Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors

Functional Analysis & Records Disposition Authority

Revision
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Functional and Organizational Analysis of the Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors

Sources of Information

- Representatives of the Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors
- Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-1 through 34-11-37
- Alabama Administrative Code Chapters 330-X-I through 330-X-13
- Archives Division State Agency Files (1985-ongoing)
- Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Annual Reports (1942, 1990, 1996)
- Examiners of Public Accounts Audit Reports (1984-2018)
- Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Minutes

Historical Context

The Founding Fathers prioritized comprehensive land surveying initiatives shortly after the conclusion of the American Revolution. In the 1780s, the Congress of the Confederation developed the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) scheme, an organized means by which to sell land in the western territories to settlers. The proceeds would be used to pay debts the federal government owed from the American Revolution, as the government under the Articles of Confederation had little ability to tax its citizens (*Journal of Continental Congress* 1784).

The federal government appointed a Surveyor General to survey the territories available for settlement. These lands continued to expand in scope as the United States’ territory enlarged, necessitating the appointment of multiple Surveyors General. In March 1817, President James Monroe appointed General John Coffee to be the Surveyor General of the northern Mississippi Territory, which included what is now Alabama. General Coffee would continue to serve as Surveyor General of the region as Alabama achieved territoriality and then statehood. He
assisted in surveying the state boundaries separating Alabama from Mississippi and Tennessee (Lewis 2011).

Public lands in the eastern United States had been comprehensively surveyed and documented by the mid-nineteenth century. Around this time, the profession of land surveying began to converge on a national level with a similar profession, civil engineering. The University of Alabama had started offering courses in civil engineering in 1837, following a directive from its Board of Trustees that “the present state of our country calls for instruction in [engineering] from our university.” The curriculum quickly expanded to include railroad installation, applied mathematics, and military engineering in the subsequent three decades (“History of the College” 2011).

Licensure/registration of both professions began around the turn of the twentieth century, often in tandem. California passed the first surveying licensure law in 1891; Wyoming passed the first engineering licensure law in 1907. Seven (7) states with engineering/surveying licensure laws founded the Council of State Boards of Engineering Examiners (CSBEE) in 1920; this organization is today referred to as the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) (NCEES 2018).

The Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was established in Alabama by legislative action in 1935 (Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-1). The Board licenses Professional Engineers, Professional Land Surveyors, and interns in both professions according to standards prescribed by the legislature. Qualifications for licensure include “graduation and examination plus experience,” “graduation plus examination” (in the case of interns only), or “comity” – defined in the Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-4 as the issue of a certificate of licensure to any person who “holds a valid professional engineering certificate issued by any jurisdiction of the United States or of any country” provided that other qualifications are met. The Board is a member of NCEES and utilizes the national organization’s examinations to assess candidates, as do all other member Boards.

On August 1, 1997, the agency became known as the Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors.

Agency Organization

The Board is composed of nine members, including five professional engineers, two professional land surveyors and two members of the general public (Acts of Alabama No. 2018-550). The professional engineers are appointed by the Governor from a list of three persons nominated for each appointment by a professional engineer nominating committee. The land surveyors are appointed by the Governor from a list of three persons nominated for each appointment by a professional land surveyor nominating committee. The members of the public are appointed by the Governor from a list of three persons nominated for each appointment by a committee comprised of representatives of Alabama’s business community.
Nominations are made available to the Governor as vacancies on the Board occur, whether by the expiration of a term or otherwise.

The professional engineering nominating committee, the professional land surveyor nominating committee, the public member nominating committee, and the Governor shall select those persons whose appointments ensure that the membership of the Board is inclusive and reflects the racial, gender, geographic, urban/rural, and economic diversity of the state. (Code of Alabama, 1975 § 34-11-30).

The Board meets at least twice per year and its members serve five-year terms. The Board employs an executive director and other staff necessary to carry out its functions.

**Agency Function and Subfunctions**

The mandated function of the Board is to license individuals involved in the practice of engineering and/or land surveying in the state (Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-30 and 34-11-35). As such, it is one of the agencies responsible for performing the Regulatory function of Alabama government as described in the “Functional Analysis of Alabama Government.”

In performance of its mandated functions, the Board may engage in the following subfunctions:

- **Promulgating Rules and Regulations.** According to the Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-35, the Board has the power “to adopt and amend bylaws, rules and regulations, not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of this state, as may be reasonably necessary for the proper performance of its duties and the regulations of the proceedings before it. The board shall have the power to adopt and amend from time to time rules of professional conduct for professional engineers, engineer interns, professional land surveyors, land surveyor interns, and corporations, partnerships, or firms holding certificates of authorization.”

  The Board may issue declaratory rulings in response to a petition by any person substantially affected by a rule or regulation of the Board. The petitioner must show how he/she is affected by the rule and must supply sufficient facts to the Board. The request for a declaratory ruling must arise from an actual question or controversy. The Board responds in accordance with the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act.

- **Licensing.** The Board maintains licensing authority over professionals in the engineering and land surveying disciplines.

  The Board issues the following types of licenses for persons in Alabama: professional engineer, engineer intern, professional land surveyor, and land surveyor intern.

*Explanatory Note: According to the Alabama Administrative Code 330-X-6, “experience [credited towards the licensure of a professional engineer or professional land surveyor] must be progressive and of an increasing standard of quality and responsibility and
usually follows graduation.” While an internship is not the required means to obtain such experience, individuals who intend to work under a licensed professional engineer or professional land surveyor must themselves register as interns.

The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-1 through 34-11-8 authorizes the Board to examine applicants for licensure on the bases of education, experience, and examination, or a combination thereof.

Professional engineer licensees must meet one of the following sets of qualifications: (a) graduation from a Board-approved four-year engineering curriculum, four years of experience, and passage of the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) and Principles and Practice of Engineering (PE) examinations administered by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES); (b) graduation from an unapproved four-year engineering curriculum, six years of experience, and passage of the FE and PE examinations administered by the NCEES; (c) comity, or issuance of licensure to an individual who holds a valid professional engineering license from another state or country.

Engineer intern licensees must meet one of the following sets of qualifications: (a) graduation from a Board-approved four-year engineering curriculum and passage of the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) examination administered by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES); (b) graduation from an unapproved four-year engineering curriculum, two years’ experience and passage of the FE examination administered by the NCEES; (c) comity.

Professional land surveyor licensees must meet one of the following sets of qualifications: (a) graduation from a Board-approved four-year land surveying curriculum or a Board-approved four-year civil engineering curriculum including 15 semester hours / 22.5 quarter-hours of land surveying, four years of progressive combined office and field experience, passage of the Fundamentals of Surveying (FS) and Principles and Practice of Surveying (PS) examinations administered by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES), and passage of the state-specific examination administered by the Board; (b) graduation from a Board-approved surveying curriculum including 15 semester hours / 22.5 quarter-hours of land surveying, five years of progressive combined office and field experience, passage of the FS and Principles and PS examinations administered by the NCEES, and passage of the state-specific examination administered by the Board; (c) graduation from a related Board-approved four-year science curriculum, six years of progressive combined office and field experience, passage of the FS and Principles and PS examinations administered by the NCEES, and passage of the state-specific examination administered by the Board; (d) comity.

Land surveyor intern licensees must meet one of the following sets of qualifications: (a) graduation from a Board-approved four-year land surveying or civil engineering curriculum including 15 semester hours / 22.5 quarter-hours of land surveying and passage of the Fundamentals of Surveying (FS) examination administered by the
National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES); (b) graduation from a Board-approved surveying curriculum including 15 semester hours / 22.5 quarter-hours of land surveying, one year of progressive combined office and field experience and passage of the FS examination administered by the NCEES; (c) graduation from a related Board-approved four-year science curriculum, two years of progressive combined office and field experience and passage of the FS examination administered by the NCEES; (d) graduation from a Board-approved associate of science (A.S.) degree program in surveying or engineering including 15 semester hours / 22.5 quarter-hours of land surveying, two years of progressive combined office and field experience and passage of the FS examination administered by the NCEES; (e) comity.

The following types of businesses may be licensed: engineering firms and land surveying firms.

The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-9 regulates the practice of engineering and land surveying by licensed individuals via a corporation, partnership, or firm. One or more of the principal officers of the corporation or firm must be a licensed professional engineer or land surveyor, and all personnel acting as engineers and land surveyors must likewise be licensed. The role of principal officer may pass between two licensees. Corporations, partnerships, or firms intending to provide engineering and land surveying services to the public must apply to the Board for a certificate of authorization, which demonstrates that the organization is complying with state regulations in the licensure of its employees.

- **Investigating Complaints and Violations.** The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-11 authorizes the Board to “reprimand, censure, suspend, revoke, place on probation, recover costs, or fine” any licensee; for interns in violation of Board regulations, the Board may “refuse to issue, renew, or reinstate” the license. Offenses resulting in disciplinary action may include the following: provision of fraudulent information during the licensing process, gross negligence in the practice of engineering/land surveying, conviction of a felony, provision of false testimony to the Board.

Complaints may be filed against both licensees of the Board and unlicensed individuals offering to practice or practicing engineering/land surveying services in the state without a license. Complaints are to be filed in writing with the Executive Director of the Board. If the Board feels an investigation is necessary, it may designate persons to investigate and report any findings to the Board.

The Board may resolve violations by agreement between the Board and the licensee with or without the filing of formal charges. The Board may also conduct an informal hearing without meeting the requirements of the Administrative Procedures Act, at which no actions are taken other than a reprimand. Some disciplinary situations require the Board to conduct a formal hearing. The defendant at such a hearing has the right to appear personally and to cross-examine witnesses subpoenaed by the Board. If three or more members of the Board vote in favor of finding the accused guilty, the Board imposes disciplinary penalties. An appeal may be filed in the circuit court of Montgomery County.
**Maintaining Continuing Education Programs.** The Alabama Administrative Code 330-X-13.02 requires professional engineer and professional land surveyor licensees to complete thirty (30) hours of continuing education biennially as a condition for licensure renewal. “Continuing professional competency obtained by a licensee should maintain, improve, or expand skills and knowledge obtained prior to initial licensure or develop new and relevant skills and knowledge” (AAC 330-X-13.02). The Board offers certain continuing education programs to its licensees to ensure that these requirements are achievable each calendar year.

**Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of the agency’s work includes general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support the programmatic areas of the agency including:

**Managing the Agency:** Activities include internal office management activities common to most government agencies such as corresponding and communicating, scheduling, meeting, documenting policy and procedures, reporting, litigating, legislating (drafting, tracking), publicizing and providing information, managing records, and managing information systems and technology.

**Managing Finances:** Activities include budgeting (preparing and reviewing budget package, submitting the budget package to the Department of Finance, documenting amendments and performance of the budget); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency’s budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; and assisting in the audit process.

**Managing Human Resources:** Activities include recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill positions within the agency; providing compensation to employees; providing benefits to employees such as leave, health insurance, unemployment compensation, worker’s compensation, injury compensation, retirement, and death benefits; supervising employees by evaluating performance, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave; training and providing continuing education for employees; investigating and disciplining.

**Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources:** Activities include inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing security for property managed by the agency; insuring property; and assigning, inspecting and maintaining agency property.
Records Appraisal of the Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors

The following is a discussion of the three major categories of records created and/or maintained by the department: Temporary Records, Permanent Records, and Records No Longer Created.

Temporary Records

Temporary records should be held for what is considered their active life and be disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. Some of the temporary records created by the board are discussed below:

- **Professional Engineer Licensure Database.** The Board is responsible for licensing applicants as professional engineers and engineer interns. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-2 states that the terms “engineer, engineers, engineering, professional engineer, professional engineers, professional engineering, P.E., or any modification or derivative thereof” may only be utilized by professional engineer licensees. Experience is one eligibility criterion for licensure as a professional engineer per the Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-4; as such, many professional engineers begin their careers as engineer interns and transition to professional engineers upon passage of the Principles and Practice of Engineering (PE) examination. A typical licensure file documents the licensee’s professional career in Alabama and may contain a completed licensure application form, Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) and/or Principles and Practice of Engineering (PE) examination reports, internship/experience verification materials, copies of diplomas and transcripts, evidence of continuing education, and correspondence. Licensee files are assigned a unique identifier within the database to ensure that they are clearly differentiated from other records. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-37 describes the portions of licensee files which are of a confidential nature: “…exam scores; letters of inquiry and reference concerning applicants; transcripts of college courses and grades; e-mail addresses; home addresses; board inquiry forms concerning applicants; pending and closed complaints and investigative files where no formal disciplinary action is taken.” These materials are restricted and not available to the public. To ensure the availability of this file during the professional career of the licensee, the recommended retention for the file is 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the licensee becomes inactive.

- **Professional Land Surveyor Licensure Database.** The Board is responsible for licensing applicants as professional land surveyors. More specifically, the Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-2 states that the terms “land surveyor, land surveyors, land surveying, professional land surveyor, professional land surveyors, professional land surveying, P.L.S., or any modification or derivative thereof” may only be utilized by professional land surveyor licensees. Experience is one eligibility criterion for licensure as a professional land surveyor per the Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-4; as such, many professional land surveyors begin their careers as land surveyor interns and transition to professional land surveyors upon passage of the Principles and Practice of Surveying...
(PS) and state-specific land surveying examinations. A typical licensure file documents the licensee’s professional career in Alabama and may contain a completed licensure application form, the Fundamentals of Surveying (FS) and Principles and Practice of Surveying (PS) examination reports, internship/experience verification materials, copies of diplomas and transcripts, evidence of continuing education, and correspondence. Licensee files are assigned a unique identifier within the database to ensure that they are clearly differentiated from other records. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-37 describes the portions of licensee files which are of a confidential nature: “…exam scores; letters of inquiry and reference concerning applicants; transcripts of college courses and grades; e-mail addresses; home addresses; board inquiry forms concerning applicants; pending and closed complaints and investigative files where no formal disciplinary action is taken.” These materials are restricted and not available to the public. To ensure the availability of this file during the professional career of the licensee, the recommended retention for the file is 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the licensee becomes inactive.

- **Certificates of Authorization Database.** This record series consists of the information maintained by the Board for corporations, partnerships, or firms engaged in the practice of engineering and/or land surveying in the state of Alabama. The series includes application forms, articles of incorporation, and correspondence. Information on the application form includes business name, address, telephone number, type of business, list of the company's licensed professional engineers and/or professional land surveyors (including names and license numbers), state of original incorporation, and list of the company’s board of directors. The certificate of authorization file will be linked to the licensure file of the principal professional engineer or professional land surveyor licensee in the database. The certificate of authorization file may be transferred to a new principal in the event of the initial principal’s death, retirement, or lapse of activity. These records are needed by the agency for long-term administrative purposes, since it is sometimes necessary to prove a business was licensed to operate in the state. The recommended retention for the file is 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the certificate becomes expired, and other data entry fields until superseded.

- **Investigation Files Resulting in Formal Disciplinary Actions.** The Board or any person may file a complaint in cases where a person or business entity's activities are in violation of the Board's rules and regulations. Upon receipt of evidence, the Board will assemble the facts, obtain legal guidance and follow the case to completion. These files contain letters of inquiry or complaint received by the Board, investigation reports conducted by the Board's staff, transcripts of hearings, recommendations for course of action, orders of the Board if disciplinary actions are taken, and correspondence concerning the case. These files are electronically imaged and stored on the hosted network. The recommended retention for the file is 10 years after the expire date of the license.

**Permanent Records**

The Archives Division recommends the following records as permanent.
Promulgating Rules and Regulations

- **Meeting Minutes, Agendas, and Packets of the Board.** Information in meeting minutes, agendas, and packets may include reports from the Board’s officers and various internal committees/task forces, actions of the Board on applicants, orders of the Board, and disciplinary actions. These records are the best source of information about the functions of the board and the creation of its policy. *(Bibliographic Title: Meeting Files)*

- **Orders of the Board.** The Board issues declaratory rulings in response to petitions by persons substantially affected by a rule or regulation of the Board. Additionally, when the board has determined that a licensee violated one or more of the Board’s rules and/or statutes, the Board will enter an order to fine, suspend, or revoke the license at its discretion. The final outcome of the hearing is documented as part of the Orders of the Board record series. These records document the board’s function of enforcement of the state’s engineering and land surveying laws. *(Bibliographic Title: Not Applicable) (Maintained by the Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors)*

Licensing

- **Annual Roster Reports of Licensed Professional Engineers.** This record series documents the board’s regulation of the profession of engineering in the State of Alabama. Information includes but is not limited to the names, license statuses (active vs. inactive), and business addresses of licensees. These files are produced and maintained in an electronic database. *(Bibliographic Title: Registers and Rosters)*

- **Annual Roster Reports of Licensed Professional Land Surveyors.** This record series documents the board’s regulation of the profession of land surveying in the State of Alabama. Information includes but is not limited to the names, license statuses (active vs. inactive), and business addresses of licensees. These files are produced and maintained in an electronic database. *(Bibliographic Title: Registers and Rosters)*

- **Annual Roster Reports of Certificates of Authorization.** This record series documents the Board’s regulation of corporations, partnerships, and firms engaging in the business of professional engineering and/or land surveying in the State of Alabama. The record series includes the date on which the corporation, partnership, or firm received its certificate from the Board and the date of expiration. The Certificate functions similarly to a business license in the community of professional engineering and professional land surveying, and demonstrates that the organization is complying with state regulations in the licensure of its employee. These files are produced and maintained in an electronic database. *(Bibliographic Title: Registers and Rosters)*

- **State-Specific Professional Land Surveyor Examination Files.** The Board develops and administers one examination, a state-specific examination offered to individuals seeking licensure as professional land surveyors. The state-specific examination is the
final step prior to professional land surveyor licensure, subsequent to passage of the Fundamentals of Surveying (FS) and Principles and Practice of Surveying (PS) examinations administered by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES). The Board prepares and grades the examinations; as such, this record series includes files pertaining to the development of examination questions and draft examinations. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-37 provides that most files comprising this record series are restricted and unavailable to the public. (Bibliographic Title: Examination Files)

Investigating Complaints and Violations

- **Investigative Final Reports.** The Board investigations conclude in the production of a final investigative report. The series is appended to the meeting packet and becomes permanent as a result. These reports are the final product of any investigations stemming from a complaint or suspected violation of a licensee, which may include provision of fraudulent information during the licensing process, gross negligence in the practice of engineering/land surveying, conviction of a felony, or provision of false testimony to the Board. (Bibliographic Title: Not Applicable) (Maintained by the Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors)

Maintaining Continuing Education Programs

- **Continuing Education Program Files.** The Alabama Administrative Code 330-X-13.02 requires professional engineer and professional land surveyor licensees to complete thirty (30) hours of continuing education biennially as a condition for licensure renewal. Among the thirty (30) hours required of professional land surveyors biennially, four (4) hours must pertain to the standards of practice and one (1) hour annually must pertain to ethics. The Board offers webinars to assist its licensees in achieving the mandated continuing education requirements, and more continuing education programming may be offered in the future. This series documents essential data on all educational programs offered by the Board from initial approval until closure and provides valuable information on the education required of licensees. (Bibliographic Title: Educational Program Files)

Administering Internal Operations

- **Policies and Procedures.** These manuals are designed to assist in the conduct of day-today operations. The manuals contain policies promulgated by the Executive Director and the Board. (Bibliographic Title: Policies and Procedures)

- **Administrative Rules and Regulations.** These rules and regulations are approved by the Board and govern the conduct of the Board. Combined with the policy and procedures manuals, they document the Board’s roles in prescribing standards for its programs. (Bibliographic Title: Rules and Regulations)
- **Register of Administrative Rules.** Each agency shall have an officer [who] shall file in the office of the Secretary of State a certified copy of each rule adopted by it. The secretary of the agency shall keep a permanent register of the rules open to public inspection. (Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-22-6) *(Bibliographic Title: Not Applicable) (Maintained by the Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors)*

- **Administrative Files that Document Policy, Process, and Procedure.** These records, which include official correspondence of the agency document actions and positions of the agency, do not include correspondence dealing with routine matters. These records include, but are not limited to, correspondence with state officials, legal/advisory correspondence, correspondence documenting insurance coverage, correspondence between the board and the director, and correspondence between the Board and other state agencies. These records may be paper or electronic. *(Bibliographic Title: Administrative Correspondence)*

- **Annual Reports.** The Board’s annual report provides summary documentation of the activities of the Board. Included in the report are statistics for number of applicants, registrants, renewals, examinations, authorizations, and investigations, and financial statements. Annual reports provide the best summary documentation of the board’s function and activities. *(Bibliographic Title: State Publications)*

- **Informational and Promotional Materials.** These records are created to build public awareness about a variety of issues and department related activities. The records include a newsletter that explains the Board’s activities and new regulations. The newsletter also includes a description of any disciplinary actions taken by the Board during the year. The publications help document the activities of the Board and how the Board views these activities. *(Bibliographic Title: Publicity Files)*

- **Website and Social Media Site(s).** The Board has a website at www.bels.alabama.gov and social media sites with Facebook and Twitter. ADAH staff capture and preserves the agency’s website and other social media sites via a service offered by the Internet Archive [Archive-It]. Any content behind password protected or login would not be captured by ADAH. Check with the ADAH website at www.archiveit.org/organizations/62 to ensure your agency and social media site(s) are captured and preserved. If your agency’s website and social media site(s) are not being captured by the service, please contact the Archives Division at 334-242-4452 to get them included. *(Bibliographic Title: Website and Social Media Site[s])*

**Records No Longer Created**

The Board no longer creates these record series.

- **Entry Level Application Registers.** When an application is filed with the Board, a number is assigned to the application. The numbers are issued in order and start over each year. Information from the application is entered into the Entry Level program on the
computer. This information includes the application number and the name and address of the applicant. The program allows easy retrieval of basic information by entering the application number. This file is printed out and used as a receipt of payment.

The printouts contain all the information in the computer file and are used by the Examiners of Public Accounts for audit purposes. These cards are no longer produced on new applicants as they are part of the licensure database.

- **Application Record Index Cards.** These are 4x6 cards that provide information on all applicants. These reference cards are filed alphabetically by the applicant’s name and include the date of birth, license number if licensed, the reason for denial if applicable, and current status. The information on these cards is also found in the License/Certification/Registration Files. These cards are no longer produced on new applicants as they are part of the licensure database.

- **PLS Applicants’ Examination Files.** When an applicant takes the ALLS examination, a file is created. A record of the examination is placed in this file. If an applicant passes the examination, the Applicant’s Examination File becomes a License / Registration / Certification File. If the examination is failed, the file remains Applicant’s Examination File. If an applicant cannot pass the exam within one year, the file is closed. It is kept for one year after closure and is used by the Board as a reference file. These cards are no longer produced on new applicants as they are part of the licensure database.

- **Professional Engineer and Professional Land Surveyor Examination Files (Excluding State-Specific Professional Land Surveyor Examination Files).** In the past, the Board developed and administered qualifying examinations to individuals seeking licensure as professional engineers and professional land surveyors. These examinations were equivalent to the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE), Principles and Practice of Engineering (PE), Fundamentals of Surveying (FS), and Principles and Practice of Surveying (PS) examinations now administered by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES). The Board stopped administering the FE, PE, FS, and LS examinations in 2004. The legacy questionnaires and draft examinations show the development of the professions over the history of the Board. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 34-11-37 describes that most files comprising this record series are restricted and unavailable to the public.

- **Investigation Record Index Cards.** These cards are filed in alphabetical order and are used as reference for complaints against licensees. The cards contain information about the complaint and the result. This information is also found in the record series “Investigation Files Resulting in Formal Disciplinary Actions” and “Investigation Files Not Resulting in Formal Disciplinary Actions.” These cards are no longer produced on new complaints as they are part of the licensure database.
Permanent Records List
Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors

Promulgating Rules and Regulations

1. Meeting Minutes, Agendas, and Packets of the Board
2. Orders of the Board*

Licensing

1. Annual Roster of Licensed Professional Engineers
2. Annual Roster of Licensed Professional Land Surveyors
3. Annual Roster of Certificates of Authorization
4. State-Specific Professional Land Surveyor Examination Files*

Investigating Complaints and Violations

1. Investigative Final Reports*

Maintaining Continuing Education Programs

1. Continuing Education Program Files

Administering Internal Operations

1. Policies and Procedures
2. Administrative Rules and Regulations
3. Register of Administrative Rules*
4. Administrative Files that Document Policy, Process, and Procedure
5. Annual Reports
6. Informational and Promotional Materials
7. Website and Social Media Site(s)

Records No Longer Created

1. Professional Engineer and Professional Land Surveyor Examination Files (Excluding State-Specific Professional Land Surveyor Examination Files)

*indicates records that the Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors determined should be retained permanently and that ADAH anticipates will remain in the care and custody of the creating agency.

ADAH staff is available to work with agency staff in determining the best location and storage conditions for the long-term care and maintenance of permanent records.
Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Records Disposition Authority

This Records Disposition Authority (RDA) is issued by the State Records Commission under the authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-5 and 41-13-20 through 21. It was compiled by the Archives Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the Commission’s staff, in cooperation with representatives of the Agency. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the Agency in carrying out their mandated functions and activities. It establishes minimum retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for the Agency to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their offices. These records must be protected from “mutilation, loss, or destruction,” so that they may be transferred to an official’s successor in office and may be made available to members of the public. Records also must be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-12-2, 36-12-4, and 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA, or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the agency records manager or ADAH Archives Division at (334) 242-4452.

Explanation of Records Requirements

The RDA shall govern the disposition of all records, regardless of format, created by the agency from creation to dissolution. Please contact the staff of the Department of Archives and History before destroying any records created prior to 1940.

This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition schedules or RDAs governing the retention of the records created by the Agency. Copies of superseded schedules are no longer valid and may not be used for records disposition.

The RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records listed below, regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.

Certain other record-like materials are not actually regarded as official records and may be disposed of under this RDA. Such materials include (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; (2) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document agency activities; (3) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete; (4) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term, internal purposes, may include, but are not limited to, telephone call-back messages, drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value, copies of material sent for information purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future
business, and internal communications about social activities; (5) honorary materials, plaques, awards, presentations, certificates, and gifts received or maintained by the agency staff. They may be disposed of without documentation of destruction.

**Records Disposition Requirements**

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of the Agency and lists the groups of records created and/or maintained as a result of activities and transactions performed in carrying out these subfunctions. The Agency may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements to the State Records Commission for consideration at its regular biannual meetings.

** indicates records no longer created

**Promulgating Rules and Regulations**

**MEETING MINUTES, AGENDAS, AND PACKETS OF THE BOARD**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

**ORDERS OF THE BOARD**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office.

**Requests for Information**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

**Requests for Opinions of the Board**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

**Licensing**

**Professional Engineer Licensure Database**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain licensure files for 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the licensee becomes expired, and other data entry fields until superseded.

**ANNUAL ROSTER REPORTS OF LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

**Applications for Professional Engineer Licensure Renewal**

a. Applications for Professional Engineer Licensure Renewal (Inactive)
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the licensee becomes expired.

b. Applications for Professional Engineer Licensure Renewal (Deceased)
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after verification of death.
Applications for Engineer Intern Licensure Renewal

a. Applications for Engineer Intern Licensure Renewal (Inactive)
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the licensee becomes expired.

b. Applications for Engineer Intern Licensure Renewal (Deceased)
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after verification of death.

Applications Not Resulting in Professional Engineer Licensure
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Applications Not Resulting in Engineer Intern Licensure
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Professional Land Surveyor Licensure Database
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain licensure files for 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the licensee becomes expired, and other data entry fields until superseded.

ANNUAL ROSTER REPORTS OF LICENSED PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Applications for Professional Land Surveyor Licensure Renewal

a. Applications for Professional Land Surveyor Licensure Renewal (Inactive)
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the licensee becomes expired.

b. Applications for Professional Land Surveyor Licensure Renewal (Deceased)
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after verification of death.

Applications for Land Surveyor Intern Licensure Renewal

a. Applications for Land Surveyor Intern Licensure Renewal (Inactive)
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the licensee becomes expired.

b. Applications for Land Surveyor Intern Licensure Renewal (Deceased)
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after verification of death.

Applications Not Resulting in Professional Land Surveyor Licensure
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Applications Not Resulting in Land Surveyor Intern Licensure
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.
Certificate of Authorization Database
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain licensure files for 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the certificate becomes expired, and other data entry fields until superseded.

ANNUAL ROSTER REPORTS OF CERTIFICATES OF AUTHORIZATION
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Applications for Certificate of Authorization Renewal
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 25 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the principal becomes expired.

Applications Not Resulting in Certificate of Authorization
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Incomplete Applicant Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

STATE-SPECIFIC PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER LAND SURVEYOR EXAMINATION FILES
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office.

Entry Level Application Registers**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Application Record Index Cards**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

PLS Applicant’s Examination Files**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after closure.

PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER AND PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR EXAMINATION FILES (EXCLUDING STATE-SPECIFIC PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR EXAMINATION FILES)**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office.

Investigating Complaints and Violations

INVESTIGATIVE FINAL REPORTS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office.

Investigation Files Resulting in Formal Disciplinary Actions
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the licensee becomes expired.
Investigation Files Not Resulting in Formal Disciplinary Actions
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Investigation Record Index Cards**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Maintaining Continuing Education Programs

CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM FILES
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Continuing Educational Program Provider Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the course is no longer effective.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND REGULATIONS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

REGISTER OF ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

Administrative Rule Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

ADMINISTRATIVE FILES THAT DOCUMENT POLICY, PROCESS, AND PROCEDURE
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

ANNUAL REPORTS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

INFORMATIONAL AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Routine Correspondence
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.
Administrative Reference Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Board Member Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit after the end of the fiscal year in which the term expires.

Board Appointment Letters
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit after the end of the fiscal year in which the term expires.

Internal Procedures
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Legislative Files (drafts of proposed agency-sponsored legislation, tracking files and records)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Records documenting the implementation of the agency’s approved RDA (copies of transmittal forms to Archives or State Records Center, evidence of obsolete records destroyed, and annual reports to State Records Commission)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit after the end of the fiscal year in which the RDA was superseded.

Copies of Approved RDA
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after the audit for the fiscal year in which the RDA is superseded.

Computer Systems Documentation (Hardware/Software Specifications and Warranties)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain documentation of former system 1 year after audit for the fiscal year in which the former hardware and software no longer exists anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to a new system.

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA SITE(S)
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: ADAH staff capture and preserve the agency’s website and other social media sites via a service offered by the Internet Archive [Archive It]. Any content behind password protected or login would not be captured by ADAH. Check with the ADAH website at www.archiveit.org/organizations/62 to ensure your agency and social media site(s) are captured and preserved. If your agency’s website and social media site(s) are not captured by the service, please contact the Archives Division at 334-242-4452 to get them included.
Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

Records documenting the preparation of a budget request package and reporting of the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Records documenting the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products (includes AST-1 and AST-1A)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Records of original entry or routine accounting transactions, such as journals, registers, and ledgers, and records of funds deposited outside the state treasury
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Purchase and Repair Order Documents
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of warranty.

Records documenting requests for authorization from supervisors to travel on official business and other related materials, such as travel reimbursement forms and itineraries
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Records documenting contracts for services or personal property
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after expiration of the contract.

Records documenting the bid process (including requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses)

a. Sealed Bids over $15,000
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the bids were opened. (Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-24).

b. Other Bids
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 10 years after the award of the contract, then destroy.
**Agency Audit Reports**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

**Records documenting the application for, award of, receipt and disbursement of, and reporting of expenditure of federal funds received through grants and federal funds**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of final expenditure report.

**Records documenting the unsuccessful application for grants and federal funds**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

**Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources**

**Job Recruitment Materials**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

**Application Materials**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

**Position Classification Questionnaire**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after reclassification of the position.

**Records documenting payroll (e.g. pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers)**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm.

**Records documenting payroll deduction authorizations**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

**Records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes (including Form 941)**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

**Personnel File - Records documenting an employee’s work history - generally maintained as a case file**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

**Records documenting employees’ daily and weekly work schedules**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.
Records documenting employee hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Records Documenting Leave Donations
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

Records of Final Leave Status
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain record of individual employees’ cumulative leave 6 years after separation of employee from the agency.

Employee Flexible Benefits Plan Files (Applications and Correspondence)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of participation in program.

Records documenting the State Employee Injury Compensation Trust Fund (SEICTF) Claims
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records documenting Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Charges of Discrimination
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after final dispensation.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Case Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Employee Administrative Hearing Files
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records Documenting Employee Grievances (Internal Complaints)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records documenting complaints against the agency and its employees from outside the agency (made by members of the public, officials, or supervisees, etc.)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records (maintained separately from employee personnel file), documenting employee disciplinary proceedings and appeals of formal reprimands, demotions, transfers, or terminations resulting from a grievance or complaint
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

**Records documenting the administration of the unemployment compensation program**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after conclusion of eligibility.

**Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources**

**Semiannual Inventory Lists**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-16-8[1]).

**Agency Copies of Transfer of State Property Forms (SD-1)**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit.

**Property Inventory Cards and/or Computer Files**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

**Property Inventory Affidavits**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit.

**Receipts of Responsibility for Property**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until return of item to property manager.

**Real Property Renting/Leasing records**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the termination of lease or rental agreement or until agency is audited and audit report is released, whichever is longer.

**Facilities/Building Security Records (including visitor logs)**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit.

**Motor Pool Vehicle Use Records**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after compliance or financial audit by the Examiners of Public Accounts or an equivalent auditing firm or one year after the end of the fiscal year the audit covers, whichever is later.

**Insurance Policies/Risk Management Records**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of policy or membership.

**Building Maintenance Work Orders**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

**Records documenting the use, maintenance, ownership, insurance, and disposition of vehicles owned by the agency**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the vehicle was removed from the property inventory.

**Records Documenting Vehicle Use/Mileage**  
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.
Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority (RDA)

Requirement

Under the Code of Alabama 1975, § 41-13-21, “no state officer or agency head shall cause any state record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining approval of the State Records Commission.” This Records Disposition Authority constitutes authorization by the State Records Commission for the disposition of the records of the Agency as stipulated in this document.

One condition of this authorization is that the Agency submit an annual Records Disposition Authority (RDA) Implementation Report on its activities, including documentation of records destruction, to the State Records Commission.

Recommendations

In addition, the Agency should make every effort to establish and maintain a quality record-keeping program by conducting the following activities:

The Agency should designate a staff member in a managerial position as its records liaison/records manager, who is responsible for: ensuring the development of quality record keeping systems that meet the business and legal needs of the agency, coordinating the transfer and destruction of records, ensuring that permanent records held on alternative storage media (such as microforms and digital imaging systems) are maintained in compliance with national and state standards, and ensuring the regular implementation of the agency’s approved RDA.

Permanent records in the Agency’s custody should be maintained under proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation.

Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in this RDA, should occur agency-wide on a regular basis—for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA’s provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the Open Meetings Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.

The agency should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the agency chooses to maintain permanent records solely in electronic format, it is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies necessary to ensure the records’ permanent preservation and accessibility.

Electronic mail contains permanent, temporary, or transitory record information. Although e-mail records can be printed out, filed, and retained according to the RDA’s requirements, the
office should preferably employ an electronic records management system capable of sorting e-
mail into folders and archiving messages having long-term value.

The staff of the State Records Commission or the Examiners of Public Accounts may examine
the condition of the permanent records maintained in the custody of the Agency and inspect
records destruction documentation. Agency records managers and/or the ADAH archivists are
available to instruct the staff in RDA implementation and otherwise assist the Agency in
implementing its records management program.

The State Records Commission adopted this records disposition authority on April 24, 2019.

_____________________________________________    _______________ 
Steve Murray, Chairman                      Date
State Records Commission

By signing below, the agency acknowledges receipt of the retention periods and requirements
established by the records disposition authority.

_____________________________________________    ______________ _
William R. Huett, Director       Date
Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors