). Vidal paid the fine, satisfying the citation. This citation became fine on April 4, 2025.

Eran Gispan (Sherman Oaks) —The Board issued a one-count citation that included a \$2,500 administrative fine to Eran Gispan, dba Gispan Design, Inc., an unlicensed individual, for alleged violations of BPC section 5536(a). The action alleged that between August 26, 2022, and November 2, 2022, Gispan represented himself as an architect and his company as an architectural firm through the following advertisements:

The company website of Gispan Design, Inc. entitled “Gispan Design – Architectural Design” described it as an “Architectural Design Firm Based in Los Angeles” offered Commercial Design and a “full suite” of commercial design services; claimed design credit for a three-story residence and a commercial office; and offered a job titled “Architectural Design Assistant” with no licensure requirement. There were also numerous online descriptions of properties designed by “architect Eran Gispan.”

A heightened fine amount was warranted based on the following, according to CCR 152 subsections (d) and (e):

- a. Gispan exhibited bad faith by falsely claiming to bring his website into compliance;
- b. Widespread instances of advertising violations indicating a willful disregard of the law;
- c. Prior citation (CAB #19-02) and failure to comply with a prior order of abatement.

Gispan’s online advertising and profiles are devices that might indicate to the public that he is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes a violation of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a).

Gispan paid the fine, satisfying the citation. The citation became final on April 10, 2025.

Luis Ramirez (Palmdale) - The Board issued a two-count citation that included a \$2,500 administrative fine to Luis Ramirez, dba Lefranc Design, an unlicensed individual, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536(a) and 5536.1(c) and California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or about January 11, 2024, Ramirez executed an “ARCHITECTURE SERVICES PROPOSAL & CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES” contract with Mr. E.S. (client) to provide services for a project located in Rosamond, California. Ramirez was hired to measure, design, and prepare structural foundation and site plans for a steel garage building, a project which is not exempt from licensing requirements under Business and Professions Code Section 5537(a)(3).

The contract included “Architect Designer” and “Architectural” and “Architecture” services. The contract stated, “Architect agrees to provide the following” and “Lefrac Design is an architectural company providing services as architect designers and NOT licensed architects.”

In text messages between Ramirez and the client, Ramirez used the title of “Architect Designer.”

Ramirez’s company website offered “Architectural” services and stated Ramirez would “Generate architectural drawings quickly and efficiently...GOALS: increase my Architectural knowledge, perform well, gain trust and develop a long-term relationship that promotes mutual growth and prosperity...”

Ramirez’s company Angi profile was categorized under “Architects” and stated “Professional architect in Los Angeles with experience to design/develop residential and/or commercial buildings...”

Ramirez’s company Houzz profile was categorized under “Architects” and offered “architecture design and plans services.”

A citation with an aggravated fine was warranted because on June 22, 2022, the Board issued a one-count citation that included a \$1,500 administrative fine to LeFranc Design, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a).

Ramirez’s contract, text messages, company website, and online profiles wherein Ramirez used the titles of “Architect Designer,” “Architectural Designer,” and “Professional architect,” described his services as “Architecture” and “Architectural,” and categorized his company as “Architects” are devices that might indicate to the public that Ramirez is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

The design of a steel garage building without a license is a violation of BPC section 5536.1(c). The citation became final on April 19, 2025.

Ricardo Urquidi (North Hollywood) - The Board issued a one-count citation that included a \$750 administrative fine to Ricardo Urquidi, dba Urbe & Orbe, an unlicensed individual, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a).

On or around December 22, 2022, Urquidi was hired to prepare design plans associated with a residential project located in Sun Valley, California for S.N. (client) and to submit the plans to the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) for approval. Urquidi was paid but never submitted plans to the city for the permit.

The agreement specifically stated, “will be prepared architectural drawings.”

Urquidi’s business card and company letterhead offered architectural services.

His title block included “ARCHITECTURE” and included Urbe & Orbe under “ARCHITECT & ENGINEER.”

Urquidi’s business card, title block, letterhead, and agreement, wherein Urquidi described his services as “Architect,” “Architecture,” and “Architectural,” are devices that might indicate to the public that Urquidi is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a). The citation became final April 26, 2025.

Michael Miller (Los Angeles) - The Board issued a one-count citation that included a \$250 administrative fine to Michael Miller, dba MM&A Architects, Inc., a licensed individual, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536.22(a). The action ordered that Miller cease and desist from violating Business and Professions Code sections 5536.22, subdivisions (a)(6) and (a)(8). Miller paid the fine, satisfying the citation. The citation became final on April 27, 2025.

Ty Clay (Los Angeles) - The Board issued a one-count citation that included a \$1,500 administrative fine to Ty Clay, dba MG Design, an unlicensed individual, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or about March 2024, Clay agreed to design a single-family house in Los Angeles, California for Ms. M.A. (client). The work order dated March 11, 2024, included design and development, site visit and survey, development of conceptual, landscape, and space plan drawings, and due diligence documents with lot spacing calculations for a fixed cost of \$4,930, which was paid in full. Clay said he would provide the survey report after the final amount was paid on June 21, 2024, but he never provided one.

Clay’s title block from the plans dated May 28, 2024, included the word “Architecture.” His company website offered “Architectural Design” and stated, “We are a full service architectural design company providing over 13 years of excellent residential and commercial service” and “To speak with an architect please use our contact link to leave a note or call us at...”

Clay failed to comply with the Board’s request for information and corrections.

Clay's title block and company website wherein he offered an architect and described his services as "Architectural" and "Architecture" are devices that might indicate to the public that Clay is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a). The citation became final May 3, 2025.

Eric Martinez-Lucio (Watsonville) - The Board issued a three-count citation including a \$7,500 administrative fine to Eric Martinez-Lucio, an unlicensed individual doing business as Urbatect Development, LLC, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or about April 19, 2021, Martinez-Lucio was hired to provide design services for a residential project located in Dillon Beach, California for Mr. G.M. (client). Under the contract, Urbatect was to "provide architectural design" for three ground-up homes to include the schematic design, design development and construction documents for a fixed fee of \$30,000. The client alleged that Martinez-Lucio failed to provide the services agreed to in the contract and delayed the project.

On or around September 3, 2024, Martinez-Lucio's company Facebook profile stated, "We are a multi-disciplinary design firm specializing in high-end architecture, ADUs, & construction." His company Houzz profile included several commercial projects which were not exempt from licensing requirements, such as the Salvatore Apartments, Tynan Village Apartments, and St. Leo's Apartments. Martinez-Lucio's company Instagram profile offered "Architecture" and called itself an "#architecturefirm." Martinez-Lucio's company Build Zoom profile offered "Architectural Drawings and Designs" and "Other Architecture and Engineering" services.

On or around September 3, 2024, Martinez-Lucio's Craigslist post offered services that included "Architect," "Architectural Designer," and "Architectural."

A citation with an aggravated fine was warranted because on February 15, 2024, the Board issued a two-count citation with a \$5,000 administrative fine to Martinez-Lucio, an unlicensed person, dba Urbatect Development LLC, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On April 6, 2023, Martinez-Lucio was issued a Class "A" citation in the amount of \$1,000 for violations of California Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and was formally advised that an unlicensed individual or firm in California cannot use any term confusingly similar to architect or architectural to describe services offered or be labeled in such a category. Martinez-Lucio failed to pay all previously issued fines.

Martinez-Lucio's business name, contract, online profiles (Build Zoom, Facebook, Houzz, Instagram) and online Craigslist advertisement, wherein Martinez-Lucio described his

services as “Architecture” and “Architectural” and offered an “Architect” are devices that might indicate to the public that Martinez-Lucio is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a). This citation became final on May 3, 2025.

Magdi A. Labib (Cerritos) – The Board issued a two-count citation that included a \$2,000 administrative fine to Magdi A. Labib, a licensed individual, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536.22(a) and 5584 and California Code of Regulations, title 16, section 160(a)(2).

On or about June 15, 2022, Ms. R. M. (client) hired NPB Design Studio to prepare plans for the permitting of a residential addition consisting of a bedroom and bathroom of approximately 500-700 square feet. It also included the interior remodel to modify a master suite and a garage conversion to a junior accessory dwelling unit (ADU). The client paid NPB Design Studio \$16,649.

The proposed first floor plans dated February 6, 2023, for the above-mentioned project included Labib’s stamp and signature. However, there was no written contract between Labib and either the client or NPB Design Studio. Labib’s failure to execute a written contract with either the client or the design firm prior to commencing professional services for the above-referenced project constituted a violation of Business and Professions Code section 5536.22(a).

Labib’s stamp and signature on the plans established his responsible control over the project under Business and Professions Code section 5586.1(a). While in responsible control, Labib failed to provide responses to Requests For Information, committed numerous design errors, and failed to complete the project. These failures resulted in costs to the client including construction costs to correct the framing, foundation, and electrical errors, fees paid to a new designer for new plans and project management, additional structural engineering fees, and additional permit fees to the City of Los Angeles.

Labib’s failure to exercise proper care to oversee and assure that the plans met all applicable codes and regulations and were well coordinated constitutes a violation of Business and Professions Code section 5584 and California Code of Regulations, title 16, section 160(b). Labib paid the fine, satisfying the citation. The citation became final on May 20, 2025.

Noura Bishay (Lemon Grove) - The Board issued a one-count citation that included a \$1,500 administrative fine to Noura Bishay, dba NPB Design Studio, an unlicensed individual, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or about October 31, 2024, Bishay's personal LinkedIn profile included "Top skills: Architectural Desgin [sic] • Architectural Drawings • Interior Architecture • Landscape Architecture." Bishay's company LinkedIn profile offered "Accessible & Architecture and Design." Bishay's company website identified Bishay as an "Architecture Designer."

Bishay had previously been issued a Letter of Advisement formally advising her that an individual not licensed in California to practice architecture or a firm without an affiliated California architect in responsible control of the professional services provided by the company, cannot use any term confusingly similar to *architect* or *architectural* to describe services offered, or be labeled in such a category.

Bishay's company website and LinkedIn profiles, wherein she used the title of "Architecture Designer" and described her services as "Architecture" and "Architectural," are devices that might indicate to the public that Bishay is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a). Bishay paid the fine satisfying the citation. The citation became final on June 2, 2025.

Roger Phillip Utt (San Diego) - The Board issued a one-count citation that included a \$2,500 administrative fine to Roger Phillip Utt, dba Dream Design Build LLC, an unlicensed individual, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536(a) (b).

On or around January 1, 2021, Utt entered into a contract with Ms. W.H. (client) by which he offered to provide design services for a residential project located in Poway, California. Utt was to provide plans for a home remodel expansion for a fee of \$7,960 and was paid in full.

The contract included "Roger Utt – Architect," "And the Architect: Roger Utt, License No. C-22229," the *Scope of Work* included "The Architect shall...," the *Costs* included "the Architect shall provide consultation, design and construction documents and drawings...," *Rates* included "Project Architect \$100.00 per hour," the *Termination of Services* stated "If terminated, Architect shall..." and the signature line stated "Roger Utt – Architect."

Utt's architect license had expired 12 years earlier on June 30, 2009, and was never renewed.

The Project plans dated June 22, 2022, were stamped and signed with Utt's name, license number C-22229, and the false renewal date June 30, 2023.

Utt's personal All Biz profile was categorized under "Architects" and stated, "Roger Utt Architect AIA is located in San Diego, California."

Between January 2, 2025, and January 30, 2025, the Board mailed letters to Utt detailing the allegations, but a response was not received.

A citation with an aggravated fine was warranted because Utt had been previously cited for the same type of violation on September 19, 2014 (citation #14-17).

Utt's contract, stamp on plans, and online profile, wherein Utt used the title of "Architect" and described his services as "Architecture" and "Architectural," are devices that might indicate to the public that Utt is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and (b). Utt paid the fine, satisfying the citation. The citation became final on June 28, 2025.

Jose Martinez (San Diego - The Board issued a one-count citation with a \$1,500 administrative fine to Jose Martinez, an unlicensed person, dba Taller de Arquitectura, LLC, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or about December 4, 2019, Martinez, doing business as Taller de Arquitectura, LLC, executed a contract with Mr. H. R. (client) to provide preliminary design drawings and construction documents for a second story bonus room on top of an existing garage for a fixed fee of \$8,000 for the residential project located in El Cajon, California. Martinez's contract includes the business name Taller de Arquitectura LLC. Martinez did not provide the services agreed to in the contract.

Martinez's company Facebook and LinkedIn profiles used the business name "Taller de Arquitectura, LLC," which is translated to "Architecture Workshop." His email address contained the abbreviation "arch."

The Board contacted Martinez about his violations and he failed to make all of the corrections requested.

Martinez's business name, contract, email address, and online profiles wherein he described his services as "Arquitectura" and included "arch" in his email are devices that might indicate to the public that he is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a). Martinez paid the fine, satisfying the citation. The citation became final on August 17, 2025.

Clark Remington (Thousand Oaks) - The Board issued a one-count citation with a \$1,000 administrative fine to Clark Remington, an unlicensed person, dba Clark Remington Construction, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536(a) and California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or about January 27, 2024, the Board received a complaint alleging possible violations of the Architects Practice Act regarding a residential project located in Palisades, California. On October 24, 2023, the Remington had entered into a contract entitled “Architectural Agreement” with Ms. J.S. (client) to provide design services for elevation plans and to walk the plans through the permit process for a fixed fee of \$50,000. The contract also stated, “Architectural administration (architectural supervision) can be obtained from this office on an hourly basis.” Remington never produced the plans.

Remington’s YouTube profile contained videos referring to himself as an “architect.”

Remington’s contract and YouTube profile wherein he used the title of “architect” and described his services as “Architectural,” are devices that might indicate to the public that he is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a). The citation became final on September 30, 2025.

Erika Navas (Studio City) - The Board issued a one-count citation with a \$1,500 administrative fine to Erika Navas, an unlicensed person, dba Infinity Concept Builders, Inc., for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536(a) and California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or about February 11, 2025, the Board received a complaint alleging possible violations of the Architects Practice Act (Act) regarding a residential project located in Santa Ana, California. On or about May 13, 2025, the Board received a second complaint regarding a residential project located in Granada Hills, California. Both complaints claimed that Navas failed to provide the agreed upon services and failed to answer phone calls and emails.

Around the same time, Navas’ company website offered knowledge of “architecture” in California and commercial design services which are not exempt from licensing requirements. Navas’ profile on the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) website listed her as an “Architect.” Navas’ company Yelp profile was categorized under “Architects” and offered “Architectural” services, and stated, “We offer all pre-construction services, architectural plans, blueprints, permit expediting, 3D Renderings, construction administration, detailed cost estimates, legalization. custom home building, custom renovations and additions,” “ranging from residential to commercial.” Navas’ company Instagram profile called her an “Architectural Designer” and offered “Architecture” services.

Navas failed to reply to the Board’s requests for information and corrections.

Navas’ company website and online profiles, wherein Navas used the titles of “Architect” and “Architectural Designer,” described her services as “Architecture” and “Architectural,” and offered commercial services which require a license are devices that might indicate to the

public that Navas is an architect or qualified to engage in the practice of architecture in California. Such conduct constitutes violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a) and Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 134(a). The citation became final on October 12, 2025.

Catie T. Vuong (Westminster) - The Board issued a one-count citation with a \$2,000 administrative fine to Catie T. Vuong, an unlicensed person, dba Artwave Design Studio, for alleged violations of Business and Professions Code sections 5536(a) and California Code of Regulations section 134(a).

On or around January 23, 2024, Vuong entered into a contract with Ms. A.T.N. (client) offering to provide design services for a residential project located in South El Monte, California. Vuong promised to provide an “architectural set” for an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) for a fixed fee of \$7,000. The contract also promised to “...provide a standards of care equal to, or superior to, care use by Architect's similar to ARTWAVE on similar project ...” Vuong was paid an initial deposit of \$2,000.

Vuong failed to reply to the Board’s requests for information and corrections.

On November 16, 2023, the Board had issued a previous two-count citation with a \$2,000 administrative fine to Vuong for similar violations of Business and Professions Code section 5536(a). The first citation was not paid. The new citation became final on October 25, 2025.

AGENDA ITEM F: UPDATE ON 2025-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES WHICH MAY RESULT IN A RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD

The Enforcement Unit will discuss each of the Strategic Plan Objectives identified by the Board and will ask the Committee to help identify appropriate actions to take in support of the goals. Updates to Strategic Plan Objectives may result in a recommendation to the Board:

- F.1 Evaluate the Board's fine structure and update regulations as necessary to increase fines to discourage practice violations.
- F.2 Determine whether statutory changes are necessary to clarify licensed architects are required to submit plans for local approval and what architects can do to eliminate confusion and protect consumers.
- F.3 Research and amend regulations as necessary to ensure relevancy with current technologies and practices.
- F.4 Pursue legislation to update the Business Entity Report Form (BERF) to include more information about the management control of businesses.
- F.5 Provide additional training to subject matter experts (SMEs), board members, and staff to strengthen enforcement decisions and recommendations.

F. Update on 2025-2028 Strategic Plan Objectives:

1. Evaluate the Board's fine structure and update regulations as necessary to increase fines to discourage practice violations.

AGENDA ITEM F.1: EVALUATE THE BOARD'S FINE STRUCTURE AND UPDATE REGULATIONS AS NECESSARY TO INCREASE FINES TO DISCOURAGE PRACTICE VIOLATIONS.

Summary

The Enforcement Unit will discuss the Strategic Plan Objective to evaluate the Board's fine structure and update regulations as necessary to increase fines to discourage practice violations.

To advance this strategic objective, staff has undertaken a coordinated review of the Board's citation and fine framework to determine whether existing penalties remain effective and legally supportable. Staff have considered the following:

- Reviewing the current fine structure to assess whether existing penalty amounts adequately deter violations of the Architect Practice Act and Board regulations.
- Researching legal and policy considerations to determine whether a formal justification is required to support increases to fine levels.
- Engaging with other Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Boards and Bureaus to determine interest in increasing fine amounts.
- Consulting with legal counsel to evaluate whether fine amounts may be negotiated or adjusted through the informal conference process and the implications for enforcement consistency and deterrence.
- Evaluating the feasibility of including cost recovery provisions to citations issued to both licensees and unlicensed individuals.

Considerations for achieving this Strategic Plan Objective to increase fines to discourage practice violations include:

- Repeat offenders rarely pay their fines regardless of the cost.
- First-time violations are often attributed to a lack of familiarity with the Architect Practice Act.
- Adding cost recovery provisions in citations with the possibility of negotiation of fine amounts.

Enforcement staff have determined that the Board's fine structure is aligned to other Boards and Bureaus within DCA. Further increases to fine amounts would depend on developing interest from other Boards in increasing the statutory cap.

To achieve this Strategic Plan Objective staff have begun including cost recovery language to citations issued.

Action Requested

Discuss the steps taken for this objective and recommend ongoing efforts to add cost recovery to citations and implement negotiation of timely fine payments during informal conferences.

Attachments

- Business and Professions Code section 125.9
- Business and Professions Code section 148
- California Code of Regulations 152

[Up^](#)[<< Previous](#)[Next >>](#)[cross-reference chaptered bills](#)[PDF](#) | [Add To My Favorites](#)Search Phrase: **BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE - BPC****DIVISION 1. DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS [100 - 472.5]** (*Heading of Division 1 amended by Stats. 1973, Ch. 77.*)**CHAPTER 1. The Department [100 - 144.6]** (*Chapter 1 enacted by Stats. 1937, Ch. 399.*)

125.9. (a) A board, bureau, or commission within the department, the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners, and the Osteopathic Medical Board of California, may establish, by regulation, a system for the issuance to a licensee of a citation which may contain an order of abatement or an order to pay an administrative fine assessed by the board, bureau, or commission where the licensee is in violation of the applicable licensing act or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto.

(b) The system shall contain the following provisions:

(1) Citations shall be in writing and shall describe with particularity the nature of the violation, including specific reference to the provision of law determined to have been violated.

(2) Whenever appropriate, the citation shall contain an order of abatement fixing a reasonable time for abatement of the violation.

(3) In no event shall the administrative fine assessed by the board, bureau, or commission exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for each inspection or each investigation made with respect to the violation, or five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for each violation or count if the violation involves fraudulent billing submitted to an insurance company, the Medi-Cal program, or Medicare. In assessing a fine, the board, bureau, or commission shall give due consideration to the appropriateness of the amount of the fine with respect to factors such as the gravity of the violation, the good faith of the licensee, and the history of previous violations.

(4) A citation or fine assessment issued pursuant to a citation shall inform the licensee that if the licensee desires a hearing to contest the finding of a violation, that hearing shall be requested by written notice to the board, bureau, or commission within 30 days of the date of issuance of the citation or assessment. If a hearing is not requested pursuant to this section, payment of any fine shall not constitute an admission of the violation charged. Hearings shall be held pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

(5) Failure of a licensee to pay a fine or comply with an order of abatement, or both, within 30 days of the date of assessment or order, unless the citation is being appealed, may result in disciplinary action being taken by the board, bureau, or commission. Where a citation is not contested and a fine is not paid, the full amount of the assessed fine shall be added to the fee for renewal of the license. A license shall not be renewed without payment of the renewal fee and fine.

(c) The system may contain the following provisions:

(1) A citation may be issued without the assessment of an administrative fine.

(2) Assessment of administrative fines may be limited to only particular violations of the applicable licensing act.

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if a fine is paid to satisfy an assessment based on the finding of a violation, payment of the fine and compliance with the order of abatement, if applicable, shall be represented as satisfactory resolution of the matter for purposes of public disclosure.

(e) Administrative fines collected pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the special fund of the particular board, bureau, or commission.

(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 484, Sec. 1. (SB 1454) Effective January 1, 2025.)



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)

CHAPTER 1.5. Unlicensed Activity Enforcement [145 - 149] (*Chapter 1.5 added by Stats. 1992, Ch. 1135, Sec. 2.*)

148. Any board, bureau, or commission within the department may, in addition to the administrative citation system authorized by Section 125.9, also establish, by regulation, a similar system for the issuance of an administrative citation to an unlicensed person who is acting in the capacity of a licensee or registrant under the jurisdiction of that board, bureau, or commission. The administrative citation system authorized by this section shall meet the requirements of Section 125.9 and may not be applied to an unlicensed person who is otherwise exempted from the provisions of the applicable licensing act. The establishment of an administrative citation system for unlicensed activity does not preclude the use of other enforcement statutes for unlicensed activities at the discretion of the board, bureau, or commission.

(Added by Stats. 1992, Ch. 1135, Sec. 2. Effective January 1, 1993.)

[Home](#) [Table of Contents](#)**§ 152. Citations.**

16 CA ADC § 152

Barclays Official California Code of Regulations

Effective: October 1, 2022

Barclays California Code of Regulations

Title 16. Professional and Vocational Regulations
Division 2. California Architects Board (Refs & Annos)
Article 8. Disciplinary Proceedings

Effective: October 1, 2022

16 CCR § 152

§ 152. Citations.Currentness

(a) The Board's executive officer is authorized to issue citations containing orders of abatement and/or administrative fines pursuant to sections 125.9 or 148 of the code against an architect or an unlicensed person who has committed any acts or omissions which are in violation of the Architects Practice Act or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto.

(b) A citation shall be issued whenever any order of abatement is issued or any fine is levied. Each citation shall be in writing and shall describe with particularity the nature and facts of the violation, including a reference to the statutes or regulations alleged to have been violated. The citation shall be served upon the individual personally or by certified mail.

(c) Where citations include an assessment of an administrative fine, they shall be classified according to the nature of the violation and shall indicate the classification on the face thereof as follows:

(1) Class "A" violations are violations which the executive officer has determined involve an unlicensed person who has violated sections 5536, 5536.1, 5536.4, or 5536.5 of the code, or title 16, section 134 of these regulations, including but not limited to, acting in the capacity of or engaged in the practice of architecture. A class "A" violation is subject to an administrative fine in an amount not less than seven hundred and fifty dollars (\$750) and not exceeding two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) for each and every violation except a higher fine may be assessed when expressly authorized by statute.

(2) Class "B" violations are violations which the executive officer has determined involve either a person who, while engaged in the practice of architecture, has violated a statute or regulation relating to the practice of architecture and which has caused physical damage to a structure or building or to real property or monetary damage to a client or member of the public or a person who has committed a class "C" violation and has one or more prior, separate class "C" violations. A class "B" violation is subject to an administrative fine in an amount not less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) and not exceeding two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) for each and every violation.

(3) Class "C" violations are violations which the executive officer has determined involve a person who, while engaged in the practice of architecture, has violated a statute or regulation relating to the practice of architecture and which has not caused either the death or bodily injury to another person or physical damage to a structure or building or to real property or monetary damage to a client or a member of the public. A class "C" violation is subject to an administrative fine in an amount not less than two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) and not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each and every violation.

(d) In assessing the amount of an administrative fine, the executive officer shall consider the following criteria:

- (1) The good or bad faith exhibited by the cited person.
- (2) The nature and severity of the violation.
- (3) Evidence that the violation was willful.
- (4) History of violations of the same or similar nature.
- (5) The extent to which the cited person has cooperated with the board's investigation.

(6) The extent to which the cited person has mitigated or attempted to mitigate any damage or injury caused by his or her violation.

(7) Such other matters as justice may require.

(e) Notwithstanding the administrative fine amounts specified in subsection (c), a citation may include a fine between \$2,501 and \$5,000 if one or more of the following circumstances apply:

(1) The citation involves a violation that has an immediate relationship to the health and safety of another person.

(2) The cited person has a history of two or more prior citations of the same or similar violations.

(3) The citation involves multiple violations that demonstrate a willful disregard of the law.

(4) The citation involves a violation or violations perpetrated against a senior citizen or disabled person.

(f) The sanction authorized under this section shall be separate from, and in addition to, any other civil or criminal remedies.

Credits

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 125.9, 148 and 5526, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 125.9, 148, 149, 5510.1 and 5560, Business and Professions Code.

HISTORY

1. New section filed 12-2-86; designated effective 1-1-87 (Register 86, No. 49).
2. Amendment of section heading, section and NOTE filed 7-13-98; operative 8-12-98 (Register 98, No. 29).
3. Amendment of section and NOTE filed 5-22-2006; operative 6-21-2006 (Register 2006, No. 21).
4. Editorial correction of subsection (c)(3) (Register 2014, No. 3).
5. Amendment of subsection (c)(1) and NOTE filed 8-29-2022; operative 10-1-2022 (Register 2022, No. 35).

This database is current through 4/18/25 Register 2025, No. 16.

Cal. Admin. Code tit. 16, § 152, 16 CA ADC § 152

END OF DOCUMENT

F. Update on 2025-2028 Strategic Plan Objectives:

2. Determine whether statutory changes are necessary to clarify licensed architects are required to submit plans for local approval and what architects can do to eliminate confusion and protect consumers.

AGENDA ITEM F.2: DETERMINE WHETHER STATUTORY CHANGES ARE NECESSARY TO CLARIFY LICENSED ARCHITECTS ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT PLANS FOR LOCAL APPROVAL AND WHAT ARCHITECTS CAN DO TO ELIMINATE CONFUSION AND PROTECT CONSUMERS.

Summary

The Enforcement Unit will discuss the Strategic Plan Objective to determine whether statutory changes are necessary to clarify that licensed architects are required to submit plans for local approval and what architects can do to eliminate confusion and protect consumers.

To advance this strategic objective, staff has undertaken a coordinated review of how licensure verification is applied when architectural plans are submitted to local planning departments for non-exempt projects. Staff have considered the following:

- Confirm the interpretation that licensure verification applies to planning departments reviewing architectural plans for non-exempt projects.
 - Consideration: Request legal guidance to determine the Boards legal rights to when requiring the planning departments determine verification of licensure.
- Evaluate whether existing statutes and regulations adequately clarify licensure requirements for plan submissions. Specifically consider amending Business and Professions Code section 5536.2 or include an adoption for a clarifying regulation.
 - Consideration: Request legal guidance to determine the Boards legal rights to when requiring the planning departments determine verification of licensure.
- Issue a letter to planning departments in jurisdictions where unlicensed practice has been identified.
 - Consideration: The Board has previously issued letters to planning departments that were not successful in achieving the desired outcome for this Strategic Plan. Determine whether the Board should issue a new letter or bulletin to the planning departments.
- Coordinate with the American Planning Association to send a letter to all planning departments
 - Consideration: Determine whether updates or edits are needed for the letter and/or legislation and request a co-signature to support statewide consistency.
- Update Board guides and handbook to clarify licensure verification requirements for non-exempt projects.
 - Consideration: After determination of legislation updates, the Board staff could consider which guides and handbooks need updating based upon the audience of documents.

Action Requested

Discuss the objective and recommend whether statutory or regulatory changes are necessary to clarify that licensed architects are required to submit plans for local planning approval in order to eliminate confusion and protect consumers.

Attachments

- Business and Professions Code section 5500.1
- Business and Professions Code section 5536.1
- Business and Professions Code section 5536.2
- Business and Professions Code section 5536.2 (Proposed modification)



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DIVISION 3. PROFESSIONS AND VOCATIONS GENERALLY [5000 - 9998.12] (*Heading of Division 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 30.*)

CHAPTER 3. Architecture [5500 - 5610.7] (*Chapter 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

ARTICLE 1. General Provisions [5500 - 5502] (*Article 1 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

5500.1. (a) The practice of architecture within the meaning and intent of this chapter is defined as offering or performing, or being in responsible control of, professional services which require the skills of an architect in the planning of sites, and the design, in whole or in part, of buildings, or groups of buildings and structures.

(b) Architects' professional services may include any or all of the following:

- (1) Investigation, evaluation, consultation, and advice.
- (2) Planning, schematic and preliminary studies, designs, working drawings, and specifications.
- (3) Coordination of the work of technical and special consultants.
- (4) Compliance with generally applicable codes and regulations, and assistance in the governmental review process.
- (5) Technical assistance in the preparation of bid documents and agreements between clients and contractors.
- (6) Contract administration.
- (7) Construction observation.

(c) As a condition for licensure, architects shall demonstrate a basic level of competence in the professional services listed in subdivision (b) in examinations administered under this chapter.

(Amended by Stats. 1996, Ch. 184, Sec. 1. Effective January 1, 1997.)



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DIVISION 3. PROFESSIONS AND VOCATIONS GENERALLY [5000 - 9998.12] (*Heading of Division 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 30.*)

CHAPTER 3. Architecture [5500 - 5610.7] (*Chapter 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

ARTICLE 3. Application of Chapter [5535 - 5538] (*Article 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

5536.1. (a) All persons preparing or being in responsible control of plans, specifications, and instruments of service for others shall sign those plans, specifications, and instruments of service and all contracts therefor, and, if licensed under this chapter, shall affix a stamp, which complies with subdivision (b), to those plans, specifications, and instruments of service, as evidence of the person's responsibility for those documents. The failure of any person to comply with this subdivision is a misdemeanor punishable as provided in Section 5536. This section shall not apply to employees of persons licensed under this chapter while acting within the course of their employment.

(b) For the purposes of this chapter, any stamp used by any architect licensed under this chapter shall be of a design authorized by the board, which shall at a minimum bear the licensee's name, their license number, the legend "licensed architect" and the legend "State of California," and which shall provide a means of indicating the renewal date of the license.

(c) The preparation of plans, specifications, or instruments of service for any building, except the buildings described in Section 5537, by any person who is not licensed to practice architecture in this state, is a misdemeanor punishable as provided in Section 5536.

(d) The board may adopt regulations necessary for the implementation of this section.

(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 482, Sec. 4. (SB 1452) Effective January 1, 2025.)



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DIVISION 3. PROFESSIONS AND VOCATIONS GENERALLY [5000 - 9998.12] (*Heading of Division 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 30.*)

CHAPTER 3. Architecture [5500 - 5610.7] (*Chapter 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

ARTICLE 3. Application of Chapter [5535 - 5538] (*Article 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

5536.2. Each county or city which requires the issuance of any permit as a condition precedent to the construction, alteration, improvement, or repair of any building or structure shall also require as a condition precedent to the issuance of the permit a signed statement that the person who prepared or was in responsible control of the plans and specifications for the construction, alteration, improvement, or repair of the building or structure is licensed under this chapter to prepare the plans and specifications, or is otherwise licensed in this state to prepare the plans and specifications.

The signature and stamp, as provided for in Section 5536.1, on the plans and specifications by the person who prepared or was in responsible control of the plans and specifications shall constitute compliance with this section.

It is the responsibility of the agency that issues the permit to determine that the person who signed and stamped the plans and specifications or who submitted the signed statement required by this section is licensed under this chapter or is otherwise licensed in this state to prepare the plans and specifications.

This section shall not apply to the issuance of permits where the preparation of plans and specifications for the construction, alteration, improvement, or repair of a building or structure is exempt from this chapter, except that the person preparing the plans and specifications for others shall sign the plans and specifications as provided by Section 5536.1.

(Amended by Stats. 1996, Ch. 184, Sec. 7. Effective January 1, 1997.)

BPC 5536.2 (Proposed modification)

Each county or city which requires the issuance of any permit as a condition precedent to the **PLANNING**, construction, alteration, improvement, or repair of any building or structure shall also require as a condition precedent to the issuance of the permit a signed statement that the person who prepared or was in responsible control of the plans and specifications for the construction, alteration, improvement, or repair of the building or structure is licensed under this chapter to prepare the plans and specifications, or is otherwise licensed in this state to prepare the plans and specifications.

The signature and stamp, as provided for in Section 5536.1, on the plans and specifications by the person who prepared or was in responsible control of the plans and specifications shall constitute compliance with this section.

It is the responsibility of the agency that issues the permit to determine that the person who signed and stamped the plans and specifications or who submitted the signed statement required by this section is licensed under this chapter or is otherwise licensed in this state to prepare the plans and specifications.

This section shall not apply to the issuance of permits where the preparation of plans and specifications for the construction, alteration, improvement, or repair of a building or structure is exempt from this chapter, except that the person preparing the plans and specifications for others shall sign the plans and specifications as provided by Section 5536.1.

(Amended by Stats. 1996, Ch. 184, Sec. 7. Effective January 1, 1997.)

F. Update on 2025-2028 Strategic Plan Objectives:

3. Research and amend regulations as necessary to ensure relevancy with current technologies and practices.

AGENDA ITEM F.3: RESEARCH AND AMEND REGULATIONS AS NECESSARY TO ENSURE RELEVANCY WITH CURRENT TECHNOLOGIES AND PRACTICES.

Summary

The Enforcement Unit will discuss the Strategic Plan Objective to research and amend regulations as necessary to ensure relevancy with current technologies and practices.

To advance this strategic objective, staff has conducted a comprehensive review of how emerging technologies and evolving professional practices—particularly the use of artificial intelligence (AI), electronic plan submittals, and digital authentication tools—interact with the Architect Practice Act and existing Board regulations. This work is intended to ensure that the Board's regulatory framework continues to protect consumers while allowing for responsible innovation within the profession.

To advance this strategic objective, staff has considered the following:

- Reviewed how emerging technologies, including AI, electronic plan submittals, and digital authentication tools, interact with the Architect Practice Act and existing Board regulations.
- Developed a policy framework addressing the ethical use and disclosure of AI in architectural practice.
- Presented AI-related regulatory and enforcement issues for cross-committee discussion.
- Evaluated Governor Newsom's AI-based permit initiative and its potential impact on traditional plan-checking and licensure oversight.
- Consider a statutory or regulatory amendment to require disclosure of the use of AI in preparing instruments of service:
 - Analyzed Business and Professions Code (BPC) section 5536.22 and California Code of Regulations, Title 16, (CCR) section 160(e) to identify consumer protection gaps related to written contract requirements.
 - Reviewed CCR section 136 to assess whether updates are needed to address the security and integrity of electronic stamps and digital signatures.

Action Requested

Discuss the objective and recommend updating or amending the regulations as necessary to ensure relevancy with current technologies and practices.

Attachments

Articles

Second RIBA AI Report shows surge in usage among UK architects

Top 18 AI Tools for Architects in 2025

Use of Artificial Intelligence in Architecture

Relevant statutes and regulations

Business and Profession Code section 5536.22

California Code of Regulations 136

California Code of Regulations 160(e)

California Civil Code, Title 2.5, section 1633.7

California Civil Code, Title 2.5, section 1633.17



Second RIBA AI Report shows surge in usage among UK architects

Date 27/06/2025 Author RIBA News

Share

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) has published the results of the second survey among its members into attitudes towards, and usage of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

- The number of architects' practices using AI rises from 41% in 2024, to 59% in 2025
- 65% of architects think AI will help sector meet net-zero targets
- Over two-thirds (67%), however have concerns that AI will increase the risk of work being imitated.

The [RIBA AI Report 2025](#) shows a jump in the number of architects' practices now using artificial intelligence, from 41% in 2024 to 59% in 2025. With many contributors now reporting that they view AI as having the potential to be a valuable tool for addressing some of the significant challenges the industry faces.

Well over half the architects taking part — some 65% — think that AI will have an increasingly positive effect on productivity in the construction industry. 65% also feel it will help the sector meet its net-zero targets, and 63% believe it will enable architects and developers to create buildings that will better meet current and future performance requirements.

Only 18% of practices envisage that AI will lead to job losses, and just 4% of those surveyed think that human creativity will no longer be needed for building design because of AI.

Nevertheless, a significant proportion (35%) remain concerned that AI will threaten the profession, 67% worry that it will increase the risk of work being imitated, and 44% are concerned that it will enable those without sufficient professional knowledge to design buildings.

Despite this, however, the overriding sentiment among the architects who responded is that AI offers a route to enhancing some of the professions' core offering and boosting design innovation and creativity. RIBA is working to develop guidance, and demand greater transparency to ensure that architects can harness AI without losing agency over their creative output.

UK architects are increasingly interested in the latest developments in AI technology and RIBA's first AI in Practice Summit, held this May, attracted 240 members.

RIBA President, Muyiwa Oki said:

"What a difference a year makes. The sharp rise in AI use among our members illustrates how all-encompassing this technology is becoming and how willing architects are to embrace new ways of working, to achieve even better results.

Despite the very legitimate concerns many have around imitation and the reliability of data, it's clear that architects are keen to be on the right side of digital innovations and lead by example rather than be left to catch up.

RIBA is committed to making sure the profession continues to reap all the benefits that AI offers and I'm excited to see what the future holds."

-Ends-

Notes to editors:

1. Media contact: Nancy.Ludwig@riba.org
2. The [RIBA AI Report 2025](#) is developed by RIBA's Expert Advisory Group (EAG), which was formed in late 2023 to address the rapid advances occurring in AI technologies, generative design systems and data science; the latest phase of a decades-long development path in digital technologies and their application and refinement in several design and manufacturing sectors.
3. The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) is a global professional membership body that serves its members and society in order to deliver better buildings and places, stronger communities and a sustainable environment. Follow [@RIBA on X/Twitter](#) for regular updates.

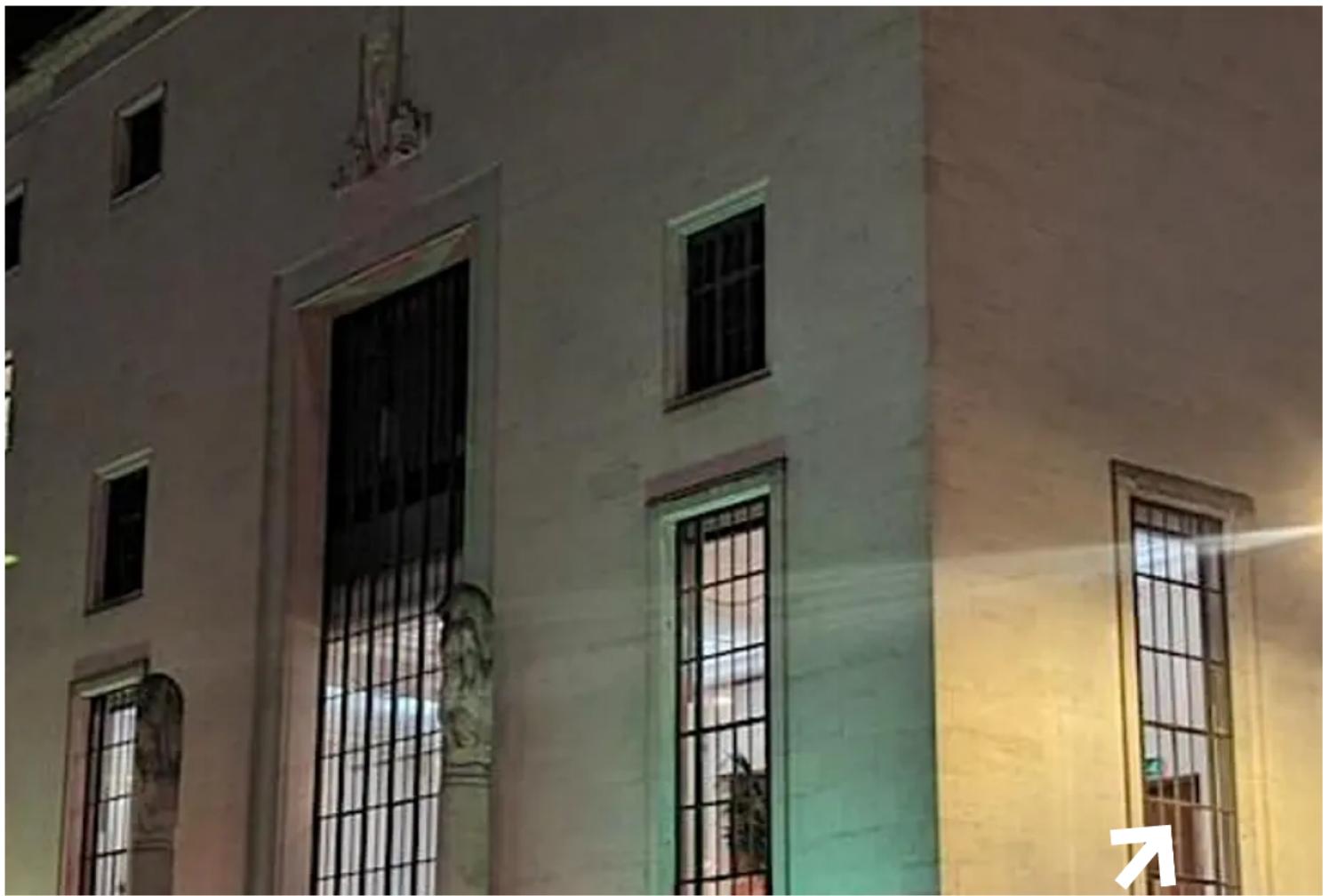
Further reading



RIBA welcomes new 10 year infrastructure strategy



"Change is coming" RIBA Presidential Taskforce meets to tackle unhealthy work culture in architectural practices



Economics of the built environment 2024-2034 – RIBA's latest horizon scans indicate most pressing factors for change

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July 28, 2025

Top 18 AI Tools for Architects in 2025



There was a time when architecture involved late nights and endless revisions. You'd spend hours creating a floor plan, only to hear the client ask, "Can we try something different?" Then, you would have to start all over again.

Now, imagine not having to redo everything manually when a client changes their mind. Does that sound futuristic? In 2025, it's just another Tuesday, thanks to Artificial Intelligence.

While AI tools are now [used in over 59% of architectural practices](#), only a small percentage of architects rely on them. Hence, the opportunity is real for those ready to adopt them.

AI won't replace architects. It's more like having a brilliant assistant who helps you do your job better. It helps explore design options in seconds, offers suggestions based on data, and even helps you figure out how to make a space more efficient. However, the results from AI depend on how the architect trains the model, provides feedback, and inputs data. It relies on the architect's expertise to guide it. Therefore, when humans and AI work together, that's when the real magic happens.

AI is no longer just a buzzword in the architecture industry. Tasks that used to take days can now be completed in seconds. It's helping architects work smarter and faster.

With so many AI tools for architects coming out each day, which ones are worth your time?

In this blog, we've gathered some of the best AI tools for architects in 2025. They are organized by every stage of your architectural design workflow, from brainstorming to collaboration.

How is AI Being Used in Architecture

- **AI helps you explore ideas faster.** You can try out different layouts and concepts in seconds.
- **It makes planning easier.** AI suggests smart ways to use space, save energy, and reduce waste.
- **You can turn rough sketches into 3D models quickly.** No need to spend hours building everything from scratch.
- **It keeps your project on track.** AI helps you manage time, materials, and deadlines more smoothly.
- **It improves teamwork.** Everyone, including architects and engineers, can work

together in real-time.

- **Clients can see the design before it's built.** With AI-powered VR and AR, they can walk through the space and share feedback early.
- **It takes care of boring tasks.** From generating floor plans to checking building rules, AI handles the routine stuff for you.

Let's look at some of the top AI tools in 2025 that are helping architects bring these benefits to life.

AI Tools for Concept Design and Ideation

Tool	Ideal For	What AI Does	Pricing
Midjourney	Turning ideas into visuals	Creates design images from text prompts	Paid
Adobe Firefly	Mood boards, concept art	Generates visuals from simple descriptions	Free & Paid
Architext	Visual ideas from text	Gives visual design ideas from prompts	Free & Paid

Midjourney

Midjourney allows architects to transform rough ideas into beautiful visuals using just a text prompt. If you type in what you're envisioning, like "a cozy cabin in the mountains during snowfall," Midjourney quickly generates an image based on that prompt. This tool is fantastic for exploring design moods or brainstorming early concepts.

Adobe Firefly

Adobe Firefly is a creative AI tool that works well for architects. Like Midjourney, it can produce images, create textures, and generate concept art from text prompts. It is useful for mood boards and storytelling in architectural presentations.

Architext

Architext is a simple prompt-based tool where you describe the kind of space you want, and it gives back visual interpretations. It's not focused on technical accuracy; instead, it helps with quick idea generation when you feel like exploring.

AI Tools for Schematic Planning and Floor Plan Automation

Tool	Ideal For	What AI Does	Pricing
Maket.ai	Fast, code-compliant layouts	Instantly creates floor plans from rules	Paid
Testfit	Quick site feasibility plans	Quickly shows what fits on a site	Paid
PlanFinder	Layout inspiration	Finds and suggests similar floor plan ideas	Free & Paid
Blueprints AI	Simple 2D layouts	Auto-drafts basic layouts from your input	Free & Paid
ARCHITEChTURES	Smart residential planning	Suggests efficient layouts with real-time feedback	Paid

Maket.ai

A leading AI tool for floor plan automation, [Maket.ai](#) helps architects quickly create floor plans based on design goals, constraints, and zoning rules. You just need to input parameters like site size, setbacks, number of units, and design rules. [Maket.ai](#) produces layout options in seconds. It's useful for exploring different design possibilities early on without spending hours on drafting. You can think of it as an AI assistant for fast, code-compliant spatial planning.

Testfit

Testfit is a real estate feasibility AI tool. It automates feasibility studies. You input site details, budgets, and goals. It then provides layout options instantly. This tool is helpful for developers and architects who need quick site planning without spending weeks on drafts.

PlanFinder

PlanFinder helps you search and explore floor plans from a large database. It's useful for referencing ideas or finding similar layouts before you create your own.

Blueprints AI

Blueprints AI is a simple AI layout generator that lets you create 2D floor plans quickly. Just enter some basic details, and the tool drafts layouts that serve as a starting point.

ARCHITEChTURES

This AI architectural software helps architects quickly create and change residential floor plans. Just enter your site and design goals; it generates smart layout options instantly. It also provides real-time feedback on factors like buildable area and energy use. This makes early-stage planning faster and easier.

AI Tools for 3D Modeling and Generative Design

Tool	Ideal For	What AI Does	Pricing
Kaedim	2D to 3D modeling	Converts sketches into simple 3D shapes	Paid
Sloyd.ai	Fast 3D geometry	Builds editable 3D models using simple controls	Free & Paid
Finch3D	Spatial layout generation	Suggests better layout options as you design	Paid

Kaedim

Kaedim quickly transforms 2D sketches or concept art into AI-generated 3D models. This process is common in gaming and product design, but architects can also use it to create early-stage forms for concept presentations.

Sloyd.ai

Sloyd helps you create customizable 3D models with simple inputs. You choose a base shape and move sliders to change the appearance. It is excellent for developing early geometry or visual prototypes.

Finch3D

Finch3D makes generative design easier to use. You provide design parameters, and it produces improved spatial layouts that you can test and refine. It learns from each choice you make.

Tool	Ideal For	What AI Does	Pricing
Veras	Fast concept rendering	Enhances models into styled renders instantly	Paid
Arko AI	Artistic sketch visuals	Turns sketches into polished presentation images	Free & Paid
Lumion	3D visual walkthroughs	Speeds up rendering with smart scene handling	Paid
Visoid	VR design experiences	Lets clients explore your design in VR before it's built	Paid
4VEED AI	Generating prompt visuals	Creates images from ideas or text prompts	Free

Veras by EvolveLAB

Veras takes your 3D model and turns it into beautiful concept renders using simple AI prompting. It saves hours of traditional rendering time and gives you stylistic

variations quickly.

Arko AI

Arko AI adds visual appeal to your sketches and CAD drawings. It turns rough designs into artistic, render-like visuals. This tool is perfect for showing early ideas to clients.

Lumion

Lumion is already popular for real-time rendering, and with AI updates, it's now faster and more responsive. It's great for creating immersive walkthroughs.

Visoid

Visoid combines AI and VR to help you explore designs in an immersive way. It's helpful when you want clients or team members to experience the space before it's built.

4VEED AI Image Generator

4VEED is a creative tool that generates visuals from prompts or rough sketches. Good for building up visual boards or marketing materials quickly.

AI Tools for Project Management & Collaboration

Tool	Ideal For	What AI Does	Pricing
ClickUp	Task + document management	Summarizes notes and organizes tasks for teams	Free & Paid
Miro	Team brainstorming & reviews	Helps teams visualize and review designs together	Free & Paid

ClickUp

ClickUp utilizes AI to assist you in managing tasks, generating summaries, and streamlining your workflow. For architecture firms juggling multiple projects, it keeps everything streamlined.

Miro

Miro is a visual collaboration tool. With AI features, it helps teams brainstorm, map workflows, and provide real-time feedback on design boards.

Wrapping Up

At the end of the day, AI isn't replacing architects; it's just making things a bit easier. It can help generate early ideas, develop floor plans, or assist with renders. These tools can lighten some of the workload.

You don't have to use every one of them. Try a few and see what suits your style. The goal is straightforward: spend less time on repetitive tasks and more time on the creative work you enjoy.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is there an AI tool for architecture?

Yes, several AI tools are designed specifically for architects. Tools like Veras and Maket can help you create floor plans, visualize architectural concepts, and explore new ideas faster than ever. They handle the heavy lifting in your workflow, allowing you to focus more on creativity and less on repetitive tasks.

2. How can AI be used in architecture?

AI is helping architects work more efficiently. Instead of spending hours on repetitive tasks, architects can now use AI to quickly generate design ideas and visualize how a space will look. This technology also improves project planning. It streamlines the design process and ensures teams and clients stay connected.

3. Can I use ChatGPT for architecture?

Yes. Architects use ChatGPT to write design briefs, generate project ideas, and create client emails and marketing copy. It's a helpful tool for brainstorming, documentation, and improving communication, especially when used with design-focused AI tools.

From: California Architects Board Licensee Related Bulletins <CAB-LICENSEE@SUBSCRIBE.DCALISTS.CA.GOV> **On Behalf Of** California Architects Board
Sent: Monday, July 21, 2025 12:04 PM
To: CAB-LICENSEE@SUBSCRIBE.DCALISTS.CA.GOV
Subject: Use of Artificial Intelligence in Architecture



You are receiving this email because you previously indicated an interest in receiving notifications from the California Architects Board and joined its eSubscriber List.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Architecture

AI has become increasingly more prevalent in the architecture profession. AI holds the immense potential to significantly transform the architectural landscape. Consequently, it is important for architects to be informed on the use of AI in the profession and address the implications of its widely spreading use.

AI is not a replacement for architects, but rather powerful tools that can enhance their capabilities. AI can generate a broad range of design possibilities, offer fresh perspectives, and accelerate ideation. It also provides various functionalities that automate and simplify processes. However, there are several challenges and considerations related to its use in the profession. Some of these challenges and considerations include:

Data Accuracy and Bias

AI output significantly relies upon the quality of the input datasets. Datasets may contain various biases to different extents that ultimately result in unfair treatment or exclusion of certain demographical groups.

Authorship and Accountability

It is crucial for architects to address the questions surrounding authorship and accountability when using AI in their designs and other output. There may be issues in determining ownership of intellectual property rights for AI-generated designs.

Data Privacy and Security

AI systems in architecture process large volumes of sensitive data. Caution must be exercised when handling client data and measures must be taken to ensure compliance with data privacy and security standards.

Responsible use of AI includes:

Maintain Responsible Control

Architects are just as responsible under the [Architects Practice Act](#) for the AI-generated drawings and other instruments of service as they would be using any other assistive tool. It is imperative when architects use AI tools for their projects that they review and validate the generated output.

Transparency

Architects should be fully transparent with clients regarding the extent to which they use AI in their practice. It is important to address and resolve any concerns raised by their clients regarding the inclusion of AI in projects.

Establish Firm Policy and Training

Architectural firms should develop clear guidelines for the use of AI and provide appropriate training to ensure responsible and effective utilization.

Human Oversight Remains Paramount

Architects should implement robust processes and procedures to validate AI-generated output and ensure compliance with project requirements and ethical obligations.

DO NOT reply to this email. If you have any questions or require further assistance, please [contact the Board](#).

Thank you,
California Architects Board





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BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE - BPC

DIVISION 3. PROFESSIONS AND VOCATIONS GENERALLY [5000 - 9998.12] (*Heading of Division 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 30.*)

CHAPTER 3. Architecture [5500 - 5610.7] (*Chapter 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

ARTICLE 3. Application of Chapter [5535 - 5538] (*Article 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

5536.22. (a) An architect shall use a written contract when contracting to provide professional services to a client pursuant to this chapter. That written contract shall be executed by the architect and the client, or the client's representative, prior to the architect commencing work, unless the client knowingly states in writing that work may be commenced before the contract is executed. The written contract shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following items:

- (1) A description of the project for which the client is seeking services.
- (2) A description of the services to be provided by the architect to the client.
- (3) A description of any basis of compensation applicable to the contract and the method of payment agreed upon by both parties.
- (4) The name, address, and license number of the architect, the name and address of the client, and the project address.
- (5) A description of the procedure that the architect and the client will use to accommodate additional services and contract changes, including, but not limited to, changes in the description of the project, in the description of the services, or in the description of the compensation and method of payment.
- (6) A description of the procedure to be used by either party to terminate the contract.
- (7) A statement identifying the ownership and use of instruments of service prepared by the architect.
- (8) A statement in at least 12-point type that reads: "Architects are licensed and regulated by the California Architects Board located at 2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105, Sacramento, CA 95834."

(b) This section shall not apply to any of the following:

- (1) Professional services rendered by an architect for which the client will not pay compensation.
- (2) An arrangement as to the basis for compensation and manner of providing professional services implied by the fact that the architect's services are of the same general kind which the architect has previously rendered to and received payment from the same client.
- (3) If the client knowingly states in writing after full disclosure of this section that a writing which complies with the requirements of this section is not required.
- (4) Professional services rendered by an architect to a professional engineer registered to practice engineering under Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 6700), or to a land surveyor licensed under Chapter 15 (commencing with Section 8700).
- (5) Professional services rendered by an architect to a public agency when using that public agency's written contract.

[Home](#) [Table of Contents](#)**§ 136. Stamp.**

16 CA ADC § 136

Barclays Official California Code of Regulations

Barclays California Code of Regulations

Title 16. Professional and Vocational Regulations

Division 2. California Architects Board (Refs & Annos)

Article 5. Miscellaneous

16 CCR § 136

§ 136. Stamp.Currentness

(a) The stamp authorized for use by architects by section 5536.1 of the code may be purchased from any source. It shall be circular in shape and shall be not less than one (1) inch in diameter and not more than two (2) inches in diameter. The stamp shall be of a design similar to those shown below and shall bear at minimum those elements specified in section 5536.1(b) of the Code.

(b) The stamp shall not be of the embossing type.

(c) The license renewal date shall be shown on the stamp by either leaving a space on the stamp where the architect shall write his or her renewal date or having the license renewal date printed on the stamp.

**REN. Refers to Renewal Date****Credits**

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 5526, 5536.1(d), 5550 and 5552, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 5536.1(d), 5550 and 5552, Business and Professions Code.

HISTORY

1. New section filed 4-3-91; operative 4-3-91 pursuant to Government Code section 11346.2(d) (Register 91, No. 16).
2. Change without regulatory effect amending subsections (a) and (c) and amending NOTE filed 10-31-2006 pursuant to section 100, title 1, California Code of Regulations (Register 2006, No. 44).

This database is current through 12/26/25 Register 2025, No. 52.

Cal. Admin. Code tit. 16, § 136, 16 CA ADC § 136

END OF DOCUMENT

[Home](#) [Table of Contents](#)**§ 160. Rules of Professional Conduct.**

16 CA ADC § 160

Barclays Official California Code of Regulations

Barclays California Code of Regulations

Title 16. Professional and Vocational Regulations

Division 2. California Architects Board (Refs & Annos)

Article 9. Professional Conduct

16 CCR § 160

§ 160. Rules of Professional Conduct.**Currentness**

A violation of any rule of professional conduct in the practice of architecture constitutes a ground for disciplinary action. Every person who holds a license issued by the Board shall comply with the following:

(a) Competence:

(1) An architect shall undertake to perform professional services only when the architect, together with those whom the architect may engage as consultants, are qualified by education, training, and experience in the specific technical areas involved.

(2) In designing a project, an architect shall have knowledge of all applicable building laws, codes, and regulations. An architect may obtain the advice of other professionals (e.g., attorneys, engineers, and other qualified persons) as to the intent and meaning of such laws, codes, and regulations and shall not knowingly design a project in violation of such laws, codes and regulations.

(b) Standard of Care:

(1) When practicing architecture, an architect shall act with reasonable care and competence, and shall apply the technical knowledge and skill which is ordinarily applied by architects of good standing, practicing in this state under similar circumstances and conditions.

(c) Timely Response to Board:

(1) Whenever the Board is conducting an investigation, an architect or a candidate for licensure shall respond to the Board's requests for information and/or evidence within 30 days of the date mailed to or personally delivered on the architect or a candidate for licensure.

(d) Conflict of Interest:

(1) An architect shall not accept compensation for services from more than one party on a project unless the circumstances are fully disclosed to and agreed to (such disclosure and agreement to be in writing) by all such parties.

(2) If an architect has any business association or financial interest which is substantial enough to influence the architect's judgment in connection with the performance of professional services, the architect shall fully disclose in writing to their client(s) or employer(s) the nature of the business association or financial interest. If the client(s) or employer(s) object(s) to such association or financial interest, the architect shall either terminate such association or interest or offer to give up the project or employment.

(3) An architect shall not solicit or accept payments, rebates, refunds, or commissions whether in the form of money or otherwise from material or equipment suppliers in return for specifying their products to a client of the architect.

(4) An architect shall not engage in a business or activity outside the architect's capacity as an officer, employee, appointee, or agent of a governmental agency knowing that the business or activity may later be subject, directly or indirectly to the control, inspection, review, audit, or enforcement by the architect.

(5) When acting as the interpreter of construction contract documents and the judge of construction contract performance, an architect shall endeavor to secure faithful performance of all parties to the construction contract and shall not show partiality to

any party.

(e) Full Disclosure:

- (1) An architect shall accurately represent to a prospective or existing client or employer the architect's qualifications and the scope of the architect's responsibility in connection with projects or services for which the architect is claiming credit.
- (2) An architect shall respond in writing within 30 days to any request from the Board for information solicited in connection with a candidate's application for a license to practice architecture. When providing information in connection with a candidate's application for a license to practice architecture, an architect shall accurately report the candidate's training or experience for the period of time that the architect had direct supervision of the candidate.

(f) Copyright Infringement:

- (1) An architect shall not have been found by a court to have infringed upon the copyrighted works of other architects or design professionals.

(g) Informed Consent:

- (1) An architect shall not materially alter the scope or objective of a project without first fully informing the client and obtaining the consent of the client in writing.

Credits

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 5526, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 5526 and 5578, Business and Professions Code.

HISTORY

1. New article 9 (section 160) and section filed 1-13-98; operative 2-12-98 (Register 98, No. 3).
2. New subsections (c)(4) and (e) filed 6-2-99; operative 7-2-99 (Register 99, No. 23).
3. New subsections (b)(2) and (c)(5), amendment of subsection (d)(2) and new subsections (f)-(f)(1) filed 7-12-2007; operative 8-11-2007 (Register 2007, No. 28).
4. Change without regulatory effect amending section filed 11-4-2021 pursuant to section 100, title 1, California Code of Regulations (Register 2021, No. 45).

This database is current through 12/26/25 Register 2025, No. 52.

Cal. Admin. Code tit. 16, § 160, 16 CA ADC § 160

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CIVIL CODE - CIV

DIVISION 3. OBLIGATIONS [1427 - 3273.91] (*Heading of Division 3 amended by Stats. 1988, Ch. 160, Sec. 14.*)

PART 2. CONTRACTS [1549 - 1701] (*Part 2 enacted 1872.*)

TITLE 2.5. ELECTRONIC TRANSACTIONS [1633.1 - 1633.17] (*Title 2.5 added by Stats. 1999, Ch. 428, Sec. 1.*)

1633.7. (a) A record or signature may not be denied legal effect or enforceability solely because it is in electronic form.

(b) A contract may not be denied legal effect or enforceability solely because an electronic record was used in its formation.

(c) If a law requires a record to be in writing, an electronic record satisfies the law.

(d) If a law requires a signature, an electronic signature satisfies the law.

(Added by Stats. 1999, Ch. 428, Sec. 1. Effective January 1, 2000.)



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DIVISION 3. OBLIGATIONS [1427 - 3273.91] (*Heading of Division 3 amended by Stats. 1988, Ch. 160, Sec. 14.*)

PART 2. CONTRACTS [1549 - 1701] (*Part 2 enacted 1872.*)

TITLE 2.5. ELECTRONIC TRANSACTIONS [1633.1 - 1633.17] (*Title 2.5 added by Stats. 1999, Ch. 428, Sec. 1.*)

1633.17. No state agency, board, or commission may require, prohibit, or regulate the use of an electronic signature in a transaction in which the agency, board, or commission is not a party unless a law other than this title expressly authorizes the requirement, prohibition, or regulation.

(Added by Stats. 1999, Ch. 428, Sec. 1. Effective January 1, 2000.)

F. Update on 2025-2028 Strategic Plan Objectives:

4. Pursue legislation to update the Business Entity Report Form (BERF) to include more information about the management control of businesses.

AGENDA ITEM F.4: PURSUE LEGISLATION TO UPDATE THE BUSINESS ENTITY REPORT FORM (BERF) TO INCLUDE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE MANAGEMENT CONTROL OF BUSINESSES.

Summary

The Enforcement Unit will discuss the Strategic Plan Objective to pursue legislation to update the Business Entity Report Form (BERF) to include more information about the management control of businesses.

To advance this strategic objective, staff has evaluated how the BERF can be strengthened to better capture and communicate management control responsibilities within architectural firms. This effort is intended to improve transparency, enhance accountability, and support the Board's enforcement and consumer protection functions. Staff have considered the following:

- Evaluated whether legislative or regulatory changes are needed to implement BERF updates
- Drafted updated language for the BERF to include notification of management control responsibilities
- Improved outreach and education to architects regarding BERF responsibilities

Collectively, these efforts are designed to ensure that firm ownership, control, and responsibility are clearly documented and understood by both licensees and the Board.

Staff have reviewed legislation and met with the Board Regulations Manager who determined that the existing regulation allows us to update the BERF form to comply with this objective without further legislation. This objective has been completed through drafting updated language for the BERF to include more information about the management control of businesses and requirements for advertising, and a check box to allow licensees to notify the Board they are in management control of services at the entity they are reporting.

A new Informational Bulletin containing further information on the BERF and definition of management control has been created and packaged together with the BERF. The updated form and bulletin have been posted on the Board's website under Forms, and will be included in introductory emails to new licensees. The Board has also posted about this update on social media.

Action Requested

Review and approve the staff report on completion of the Strategic Plan Objective to update the Business Entity Report Form (BERF) to include enhanced management control information, and recommend that the Board place this item on a future agenda to acknowledge completion of the objective.

Attachments

- Business and Professions Code section 5558
- California Code of Regulations, Title 16, section 134
- Previous Architect's Business Entity Report Form
- Previous Business Entity Report Form Informational Bulletin
- Informational Bulletin: Responsible Control Within Design and Design-Build Firms
- Updated Architect's Business Entity Report Form
- Updated 2026: Business Entity Report Form Informational Bulletin



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Code: Section: [Up^](#)[<< Previous](#)[Next >>](#)[cross-reference chaptered bills](#)[PDF](#) | [Add To My Favorites](#)Search Phrase: **BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE - BPC****DIVISION 3. PROFESSIONS AND VOCATIONS GENERALLY [5000 - 9998.11]** (*Heading of Division 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 30.)***CHAPTER 3. Architecture [5500 - 5610.7]** (*Chapter 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.)***ARTICLE 4. Issuance of Certificates [5550 - 5559]** (*Article 4 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.)*

5558. (a) Each person holding a license to practice architecture under this chapter shall file with the board their current mailing address, email address, and the proper and current name and address of the entity or entities through which they provide architectural services. For purposes of this section, "entity" means any individual, firm, corporation, or limited liability partnership.

(b) (1) The board shall post the information obtained in subdivision (a) to its internet website, pursuant to Section 5559, except for email addresses.

(2) To protect the privacy of licensees, the email addresses provided to the board pursuant to subdivision (a) shall not be considered a public record and shall not be disclosed pursuant to Section 27 or pursuant to a request under the California Public Records Act (Division 10 (commencing with Section 7920.000) of Title 1 of the Government Code), unless required by an order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 482, Sec. 10. (SB 1452) Effective January 1, 2025.)

[Home](#) [Table of Contents](#)**§ 134. Use of the Term Architect; Responsible Control Within Business Entity.**

16 CA ADC § 134

Barclays Official California Code of Regulations

Barclays California Code of Regulations

Title 16. Professional and Vocational Regulations
Division 2. California Architects Board (Refs & Annos)
Article 5. Miscellaneous

16 CCR § 134

§ 134. Use of the Term Architect; Responsible Control Within Business Entity.Currentness

(a) Use of the Term Architect: It shall be unlawful for any person to use a business name that includes as part of its title or description of services the term "architect," "architecture," or "architectural," or any abbreviations or confusingly similar variations thereof, unless that person is a business entity wherein an architect is: (1) in management control of the professional services that are offered and provided by the business entity; and, (2) either the owner, a part-owner, an officer or an employee of the business entity.

(b) Responsible Control within Business Entity: Where a person uses a business name that includes as part of its title or description of services the term "architect," "architecture," or "architectural," or any abbreviations or confusingly similar variations thereof, all of the professional services offered and provided by that person are to be offered and provided by or under the responsible control of an architect.

(c) Definitions of Terms Used in this Section:

(1) The term "professional services" shall be given the same meaning as defined in Business and Professions Code section 5500.1.

(2) The term "management control" shall mean general oversight of the professional services offered and provided by the business entity.

(3) The term "responsible control" shall be given the same meaning as defined in Business and Professions Code section 5535.1.

(4) The term "business entity" shall mean any sole proprietorship, firm, corporation, partnership, limited liability partnership, or alliance formed by written agreement to practice architecture including on a single project or on a series of projects.

(5) The term "person" shall be given the same meaning as defined in Business and Professions Code section 5535.

(6) The term "architect" shall be given the same meaning as defined in Business and Professions Code section 5500.

Credits

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 5526, Business Professions Code. Reference: Sections 5535.1, 5535.2, 5535.3, 5536, 5582 and 5582.1, Business and Professions Code.

HISTORY

1. Amendment filed 3-14-56; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 56, No. 5).
2. Amendment filed 10-27-65; effective thirtieth day thereafter (Register 65, No. 20).
3. Repealer and new section filed 10-17-88; operative 11-16-88 (Register 88, No. 44).
4. Repealer and new section heading and section and amendment of NOTE filed 7-18-2008; operative 8-17-2008 (Register 2008, No. 29).
5. Editorial correction of subsection (b) (Register 2014, No. 3).

This database is current through 4/18/25 Register 2025, No. 16.



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Architect's Business Entity Report Form

Business and Professions Code (BPC) Section 5558 of the Architects Practice Act requires every person holding an architect license to file with the California Architects Board (CAB) the name and address of the business entity (individual, firm, corporation, or limited liability partnership) through which he or she provides architectural services. **CAB must be notified immediately of any and all changes in your Business Entity Report by submitting a new report.** Please print your responses and mail this report form to CAB at 2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105, Sacramento, CA 95834.

INDIVIDUAL'S NAME AS LICENSED (PLEASE PRINT)

LICENSE NUMBER

C -

- I do not currently provide architectural services, but I am aware that when I do I am required to provide a Business Entity Report to CAB immediately upon change in status.
- I provide architectural services through the following business entity (Multiple entities: If you provide architectural services through more than one entity, please copy this form and provide the name and address of each separate entity):
- I **no longer** provide architectural services through the following business entity, and wish to disassociate from it (Multiple entities: If you wish to disassociate from more than one entity, please copy this form and provide the name and address of each separate entity):

Business Entity Name and Address

NAME OF BUSINESS ENTITY (INDIVIDUAL, FIRM, CORPORATION, OR LIMITED LIABILITY PARTNERSHIP)

Note: Name and address of the business entity should be the exact business name and address through which services are offered and provided.

STREET ADDRESS OF BUSINESS ENTITY

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

DATE OF INITIAL LICENSED AFFILIATION WITH THIS BUSINESS ENTITY

DATE OF DISASSOCIATION FROM THIS BUSINESS ENTITY, IF APPLICABLE

AREA CODE TELEPHONE NUMBER

PRIOR TO SIGNING THIS FORM, REVIEW ALL INFORMATION.

Original signature required. I certify and declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that all of my representations on this form are true, correct, and contain no material omissions of fact to the best of my knowledge and belief.

SIGNATURE

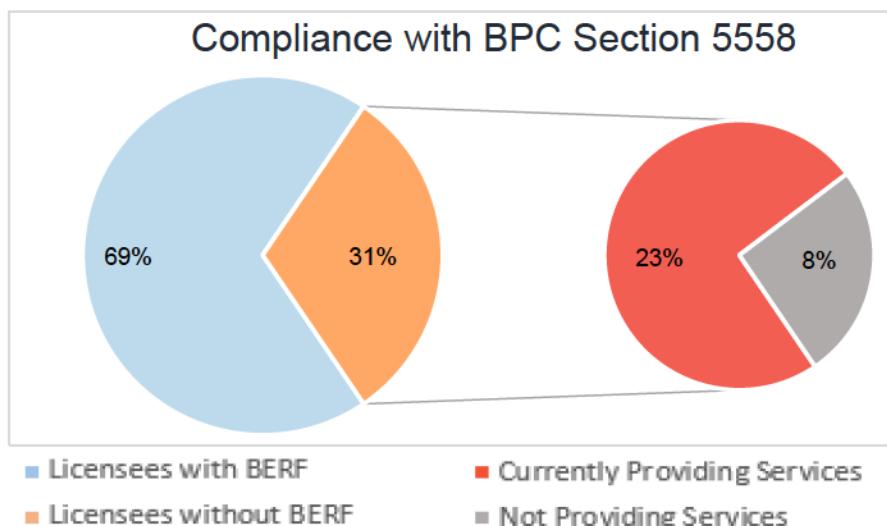
DATE OF SIGNATURE

Remember to keep your Address of Record current. If you have recently moved or wish to change your Address of Record, contact CAB for a Change of Address form at (916) 574-7220 or on the Web site www.cab.ca.gov.

Business Entity Report Form

An Informational Bulletin from the California Architects Board (Board) Regarding Compliance with Business and Professions Code (BPC) Section 5558 & Updates to the Business Entity Report Form (BERF).

The Board performed a review of licensee records and found that around 23% of current licensees appeared to be providing professional services without a BERF on file. Of those non-compliant licenses, approximately 74% were issued after 2003, when BPC 5558 was already in effect, and approximately 57% were issued after 2010. According to a report of Board records dated July 2020, the total numbers are 21,934 current licensees filed with the Board, and 15,602 BERFs filed.



All licensees who provide architectural services whether they are sole proprietors, owners, employees or independent contractors of a business entity providing architectural services are required to comply with this provision of the Act. The Board must also be immediately notified of any and all changes in your Business Entity Report Form by submitting a new report after any change.

Failure to comply with this requirement is a violation of BPC 5558 and California Code of Regulations (CCR), title 16, section 104 and can result in a citation with an administrative fine of up to \$1,000 or disciplinary action by the Board.



History of Business and Professions Code (BPC) section 5558:

BPC section 5558 was established through statute in 2001, and became effective January 1, 2002. It states:

“Each person holding a license to practice architecture under this chapter shall file with the board his or her current mailing address and the proper and current name and address of the entity through which he or she provides architectural services. For purposes of this section, “entity” means any individual, firm, corporation, or limited liability partnership.”

If you are currently providing professional services in California, you must have a BERF on file.

New and Improved BERF in 2021

Ensure you are in compliance with BPC 5558 Requirements

New BERF Options

Effective January 1, 2021, the BERF has been updated with new fields and options. Carefully review the updated BERF and submit a new form to the Board if any changes need to be made to your record.

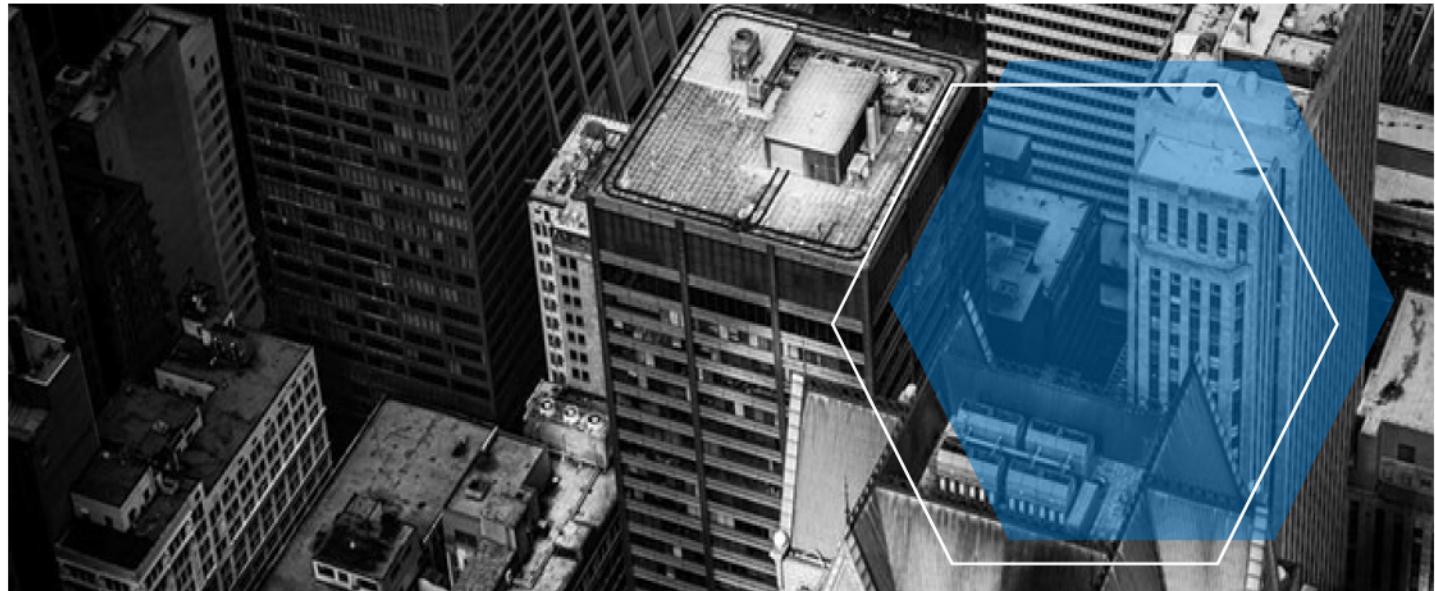
Updates to the BERF include: an option to disassociate from a single entity and a line for disassociation date, and a statement that signing of the form is under penalty of perjury and all representations on the form are true, correct, and contain no material omissions of fact.

These new options will provide more information to consumers and assist the Board with the investigation of those who unlawfully practice architecture without a license.

Advertising Architectural Services

If a business includes in its name or description of its services the term "architect," "architecture," or "architectural," or any abbreviation or confusingly similar variation thereof, that business must have a licensed architect who provides management control of the professional services that are offered and provided by the business and who is also an owner, part-owner, officer, or an employee of the business. (CCR § 134, subs. (a).)

Furthermore, all of the professional services offered by that business must be offered and provided by or under the responsible control of a licensed architect. (CCR § 134, subs. (b).) This includes structures, such as single-family residences, that would otherwise be exempt from licensing requirements under BPC section 5537.



Need a Copy?

If you need a copy of the BERF or have any questions about this bulletin, you can download a copy of the form from the Licensee Information page of the Board Web site at www.cab.ca.gov or call the Board at (916) 574-7220. The Board must be notified immediately of any and all changes in your BERF by submitting a new report after any change. Please print, sign, and mail the updated BERF to the Board at 2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105, Sacramento, CA 95834 or email it to cab@dca.ca.gov.



Informational Bulletin: Responsible Control Within Design and Design-Build Firms

Recent expansion of the design-build business model and increased collaboration between architects and unlicensed designers in California has raised questions among architects, contractors, and business owners regarding the role of licensed architects in a design firm's corporate structure and the level of control they are required to maintain over architectural designs. This article addresses the legal and professional responsibilities of stakeholders in design and design-build firms.

The Architects Practice Act (Act) does not prevent a corporation from contracting out architectural services, as long as those services are under the responsible control of a licensed architect (Business and Professions Code section (BPC) 5535.3). "Responsible control" means that level of control over the content of architectural instruments of service during their preparation that is ordinarily exercised by an architect applying the required professional standard of care (BPC 5535.1). An architect in responsible control of plans, specifications, and instruments of service for others shall sign and stamp those plans, specifications, and instruments of service and all contracts therefor (BPC 5536.1). **BPC 5536.22(a) requires that any written contract for architectural services be executed by the architect, and include their name, address, and license number.**

If a business includes in its name or description of its services the term "architect," "architecture," or "architectural," or any abbreviation or confusingly similar variation thereof, that business must have a licensed architect who provides management control of the professional services that are offered and provided by the business and who is also an owner, part-owner, officer, or an employee of the business (California Code of Regulations, title 16 section (CCR) 134(a)). Furthermore, all of the professional services offered by that business must be offered and provided by or under the responsible control of a licensed architect (CCR 134(b)). **This includes structures, such as single-family residences, that would otherwise be exempt from licensing requirements under BPC 5537.** Any architect who provides professional services through any business entity is required to report the name and address of that entity to the Board (BPC 5558).

If an architect signs instruments of service which have not been prepared by them, or under their responsible control, or has permitted their name to be used for the purpose of evading the Act, the architect is subject to disciplinary action (BPC 5582.1; CCR 151).

The Board's Enforcement Unit has seen these factors come into play, for example, when a business named "Acme Architecture," run by unlicensed individuals, contracts out on a project-by-project basis with one or more licensed architects. Under BPC 5535.3 and CCR 134, such a business can contract out the work, but it is not allowed to use the term "architecture" in its name, its advertising or its contracts.

Many architects believe that they can maintain such an arrangement and have no responsibility for the company's exempt projects. However, if the business includes the term "architecture" in their name or advertises architectural services or contracts for architectural services, one architect must at least be an "employee" (as defined by the Internal Revenue Service) and an architect must be in responsible control over all of that company's professional services.

If an architect allows their name to be used by such a business without being in management control of all their professional services, the owner of the business is subject to citation under BPC 5536 and CCR 134, while the architect is subject to disciplinary action under BPC 5582.1 and CCR 151.

Architects Practice Act Provisions Involving Responsible Control

Business and Professions Code

Section 5535.1 Responsible Control Defined

The phrase "responsible control" means that amount of control over the content of all architectural instruments of service during their preparation that is ordinarily exercised by architects applying the required professional standard of care.

Section 5535.3 Corporation Responsible Control

This chapter does not prevent a corporation from furnishing or supplying by contract architectural services, as long as any architects' professional services are offered and provided under the responsible control of a licensed architect or architects.

Section 5536(a) Practice Without License or Holding Self Out as Architect

(a) It is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), or by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by both that fine and imprisonment, for any person who is not licensed to practice architecture under this chapter to practice architecture in this state, to use any term confusingly similar to the word architect, to use the stamp of a licensed architect, as provided in Section 5536.1, or to advertise or put out any sign, card, or other device that might indicate to the public that he or she is an architect, that he or she is qualified to engage in the practice of architecture, or that he or she is an architectural designer.

Section 5536.1(a) Signature and Stamp on Plans and Documents

(a) All persons preparing or being in responsible control of plans, specifications, and instruments of service for others shall sign those plans, specifications, and instruments of service and all contracts therefor, and if licensed under this chapter shall affix a stamp, which complies with subdivision (b), to those plans, specifications, and instruments of service, as evidence of the person's responsibility for those documents. Failure of any person to comply with this subdivision is a misdemeanor punishable as provided in Section 5536. This section shall not apply to employees of persons licensed under this chapter while acting within the course of their employment.

Section 5536.22(a) Written Contract Requirements

(a) An architect shall use a written contract when contracting to provide professional services to a client pursuant to this chapter. That written contract shall be executed by the architect and the client, or the client's representative, prior to the architect commencing work, unless the client knowingly states in writing that work may be commenced before the contract is executed. The written contract shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following items:

- (1) A description of the project for which the client is seeking services.
- (2) A description of the services to be provided by the architect to the client.
- (3) A description of any basis of compensation applicable to the contract and the method of payment agreed upon by both parties.
- (4) The name, address, and license number of the architect, the name and address of the client, and the project address.
- (5) A description of the procedure that the architect and the client will use to accommodate additional services and contract changes, including, but not limited to, changes in the description of the project, in the description of the services, or in the description of the compensation and method of payment.
- (6) A description of the procedure to be used by either party to terminate the contract.
- (7) A statement identifying the ownership and use of instruments of service prepared by the architect.
- (8) A statement in at least 12-point type that reads: "Architects are licensed and regulated by the California Architects Board located at 2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105, Sacramento, CA 95834."

Section 5537(a) Exemptions

(a) This chapter does not prohibit any person from preparing plans, drawings, or specifications for any of the following:

- (1) Single-family dwellings of woodframe construction not more than two stories and basement in height.
- (2) Multiple dwellings containing no more than four dwelling units of woodframe construction not more than two stories and basement in height. However, this paragraph shall not be construed as allowing an unlicensed person to design multiple clusters of up to four dwelling units each to form apartment or condominium complexes where the total exceeds four units on any lawfully divided lot.
- (3) Garages or other structures appurtenant to buildings described under subdivision (a), of woodframe construction not more than two stories and basement in height.
- (4) Agricultural and ranch buildings of woodframe construction, unless the building official having jurisdiction deems that an undue risk to the public health, safety, or welfare is involved.

Section 5558 Mailing Address and Name and Address of Entity Through Which License Holder Provides Architectural Services; Filing Requirements

Each person holding a license to practice architecture under this chapter shall file with the board his or her current mailing address and the proper and current name and address of the entity through which he or she provides architectural services. For purposes of this section, "entity" means any individual, firm, corporation, or limited liability partnership.

Section 5582 Aiding Unlawful Practice

The fact that the holder of a license has aided or abetted in the practice of architecture any person not authorized to practice architecture under the provisions of this chapter, constitutes a ground for disciplinary action.

Section 5582.1 Signing Other's Plans or Instruments; Permitting Misuse of Name

- (a) The fact that the holder of a license has affixed his or her signature to plans, drawings, specifications, or other instruments of service which have not been prepared by him or her, or under his or her responsible control, constitutes a ground for disciplinary action.
- (b) The fact that the holder of a license has permitted his or her name to be used for the purpose of assisting any person to evade the provisions of this chapter constitutes a ground for disciplinary action.

California Code of Regulations

Section 134(a) and (b) Use of the Term Architect; Responsible Control within Business Entity

- (a) Use of the Term Architect: It shall be unlawful for any person to use a business name that includes as part of its title or description of services the term "architect," "architecture," or "architectural," or any abbreviations or confusingly similar variations thereof, unless that person is a business entity wherein an architect is: (1) in management control of the professional services that are offered and provided by the business entity; and, (2) either the owner, a part-owner, an officer or an employee of the business entity.
- (b) Responsible Control within Business Entity: Where a person uses a business name that includes as part of its title or description of services the term "architect," "architecture," or "architectural," or any abbreviations or confusingly similar variations thereof, all of the professional services offered and provided by that person are to be offered and provided by or under the responsible control of an architect.

Section 151 Aiding and Abetting

- (a) For purposes of Sections 5582 and 5582.1 of the code, aiding and abetting takes place when a California licensed architect signs any instrument of service which has been prepared by any person who is not: (1) a California licensed architect or civil engineer or structural engineer, or (2) a subordinate employee under his/her immediate and responsible direction, or (3) an individual, who is associated by written agreement with the architect and who is under the architect's immediate and responsible direction as described in subsection (b) of this section.
- (b) The requirements of "immediate and responsible direction" as used in this section shall be deemed to be satisfied when the architect: (1) instructs the person described in subsection (a) of this section, in the preparation of instruments of service, and (2) the architect has exercised the same judgment and responsibility in reviewing all stages of the design documents and other phases of the work as required by law, and which would normally be exercised if he/she personally performed the required tasks.



Architect's Business Entity Report Form

Business and Professions Code (BPC) Section 5558 of the Architects Practice Act requires each person holding an architect license to file with the California Architects Board (CAB) the name and address of the entity (individual, firm, corporation, or limited liability partnership) through which they provide architectural services. **CAB must be notified immediately of any and all changes in your Business Entity Report by submitting a new report.**

INDIVIDUAL'S NAME AS LICENSED (PLEASE PRINT)

LICENSE NUMBER

C -

I do not currently provide architectural services, but I am aware that I am required to provide an updated Business Entity Report to CAB immediately if that changes.

I provide architectural services through the following business entity:
 I am in management control* of the services provided through the following business entity:

I **no longer** provide architectural services through the following business entity, and wish to disassociate from it:

* California Code of Regulations (CCR), title 16, section 134(c)(2) defines "management control" to mean general oversight of the professional services offered and provided by the business entity. CCR 134 requires that any person that uses the term architect or architecture in their business name or description of services must have an architect in management control and in responsible control of all professional services.

Business Entity Name and Address

NAME OF BUSINESS ENTITY (INDIVIDUAL, FIRM, CORPORATION, OR LIMITED LIABILITY PARTNERSHIP)

Note: Name and address of the business entity should be the exact business name and address through which services are offered and provided.

STREET ADDRESS OF BUSINESS ENTITY

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

DATE OF INITIAL LICENSED AFFILIATION WITH THIS BUSINESS ENTITY

DATE OF DISASSOCIATION FROM THIS BUSINESS ENTITY, IF APPLICABLE

AREA CODE TELEPHONE NUMBER

PRIOR TO SIGNING THIS FORM, REVIEW ALL INFORMATION.

Original signature required. I certify and declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that all of my representations on this form are true, correct, and contain no material omissions of fact to the best of my knowledge and belief.

SIGNATURE

DATE OF SIGNATURE

Remember to keep your Address of Record current. If you have recently moved or wish to change your Address of Record, contact CAB for a Change of Address form at (916) 574-7220 or on the Web site www.cab.ca.gov.



2026: Updated Business Entity Report Form

Business and Professions Code (BPC) Section 5558 requires licensees to file with the California Architect's Board (Board) their current mailing address, email address, and the proper and current name and address of the entity through which they provide architectural services. For purposes of this section, "entity" means any individual, firm, corporation, or limited liability partnership.

Notification of Management Control

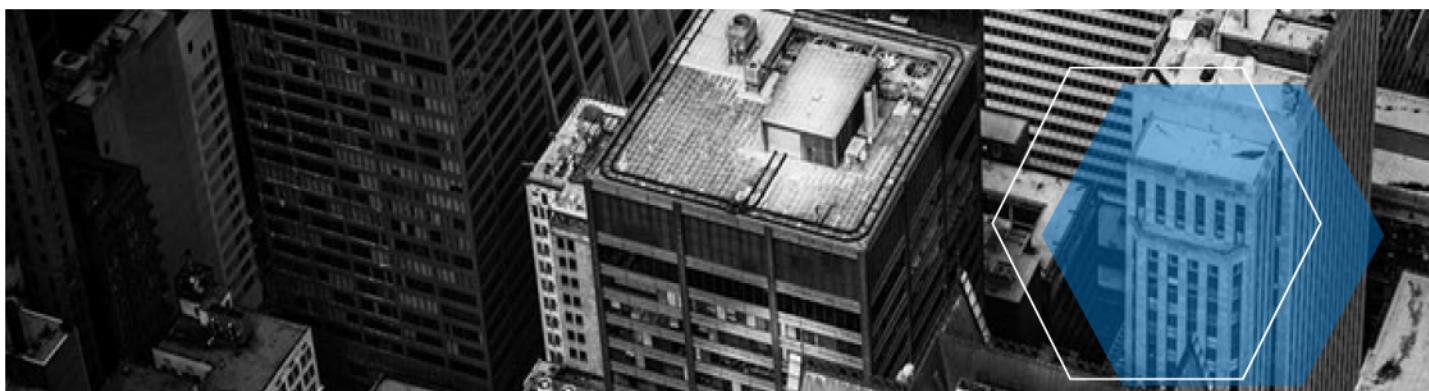
Effective January 1, 2026, the Business Entity Report Form (BERF) has been updated with an option to notify the Board if you are in management control* of services provided through the reported business entity.

**California Code of Regulations (CCR), title 16, section 134(c) defines "management control" to mean general oversight of the professional services offered and provided by the business entity.*

Advertising Architectural Services

If a business includes in its name or description of its services the term "architect," "architecture," or "architectural," or any abbreviation or confusingly similar variation thereof, that business must have a licensed architect in management control of the professional services that are offered and provided by the business and who is also an owner, part-owner, officer, or an employee of the business. (CCR § 134, subs. (a).) Additionally, all of the professional services offered by that business must be offered and provided by or under the responsible control of a licensed architect. (CCR § 134, subs.(b).) This includes structures, such as single-family residences, that would otherwise be exempt from licensing requirements under BPC section 5537.

If an architect allows their name to be used by such a business without being in management control of all their professional services, the owner of the business is subject to citation under BPC section 5536 and CCR section 134, while the architect is subject to disciplinary action under BPC section 5582.1 and CCR section 151.



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F. Update on 2025-2028 Strategic Plan Objectives:

5. Provide additional training to subject matter experts (SMEs), board members, and staff to strengthen enforcement decisions and recommendations.

AGENDA ITEM F.5: PROVIDE ADDITIONAL TRAINING TO SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS (SMEs), BOARD MEMBERS, AND STAFF TO STRENGTHEN ENFORCEMENT DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Summary

The Enforcement Unit will discuss the Strategic Plan Objective to provide additional training to subject matter experts (SMEs), Board members, and staff to strengthen enforcement decisions and recommendations.

To support consistent, well-informed enforcement outcomes, staff has undertaken a targeted effort to enhance training for SMEs, Board members, and enforcement staff. This objective is intended to improve the quality, defensibility, and consistency of enforcement recommendations and adjudicative decisions. To advance this strategic objective, staff have considered the following:

- Assessed current training gaps and needs among SMEs, Board members, and Board staff
Scheduled targeted training sessions for Board members on interpreting Administrative Law Judge rulings
- Facilitated ongoing education by introducing new legal topics during Board meetings
- Developed enhanced training modules for SMEs

Action Requested

Discuss the objective and recommend topics for additional training to Board members, to strengthen enforcement decisions and recommendations.

Attachments

Bulletins

[Design Limitations Chart for Professionals](#)

[Informational Bulletin: Responsible Control Within Design and Design-Build Firms](#)

[Informational Bulletin: Most Common Violations of the Architects Practice Act](#)

[Business or Firm \(Forming a Corporate Business Entity\) - California Architects Board](#)

Relevant statutes and regulations

Business & Professions Code section 5536.22 (“client” and exemptions)

Business & Professions Code section 5582

Business & Professions Code section 5582.1

California Code of Regulations section 151 (“immediate and responsible direction”)

Third-Party Contracts Issue

The Board has received multiple complaints recently regarding third-party contracts and billing, summarized below:

A Homeowner hires a Designer, either licensed or unlicensed, to work on plans for their exempt Project. The Designer then hires a Consultant, who is a licensed architect, for drafting or plan check services. The Consultant provides services on the Project, and then invoices the Homeowner directly for those services.

Questions:

1. Is it standard practice, or acceptable practice for an architect to invoice a Homeowner directly when the Homeowner has only contracted with the Designer?
2. How should the architect comply with BPC 5536.22?



BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES, AND HOUSING AGENCY
GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD
2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105, Sacramento, CA 95834
P (916) 574-7220 | F (916) 575-7283 | www.cab.ca.gov



DESIGN LIMITATIONS FOR PROFESSIONALS

ARCHITECTS

May design any building of any type except:
The structural portion of a hospital.

APPLICABLE STATUTES

Section 129805 of Health & Safety Code
Sections 5500.1, 6737 of Business & Professions Code

CIVIL ENGINEERS

May design any building except:
Hospitals and Public Schools.

APPLICABLE STATUTES

Section 129805 of Health & Safety Code
Section 17302 of Education Code
Sections 5537.5, 6731, 6735 of Business & Professions Code

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

No limitations;
may design any building of any type.

APPLICABLE STATUTES

Sections 6731, 6736, 5537.1 of Business & Professions Code

UNLICENSED PERSONS

Limited to design of:

- ⇒ Single-family dwellings of woodframe construction not more than two stories and a basement in height.
- ⇒ Multiple dwellings containing no more than four dwelling units of woodframe construction not more than two stories and a basement in height. Not more than four dwelling units per lot.
- ⇒ Garages or other structures appurtenant to other exempt buildings, of woodframe construction not more than two stories and a basement in height.
- ⇒ Agricultural and ranch buildings of woodframe construction.*
- ⇒ Nonstructural or nonseismic store fronts, interior alterations or additions, fixtures, cabinetwork, furniture, or other appliances or equipment including nonstructural or nonseismic work necessary to provide for their installation.
- ⇒ May not design any component that changes or affects the safety of any building, including but not limited to structural or seismic components.

* Unless the building official having jurisdiction deems that an undue risk to the public health, safety, or welfare is involved.

APPLICABLE STATUTES

Sections 5537, 5538, 6737.1 of Business & Professions Code





Informational Bulletin: Responsible Control Within Design and Design-Build Firms

Recent expansion of the design-build business model and increased collaboration between architects and unlicensed designers in California has raised questions among architects, contractors, and business owners regarding the role of licensed architects in a design firm's corporate structure and the level of control they are required to maintain over architectural designs. This article addresses the legal and professional responsibilities of stakeholders in design and design-build firms.

The Architects Practice Act (Act) does not prevent a corporation from contracting out architectural services, as long as those services are under the responsible control of a licensed architect (Business and Professions Code section (BPC) 5535.3). "Responsible control" means that level of control over the content of architectural instruments of service during their preparation that is ordinarily exercised by an architect applying the required professional standard of care (BPC 5535.1). An architect in responsible control of plans, specifications, and instruments of service for others shall sign and stamp those plans, specifications, and instruments of service and all contracts therefor (BPC 5536.1). **BPC 5536.22(a) requires that any written contract for architectural services be executed by the architect, and include their name, address, and license number.**

If a business includes in its name or description of its services the term "architect," "architecture," or "architectural," or any abbreviation or confusingly similar variation thereof, that business must have a licensed architect who provides management control of the professional services that are offered and provided by the business and who is also an owner, part-owner, officer, or an employee of the business (California Code of Regulations, title 16 section (CCR) 134(a)). Furthermore, all of the professional services offered by that business must be offered and provided by or under the responsible control of a licensed architect (CCR 134(b)). **This includes structures, such as single-family residences, that would otherwise be exempt from licensing requirements under BPC 5537.** Any architect who provides professional services through any business entity is required to report the name and address of that entity to the Board (BPC 5558).

If an architect signs instruments of service which have not been prepared by them, or under their responsible control, or has permitted their name to be used for the purpose of evading the Act, the architect is subject to disciplinary action (BPC 5582.1; CCR 151).

The Board's Enforcement Unit has seen these factors come into play, for example, when a business named "Acme Architecture," run by unlicensed individuals, contracts out on a project-by-project basis with one or more licensed architects. Under BPC 5535.3 and CCR 134, such a business can contract out the work, but it is not allowed to use the term "architecture" in its name, its advertising or its contracts.

Many architects believe that they can maintain such an arrangement and have no responsibility for the company's exempt projects. However, if the business includes the term "architecture" in their name or advertises architectural services or contracts for architectural services, one architect must at least be an "employee" (as defined by the Internal Revenue Service) and an architect must be in responsible control over all of that company's professional services.

If an architect allows their name to be used by such a business without being in management control of all their professional services, the owner of the business is subject to citation under BPC 5536 and CCR 134, while the architect is subject to disciplinary action under BPC 5582.1 and CCR 151.

Architects Practice Act Provisions Involving Responsible Control

Business and Professions Code

Section 5535.1 Responsible Control Defined

The phrase "responsible control" means that amount of control over the content of all architectural instruments of service during their preparation that is ordinarily exercised by architects applying the required professional standard of care.

Section 5535.3 Corporation Responsible Control

This chapter does not prevent a corporation from furnishing or supplying by contract architectural services, as long as any architects' professional services are offered and provided under the responsible control of a licensed architect or architects.

Section 5536(a) Practice Without License or Holding Self Out as Architect

(a) It is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), or by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by both that fine and imprisonment, for any person who is not licensed to practice architecture under this chapter to practice architecture in this state, to use any term confusingly similar to the word architect, to use the stamp of a licensed architect, as provided in Section 5536.1, or to advertise or put out any sign, card, or other device that might indicate to the public that he or she is an architect, that he or she is qualified to engage in the practice of architecture, or that he or she is an architectural designer.

Section 5536.1(a) Signature and Stamp on Plans and Documents

(a) All persons preparing or being in responsible control of plans, specifications, and instruments of service for others shall sign those plans, specifications, and instruments of service and all contracts therefor, and if licensed under this chapter shall affix a stamp, which complies with subdivision (b), to those plans, specifications, and instruments of service, as evidence of the person's responsibility for those documents. Failure of any person to comply with this subdivision is a misdemeanor punishable as provided in Section 5536. This section shall not apply to employees of persons licensed under this chapter while acting within the course of their employment.

Section 5536.22(a) Written Contract Requirements

(a) An architect shall use a written contract when contracting to provide professional services to a client pursuant to this chapter. That written contract shall be executed by the architect and the client, or the client's representative, prior to the architect commencing work, unless the client knowingly states in writing that work may be commenced before the contract is executed. The written contract shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following items:

- (1) A description of the project for which the client is seeking services.
- (2) A description of the services to be provided by the architect to the client.
- (3) A description of any basis of compensation applicable to the contract and the method of payment agreed upon by both parties.
- (4) The name, address, and license number of the architect, the name and address of the client, and the project address.
- (5) A description of the procedure that the architect and the client will use to accommodate additional services and contract changes, including, but not limited to, changes in the description of the project, in the description of the services, or in the description of the compensation and method of payment.
- (6) A description of the procedure to be used by either party to terminate the contract.
- (7) A statement identifying the ownership and use of instruments of service prepared by the architect.
- (8) A statement in at least 12-point type that reads: "Architects are licensed and regulated by the California Architects Board located at 2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105, Sacramento, CA 95834."

Section 5537(a) Exemptions

(a) This chapter does not prohibit any person from preparing plans, drawings, or specifications for any of the following:

- (1) Single-family dwellings of woodframe construction not more than two stories and basement in height.
- (2) Multiple dwellings containing no more than four dwelling units of woodframe construction not more than two stories and basement in height. However, this paragraph shall not be construed as allowing an unlicensed person to design multiple clusters of up to four dwelling units each to form apartment or condominium complexes where the total exceeds four units on any lawfully divided lot.
- (3) Garages or other structures appurtenant to buildings described under subdivision (a), of woodframe construction not more than two stories and basement in height.
- (4) Agricultural and ranch buildings of woodframe construction, unless the building official having jurisdiction deems that an undue risk to the public health, safety, or welfare is involved.

Section 5558 Mailing Address and Name and Address of Entity Through Which License Holder Provides Architectural Services; Filing Requirements

Each person holding a license to practice architecture under this chapter shall file with the board his or her current mailing address and the proper and current name and address of the entity through which he or she provides architectural services. For purposes of this section, "entity" means any individual, firm, corporation, or limited liability partnership.

Section 5582 Aiding Unlawful Practice

The fact that the holder of a license has aided or abetted in the practice of architecture any person not authorized to practice architecture under the provisions of this chapter, constitutes a ground for disciplinary action.

Section 5582.1 Signing Other's Plans or Instruments; Permitting Misuse of Name

- (a) The fact that the holder of a license has affixed his or her signature to plans, drawings, specifications, or other instruments of service which have not been prepared by him or her, or under his or her responsible control, constitutes a ground for disciplinary action.
- (b) The fact that the holder of a license has permitted his or her name to be used for the purpose of assisting any person to evade the provisions of this chapter constitutes a ground for disciplinary action.

California Code of Regulations

Section 134(a) and (b) Use of the Term Architect; Responsible Control within Business Entity

- (a) Use of the Term Architect: It shall be unlawful for any person to use a business name that includes as part of its title or description of services the term "architect," "architecture," or "architectural," or any abbreviations or confusingly similar variations thereof, unless that person is a business entity wherein an architect is: (1) in management control of the professional services that are offered and provided by the business entity; and, (2) either the owner, a part-owner, an officer or an employee of the business entity.
- (b) Responsible Control within Business Entity: Where a person uses a business name that includes as part of its title or description of services the term "architect," "architecture," or "architectural," or any abbreviations or confusingly similar variations thereof, all of the professional services offered and provided by that person are to be offered and provided by or under the responsible control of an architect.

Section 151 Aiding and Abetting

- (a) For purposes of Sections 5582 and 5582.1 of the code, aiding and abetting takes place when a California licensed architect signs any instrument of service which has been prepared by any person who is not: (1) a California licensed architect or civil engineer or structural engineer, or (2) a subordinate employee under his/her immediate and responsible direction, or (3) an individual, who is associated by written agreement with the architect and who is under the architect's immediate and responsible direction as described in subsection (b) of this section.
- (b) The requirements of "immediate and responsible direction" as used in this section shall be deemed to be satisfied when the architect: (1) instructs the person described in subsection (a) of this section, in the preparation of instruments of service, and (2) the architect has exercised the same judgment and responsibility in reviewing all stages of the design documents and other phases of the work as required by law, and which would normally be exercised if he/she personally performed the required tasks.



Informational Bulletin: Most Common Violations of the Architects Practice Act

The Board's Enforcement Unit investigates as many as 500 complaints per year alleging violations of the Architects Practice Act. The most common violations are:

- Misuse of the term "Architect"

Under [BPC 5536](#), an unlicensed designer may not use the word architect or any term confusingly similar to the word architect in their job title or advertising. [CCR 134](#) specifically prohibits the use of the word architect or architecture in a business name or its description of services unless a licensee is either an owner, officer, or employee, in management control of all of the firm's professional services. See [Bulletin: Responsible Control Within Design and Design-Build Firms](#).

- Practice without a license/device

Under [BPC 5536](#), an unlicensed designer may not prepare plans for a project that is not exempt from licensing requirements under [BPC 5537](#), unless they are employed by a licensee and practicing under their immediate supervision as described in [CCR 151](#). See [Bulletin: Design Limitations](#).

- Continuing Education Audit Incompliance

A licensee can be cited or disciplined for failing to comply with the continuing education requirements specified in [BPC 5600.05](#), for failing to maintain records of their CE courses, or for providing false or misleading information about their compliance.

- Written contract violations

A licensee must have a written contract when providing architectural services to a client. The contract must be executed prior to commencing work and should include each of the 8 items required under [BPC 5536.22](#).

- Signature/Stamp on plans and unauthorized practice

Under [BPC 5582.1](#), a licensee may not sign or stamp plans that were not prepared by them or under their responsible control.

- Negligence or Willful Misconduct

A licensee is guilty of professional negligence if they fail to apply the technical knowledge and skill which is ordinarily applied by California architects of good standing under similar circumstances and conditions. See [BPC 5584](#) and [CCR 160\(b\)](#).

A licensee commits willful misconduct in the practice of architecture when they violate a provision of their agreement with a client and make no reasonable effort to address the conduct or omission. See [BPC 5584](#) and [CCR 150](#).



Business Entity Formation - Frequently Asked Questions

The following information is provided as a courtesy to architects who wish to form a business entity in California. The California Secretary of State's office regulates business entity formation, processes filings, maintains records and provides the public with information relating to these topics. Prior to starting your business, please visit the [Business Entities Section of the Secretary of State's website](#).

You are advised to consult with an attorney or your insurance provider to determine which type of business entity is most appropriate for your firm.

General provisions governing most business entities are found in the [California Corporations Code](#). The [Architects Practice Act](#) defines the [practice of architecture](#) and governs the formation of [Professional Architectural Corporations](#).

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What are the most common types of foreign and domestic business entities that can be used to provide architectural services in California and what are the restrictions on each regarding Ownership, Naming and Advertising?

General Stock Corporation (S- or C- corp)

Ownership is not restricted to licensed architects

May use the word architect or similar in its business name. See [Business and Professions Code section 5535.2](#).

May advertise architectural services only if a licensee is in management control (owner/officer/employee) of the professional services and a licensee is in responsible control of all design services. See [California Code of Regulations title 16, section 134](#).

Registered Limited Liability Partnership (LLP)

Ownership is restricted to licensed architects, one of whom must be licensed in California.

May not use the word architect or similar in its business name

May advertise architectural services only if a licensee is in management control (owner/officer/employee) of the professional services and a licensee is in responsible control of all design services. See [California Code of Regulations title 16, section 134](#).

Professional Corporation (PC)

Shareholders, Officers, Directors, and employees rendering professional services restricted to licensed architects

Must comply with the [Moscone-Knox Professional Corporation Act](#)

Name restricted to the name or the last name of one or more of the present, prospective, or former shareholders, or of persons who were associated with a predecessor person, partnership, or other organization and whose name or names appeared in the name of the predecessor organization, and shall include either (1) the words "architectural corporation" or (2) the word "architect" or "architects" and wording or abbreviations denoting corporate existence. See [Business and Professions Code section 5610.3](#)

May advertise architectural services.

Limited Liability Corporation (LLC)

Not allowed to provide architectural services in CA. See [Corporations Code section 17701.04\(e\)](#)

Foreign Business (defined as a business from another state "entering into repeated and successive transactions of its business in this state, other than interstate or foreign commerce")

General Stock Corporations and LLPs only, with the same restrictions as a domestic entity.

Foreign Professional Corporations must be authorized by the California Business and Professions Code to qualify in the State of California. Currently, this authority includes only the professions of law and accountancy. See Secretary of State form [S&DC-PC Instructions \(REV 12/2020\)](#).

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Business Entity Report Form: The California Architects Board does not license businesses, but each person holding a license to practice architecture in California must report to the Board the name and address of any entity through which he or she provides architectural services. The [form](#) and a detailed [informational bulletin](#) can be found on the Board's website. See [Business and Professions Code section 5558](#).



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BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE - BPC

DIVISION 3. PROFESSIONS AND VOCATIONS GENERALLY [5000 - 9998.12] (*Heading of Division 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 30.*)

CHAPTER 3. Architecture [5500 - 5610.7] (*Chapter 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

ARTICLE 3. Application of Chapter [5535 - 5538] (*Article 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

5536.22. (a) An architect shall use a written contract when contracting to provide professional services to a client pursuant to this chapter. That written contract shall be executed by the architect and the client, or the client's representative, prior to the architect commencing work, unless the client knowingly states in writing that work may be commenced before the contract is executed. The written contract shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following items:

- (1) A description of the project for which the client is seeking services.
- (2) A description of the services to be provided by the architect to the client.
- (3) A description of any basis of compensation applicable to the contract and the method of payment agreed upon by both parties.
- (4) The name, address, and license number of the architect, the name and address of the client, and the project address.
- (5) A description of the procedure that the architect and the client will use to accommodate additional services and contract changes, including, but not limited to, changes in the description of the project, in the description of the services, or in the description of the compensation and method of payment.
- (6) A description of the procedure to be used by either party to terminate the contract.
- (7) A statement identifying the ownership and use of instruments of service prepared by the architect.
- (8) A statement in at least 12-point type that reads: "Architects are licensed and regulated by the California Architects Board located at 2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105, Sacramento, CA 95834."

(b) This section shall not apply to any of the following:

- (1) Professional services rendered by an architect for which the client will not pay compensation.
- (2) An arrangement as to the basis for compensation and manner of providing professional services implied by the fact that the architect's services are of the same general kind which the architect has previously rendered to and received payment from the same client.
- (3) If the client knowingly states in writing after full disclosure of this section that a writing which complies with the requirements of this section is not required.
- (4) Professional services rendered by an architect to a professional engineer registered to practice engineering under Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 6700), or to a land surveyor licensed under Chapter 15 (commencing with Section 8700).
- (5) Professional services rendered by an architect to a public agency when using that public agency's written contract.



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DIVISION 3. PROFESSIONS AND VOCATIONS GENERALLY [5000 - 9998.12] (*Heading of Division 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 30.*)

CHAPTER 3. Architecture [5500 - 5610.7] (*Chapter 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

ARTICLE 5. Disciplinary Proceedings [5560 - 5590] (*Article 5 added by Stats. 1941, Ch. 831.*)

5582. The fact that the holder of a license has aided or abetted in the practice of architecture any person not authorized to practice architecture under the provisions of this chapter, constitutes a ground for disciplinary action.

(Amended by Stats. 1985, Ch. 1223, Sec. 30.)



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DIVISION 3. PROFESSIONS AND VOCATIONS GENERALLY [5000 - 9998.12] (*Heading of Division 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 30.*)

CHAPTER 3. Architecture [5500 - 5610.7] (*Chapter 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 33.*)

ARTICLE 5. Disciplinary Proceedings [5560 - 5590] (*Article 5 added by Stats. 1941, Ch. 831.*)

5582.1. (a) The fact that the holder of a license has affixed their signature to plans, drawings, specifications, or other instruments of service which have not been prepared by them, or under their responsible control, constitutes a ground for disciplinary action.

(b) The fact that the holder of a license has permitted their name to be used for the purpose of assisting any person to evade the provisions of this chapter constitutes a ground for disciplinary action.

(Amended by Stats. 2024, Ch. 482, Sec. 14. (SB 1452) Effective January 1, 2025.)

[Home](#) [Table of Contents](#)**§ 151. Aiding and Abetting.**

16 CA ADC § 151

Barclays Official California Code of Regulations

Barclays California Code of Regulations

Title 16. Professional and Vocational Regulations

Division 2. California Architects Board (Refs & Annos)

Article 8. Disciplinary Proceedings

16 CCR § 151

§ 151. Aiding and Abetting.Currentness

(a) For purposes of Sections 5582 and 5582.1 of the code, aiding and abetting takes place when a California licensed architect signs any instrument of service which has been prepared by any person who is not:

- (1) a California licensed architect or civil engineer or structural engineer, or
- (2) a subordinate employee under his/her immediate and responsible direction, or
- (3) an individual, who is associated by written agreement with the architect and who is under the architect's immediate and responsible direction as described in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) The requirements of "immediate and responsible direction" as used in this section shall be deemed to be satisfied when the architect:

- (1) instructs the person described in subsection (a) of this section, in the preparation of instruments of service, and
- (2) the architect has exercised the same judgment and responsibility in reviewing all stages of the design documents and other phases of the work as required by law, and which would normally be exercised if he/she personally performed the required tasks.

Credits

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 5526, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 5551.1, 5582 and 5586, Business and Professions Code.

HISTORY

1. Amendment of subsections (a) and (b) filed 10-17-88; operative 11-16-88 (Register 88, No. 44).

This database is current through 12/26/25 Register 2025, No. 52.

Cal. Admin. Code tit. 16, § 151, 16 CA ADC § 151

END OF DOCUMENT

AGENDA ITEM G: ADJOURNMENT

Time: _____