



# OBOA

ONTARIO  
BUILDING OFFICIALS  
ASSOCIATION

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## OBOA Certification Program

An enhanced Certification Program  
to recognize professional excellence

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### The Ontario Building Officials Association

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## INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1956, the Ontario Building Officials Association (OBOA) is a self-governing, not-for-profit professional association for Ontario's Building Officials. For over 50 years the OBOA has played a leading role in the education, training and professional development of Ontario's municipal Building Officials. The OBOA is committed to maintaining the highest degree of professionalism in the field of Building Code administration and building safety, while promoting uniform code interpretation and enforcement through training and education services, and other related committee work.

It is recognized that individuals entering the Building Official profession possess a wide range of education, training and work experience backgrounds. One of the strategic goals of the OBOA's Strategic Plan 2012+ is to offer a professional certification program that provides assurance of a Building Official's level of qualification. This priority is achieved through a Certification Program that supports accurate and consistent Building Code administration and enforcement throughout the province. The OBOA first recognized this priority with a certification program which began in 1983 and was revised in 1992 to issue the first CBCO designation in December of that same year.

The Certification Program continues to prescribe minimum levels of examination, education and experience to achieve designation. This program is an enhancement to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) qualification examination requirements, thereby signifying a level of competency above the legislated baseline. Upon completion of required training and municipal experience, a Government Member can apply to receive the professional designation Certified Building Code Official (CBCO). When a Government Member has completed the required training, yet lacks the requisite experience component, or an Associate Member has completed the required training, the professional designation Building Code Qualified (BCQ) is available.

This certification program contains a number of streams related to the specialized sectors of the regulatory system in which a Building Official must be proficient and qualified. The current CBCO and BCQ designations of current members that possess them will be maintained, however a member may now choose to hold certification in more than one stream. As in the past, the BCQ designation will have the same examination and education requirements as the CBCO designation without an experience component.

Certification is a recognition and acknowledgement of the professionalism and expertise of our members which is readily recognized throughout the building industry. The OBOA believes that CBCO truly is "The Step Above."

## INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS:

- Applicant must be a Government Member in good standing with the OBOA in order to apply for CBCO or BCQ designation. Associate Members in good standing with the OBOA may apply for BCQ designation. See Schedule A for definitions of membership classifications.
- Application must be completed in full and submitted in duplicate in order to be accepted; including two copies of any and all supporting documents.
- Applicants must include the applicable non-refundable fee as noted in the Fee Schedule on Page 5 and shall be payable to the “Ontario Building Officials Association.”
- The Certification Review Committee (CRC) shall consider all applications objectively and make their recommendation to the next Board of Directors meeting. Any application received within three weeks of a Board meeting will be held over until the next Board meeting. Any applicant denied Certification may appeal to the Board of Directors, whose decision shall be final.
- Following a Board of Directors meeting, the applicant will be advised of the Board’s decision with respect to the application. Note that the Board meets approximately four times per year.
- An applicant with an educational background not detailed in this Certification Program may choose to apply to the Certification Evaluation Committee (CEC) to have their non-traditional education evaluated under a prior learning assessment and review (PLAR) model. The decision of the CEC will be conveyed to the applicant with any relevant recommendations. Such decision is appealable to the Board of Directors. Once equivalency has been determined, and/or conditions of the CEC met, the applicant may then make application for their certification.
- The personal information contained in this application shall be used only for the determination of Certification qualification.
- Until December 31, 2014, members may choose to apply for Certification through the former program (pre 2014). If so, please contact the office for details.
- As of January 1, 2014, the streams available in this program of certification are:
  - ✓ Housing
  - ✓ Small Buildings
  - ✓ Large Buildings
  - ✓ HVAC
  - ✓ Plumbing
  - ✓ On-Site Sewage
  - ✓ Fire Protection
  - ✓ Administrator

Applicants may apply for multiple streams on a single application. For the requirements of each stream, see Schedule B.



## CERTIFICATION FOR BUILDING OFFICIALS

The various streams of this certification program are laid out in Schedule B. Each “stream” will have its own set of criteria based on its particular area of expertise. However, each stream will contain a component of the three “E’s”; examination, education and experience.

### **E.1 Examination**

The examination component of each stream requires the successful completion of MMAH examinations, and registration of the same, as listed in Schedule B for the corresponding stream(s) being applied for. The overview technical training courses, or “refresher” courses, are optional before writing an MMAH exam. Qualification and registration with the Ministry is the minimum requirement for the right to practice in Ontario. NOTE: the OBOA offers an Internship Program for those not fully MMAH qualified (see the OBOA website for details).

### **E.2 Education**

The education portion of each stream, as shown in Schedule B, is separated into three subcategories. These subcategories are post-secondary education, technical skills training and occupational skills training. These are further detailed below.

#### ***E.2.1 Post-Secondary Education***

The required level of post-secondary education can be achieved through the completion of a program of at least three years in length in a field related to building design and/or construction.

If an applicant does not have the required level of post-secondary education or it is in a field not closely related to building design and/or construction, their academic background may be assessed by the CEC through a Prior Learning Assessment Review to determine whether it is equivalent to the established standards. The CEC may assign additional education and/or experience to supplement the individual’s current level of building code knowledge and bridge any identified deficiencies.

#### ***E.2.2 Technical Skills Training***

Technical Skills Training courses are the detailed technical training courses that are specific to the Building Official profession. All required Technical Skills Training courses are as listed in Schedule B for the corresponding stream(s) being applied for.

Other related courses taken by an applicant may be evaluated by the CEC for prior learning assessment and recognition. Once a particular course is completed in support of certification in a certain stream it does not have to be repeated by the applicant for credit in additional streams where the same course is a requirement.

#### ***E.2.3 Occupational Skills Training***

Occupational Skills Training courses contain training specific to the Building Official profession in areas such as communication skills (both verbal and written), report writing, conflict resolution, inspection techniques, legislation enforcement and Building Code administration. The “Building Official and the Law” course is seen as essential learning for all Building Officials and is included in Occupational Skills Training as a required course for all streams.

All streams require a minimum of 12 hours of occupational skills training, with the exception of the Administrator stream which requires a minimum of 18 hours. Sample Occupational Skills courses and providers of courses are included in Schedule C.

#### **E.2.4 Prior Learning Assessment Review**

Upon request, the CEC will review and evaluate an applicant's prior education to determine if there is any equivalency to the required levels of education for the applied stream(s). Applications for PLAR must be accompanied by a detailed course outline identifying the number of hours directly related to each specific stream. A gap analysis will be performed and the results conveyed to the applicant. This may include a recommendation made in order to satisfy any identified gaps.

#### **E.3 Experience**

The practical experience requirements for an individual are three years as a municipal Building Official performing inspections, plans review and/or administrative duties. Individuals participating in an Internship or Mentorship Program will be given recognition for their enrollment time. Applications for multiple streams will still only require three years of experience as a Building Official. The exception is the "Administrator" stream; in this instance, three years of experience as a Building Official, supervising other Building Officials, is required. A sample employment letter can be found in Schedule D.

#### **EXISTING CERTIFIED MEMBERS**

Members holding CBCO or BCQ designations on January 1, 2014 will not be affected. Existing certified members are not required to complete any paperwork as their current designation will continue to be certified. The designations will be preserved. Any existing certified member may opt into this revised program by filing an application in the relevant stream(s) should they decide.

#### **TRANSITION**

This revised Certification Program is effective as of March 1, 2016. OBOA members are eligible to apply for certification through the previous program until December 31, 2016. This transition will allow those members currently working towards their certification to complete their certification without disruption.

# SCHEDULE A

## DEFINITIONS

*“Member”* means a person who is a Government Member, Associate Member, Life Member, Student Member or Retired Member, as the case may be, and *“Membership”* shall have a corresponding meaning.

### *“Government Member”*

The Board may grant a Government Membership to individuals who develop, administer, apply, interpret and/or enforce building code related statutes for or on behalf of a governmental or regulatory body, including one of the following:

- (a) a duly legislated municipality, including those of countries other than Canada,
- (b) the Government of Ontario or its ministries, departments or agencies,
- (c) the Government of Canada or its ministries, departments or agencies, and
- (d) Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation (or its successor ministry, department or agency).

### *“Associate Member”*

The Board may grant an Associate Membership to those individuals who are directly or indirectly interested in the application of Building Code regulations and are not otherwise entitled to status as a Government Member or other category of Membership.

### *“Life Member”*

The Board may award a Life Membership to an individual who has consistently through the years rendered meritorious service to the Association. All Past Presidents of the Association shall be awarded Life Memberships.

### *“Student Member”*

The Board may grant a Student Membership to an individual who is:

- (a) enrolled full time in a program of study in Canada relating to the construction of buildings at a recognized post-secondary institution,
- (b) enrolled at a recognized post-secondary institution in Canada in a program of study relating to building construction, or
- (c) enrolled at a recognized post-secondary institution in Canada in a program that would assist such person in the administration or enforcement of building standards.

# SCHEDULE B

## CERTIFICATION STREAM REQUIREMENTS<sup>1</sup>

<b>Stream</b>	<b>MMAH Examination(s)</b>	<b>Technical Skills<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Housing</b>	General or CBO Legal and House	Part 9 Health and Safety, and Part 9 Building Envelope
<b>Small Buildings</b>	General or CBO Legal and Small Buildings	Small Buildings or Part 9 Fire Protection, and Part 9 Building Structural
<b>Large Buildings</b>	General or CBO Legal and Large Buildings	Part 3 Classification and Construction, and Part 3 Health and Safety
<b>HVAC</b>	General or CBO Legal and Building Services	Residential HVAC Inspection, and Building Services
<b>Plumbing</b>	General or CBO Legal and Plumbing – All Buildings	Residential Plumbing Inspection, and Plumbing – All Buildings
<b>On-Site Sewage</b>	General or CBO Legal and On-Site Sewage Systems	Part 8 On-Site Sewage Systems, and Residential Plumbing Inspection
<b>Fire Protection</b>	General or CBO Legal and Fire Protection	Part 9 Fire Protection, and Building Services
<b>Administrator</b>	CBO Legal	Community Planning and Zoning Administration, and Legal Processes for Building Officials

**NOTES:**

1. Requirements common to all streams (see Page 3 for details):
  - 3 year post-secondary education in a field related to building design and/or construction;
  - 3 years municipal experience as a municipal Building Official performing inspections, plans review and/or administrative duties (supervising staff for the Administrator Stream);
  - Building Official and the Law course; and
  - 12 hours Occupational Skills Training (18 hours for the Administrator Stream).
  
2. The Technical Skills requirements as previously required in the January 2014 version of Schedule ‘B’ will be accepted until December 31, 2016.



# SCHEDULE C

## SAMPLE OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING COURSES AND PROVIDERS

SAMPLE COURSES	SAMPLE COURSE PROVIDERS
Occupational Health and Safety Act Course	BUILDSAFE <a href="http://www.buildsafe.ca">http://www.buildsafe.ca</a>
Standard First Aid	Ontario Association of Committees of Adjustment and Consent Authorities (OACA) <a href="http://www.oaca.info">http://www.oaca.info</a>
Health and Safety for Building Inspectors	Municipal Law Enforcement Officers' Association (MLEOA) <a href="http://www.mleoa.ca">http://www.mleoa.ca</a>
The Primer on Planning Course	Ontario Association of Property Standards Officers (OAPSO) <a href="http://www.oapso.ca">http://www.oapso.ca</a>
Zoning By-law Administration	Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks, and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) <a href="http://www.amcto.com">http://www.amcto.com</a>
Community Planning and Zoning Administration	Community Colleges
Part 1 Foundations (Municipal Law)	Human Resources Departments
Workplace Violence Prevention Program	Public Services Health and Safety Association (PSHSA) <a href="http://www.pshsa.ca">http://www.pshsa.ca</a>
Dealing with Difficult People	
Customer Service Programs	
Conflict Resolution	
Communication Skills	
Report Writing	
Leadership Programs	
Change Management Programs	
Municipal Administration Program	
Joint Health & Safety Committee Certification	
Team Effectiveness	
Problem Solving Skills Programs	

# SCHEDULE D

## SAMPLE EMPLOYMENT LETTER

### Sample Employment Verification Letter (to be on Municipal Letterhead)

Municipality  
Department Address  
City, Ontario  
Postal Code  
Date

**SUBJECT:** <Applicant's Name>  
CBCO Certification Application

#### TO THE OBOA CERTIFICATION REVIEW COMMITTEE:

This letter is to confirm that <name of employee> has been employed with the <municipality> for <mm/yy> (full time equivalent in calendar years) from <mm/yyyy> to <mm/yyyy>.

(See Note 1 below for Experience Component)

<name of employee> has been appointed by the municipality under Section 3.(2) of the *Building Code Act* to administer and enforce the 'Act' and 'Code' as <position> with the <department> responsible for <duties performed> for the period from <mm/yyyy> to <mm/yyyy> inclusive.

and (where applicable) He/She has also acted as <position> with the <department> responsible for <duties performed> for the period from <mm/yyyy> to <mm/yyyy> inclusive, for a total of <yy/mm>.

<Signature>

<Printed Name>

<Title> (must be Clerk-Administrator, Chief Building Official or Human Resources/Personnel Manager)

<Signator's Contact Information>

**NOTE 1:** Define experience in terms of levels of Certification requested by the applicant as outlined in the OBOA Certification Application Form. List 'Experience' for each level of Certification requested.