

Concise Explanatory Statement

Rhode Island Government Register

In accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-35-2.6, following is a concise explanatory statement:

AGENCY: Rhode Island Department of Business Regulation
DIVISION: Board of Examiners for Landscape Architects
RULE IDENTIFIER: 420-RICR-00-00-1
REGULATION TITLE: Rules and Regulations for Landscape Architects
RULEMAKING ACTION: Full rulemaking, Amendment
COMMENT PERIOD: August 18, 2026, to September 17, 2026

A. Statement of Purpose of the Amendments

The Department of Business Regulation, on behalf of the Board of Examiners for Landscape Architects (Board), proposed these amendments to update existing licensing procedures, adopt the CLARB Uniform Licensure Standard, and clarify application requirements.

The Board is a voting member of the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB). CLARB prepares and administers the national landscape architecture licensing exam (L.A.R.E.), assists the Board with licensing by transmitting official records of exam scores, transcripts and work experience for applicants, and establishes model laws for landscape architect licensure for the United States and 5 Canadian provinces.

In 2022, CLARB's membership voted to adopt the CLARB Uniform Licensure Standard for Landscape Architecture (Uniform Standard) as part of model law to establish common, consistent requirements for education, experience and examination across jurisdictions. This Uniform Standard fits into the Board's existing statutory requirements for licensure by clarifying the requirements for applications that do not have a board-approved accredited degree in landscape architecture. This will ensure consistent application of licensing laws, clear standards for staff and applicants, and increase the ability of RI landscape architects to become licensed in other states. RI would be the 12th jurisdiction to adopt the Uniform Standard. It has been adopted in: Alaska, Alberta (Canada), Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming, and will soon to be finalized in Colorado.

B. Summary of the Regulatory Analysis

Adopting the uniform standard and clarifying licensure procedures benefits the profession and the state in multiple ways:

- Streamlines registration requirements;

- Reduces barriers and promotes greater professional mobility for RI registrants and for professionals seeking to move to or work in RI; and
- Provides clear, objective requirements for applicants that have not graduated from a board approved landscape architecture degree program.

Mandating the CLARB Record for reciprocal applications (in addition to the existing requirement for initial applications) benefits the Board, its DBR staff and applicants. The CLARB Record consolidates all licensure information into a single source, simplifying the process and reducing time for both applicants and staff. The CLARB Record provides reliable and verified evidence that the applicant meets the minimum standards for licensure. CLARB staff verify that the transcripts are official and that work experience was under registered professionals. While there are costs associated with creating and transmitting a CLARB Record, those costs are offset by efficiencies for both applicants and Board staff. Since 1/1/2025, 90% applicants for reciprocal licensure submitted a CLARB record voluntarily.

Overall, there may be a minimal cost increase to about 1-2 out-of-state applicants per year who need to obtain a CLARB Record to get a reciprocal LA registration in RI. But the other amendments do not have a financial impact upon applicants or registrants. The overall efficiencies and improved reliability of application materials outweigh these minimal costs.

In the development of the proposed amendment consideration was given to: (1) alternative approaches; (2) overlap or duplication with other statutory and regulatory provisions; and (3) significant economic impact on small business. No alternative approach, duplication, or overlap was identified based upon available information.

C. Summary of Comments Not Resulting in Regulatory Language Changes

Only one (1) comment was received. It expressed general support for the proposed amendments and requested no changes. Therefore, no post-comment changes were made, and the final rule is the same as what was proposed.