

CCB TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Updated March 2011

The following are questions and answers about the CCB prerequisite training and testing requirements.

PURPOSE

1. Q: What's the purpose of the prerequisite training and test?

A: The prerequisite training and test are required of contractors wanting to work in Oregon. They learn about construction laws and business practices that affect them. The CCB wants to make sure contractors understand how to prevent disputes by using good business practices and complying with the law.

CONTRACTORS AFFECTED BY THE REQUIREMENT

2. Q: How many people in a new business entity must complete the prerequisite training and pass the test or prove they are exempt from the requirement?

A: Each business must pick one responsible managing individual (RMI) to take the prerequisite training and pass the test, or prove that this person is exempt from the requirement.

The RMI must either be an owner as defined in ORS 701.094 or an employee of the business. The appointed RMI must exercise management or supervisory control over the construction activities of the business.

An owner is defined as a sole proprietor of, partner in, holder of controlling interest (e.g., majority corporate shareholder) in the business, or a person otherwise defined as an owner by rule.

Exercising management or supervisory control over the construction activities means meaningfully participating:

- In the administration of construction contracts performed by the business, or
- Administration of the day-to-day operations of the business.

3. Q: Which contractors must complete the course and pass the state test?

A: (1) All contractors getting licensed for the very first time with the CCB (see exemptions below).
(2) Contractors whose licenses have lapsed (expired, suspended, terminated, cancelled) for 24 months or more, regardless of the reason.

4. Q: Which contractors do not have to complete the course and do not have to pass the test?

A:

- Contractors whose licenses have lapsed for less than 24 months at their date of re-application to the CCB.
- Contractors who have completed the licensing requirements of ORS 446.395 for manufactured dwelling installers (MDIs).
- Contractors who become licensed in the Licensed Developer category. To be eligible in this category, the contractor must meet all the following; (a) engages in the business of arranging for construction work and associated improvements of real property with the intent to sell the property; (b) acts in association with one or more licensed contractors who have sole responsibility to oversee all phases of construction; and (c) **does not** perform any construction work on the property.

5. Q: What about contractors from other states?

A: All out-of-state contractors must complete the training and pass the Oregon test.

6. Q: Are there any other contractors who must take the training and state test?

A: Yes. If a contractor has three or more complaints filed against his/her business within a 12-month period and the CCB determines that the complainants have been harmed, the business can be put on probation. That probation may involve completing the course and passing the test before the business can be reinstated. This can apply to businesses that were grandfathered in and never had to complete the training as well as businesses that have completed the training.

7. Q: What if the RMI leaves the business? Does the business have to replace the RMI?

A: Yes, the business must notify the CCB immediately in writing that its RMI is no longer with the business. The business must indicate who the replacement RMI is, and send documentation showing that the replacement RMI has taken the course and passed the test, or is exempt from the course and test.

Also, if a licensed business is a corporation or LLC, and all the corporate officers or members are replaced by new ones, a new RMI must be established that has taken the training and passed the test.

PREREQUISITE TRAINING AND TEST

8. Q: Who gives the training? Where can I get a list of the providers and a schedule of their training? Are there home study courses?

A: A list of training providers is available on the web site and in the CCB application form. There are self-study and instructor-led courses.

9. Q: How much does a course cost?

A: Costs vary from \$150 to \$450 for the training. Call several providers to compare services and prices.

10. Q: How much does the test cost?

A: Each test attempt costs \$85.

11. Q: What identification is required to take the course and state test?

A: You must show one piece of government-issued photo ID—a driver's license from Oregon or another state, passport, military ID, green card, or DMV ID card. Show the same ID to your training provider, test site and the CCB.

12. Q: Can I study on my own with a course manual and take the test without taking a course?

A: No, state law requires completion of the prerequisite training before taking the test. The CCB's testing vendor, Prometric will not schedule Oregon candidates without evidence of training completion. The training providers offer instructional materials and answer questions to help you understand the material and pass the test.

13. Q: What does it take to complete the prerequisite training?

A: Training providers are required to offer a minimum of 16 clock hours of instruction. Most ask that you also pass their practice tests before taking the state test. Some have other exercises for you to do as well.

14. Q: How do I decide which training to take?

A: Decide how you learn best. Do you prefer being in a classroom with others, having an instructor teach you and being able to ask questions? Or do you learn best by yourself at your own pace on your own schedule—reading, working online or watching videotapes? Decide which format works best for you.

15. Q: How do I choose between providers?

A: Contact more than one provider. Providers' training can differ substantially in format, quality, services and price (a copy of the most current edition of the *Oregon Contractor's Reference Manual*, is often included in the course price). Providers must make instructors available to answer your questions at least one hour a week for 90 days after you purchase the training. Most offer much more assistance. When you contact providers for information, ask what kind of services and materials are included in the training fee, how long the services are good for, and what percentage of their students have passed the test.

16. Q: Can the CCB recommend a training provider?

A: No.

17. Q: I'm not sure I want to take the course and test. Can I get a course manual to see what it's like or to use as a reference even if I never get licensed?

A: Yes. Many experienced contractors buy a manual annually as a resource for their business. An *Oregon Contractor's Reference Manual* costs \$42.50 plus shipping and handling and can be ordered from Builders Book Depot at 1-800-284-3434 or buildersbookdepot.com. If you order a manual and decide to take the training, you **may** be able to get a slightly reduced price on your course. Talk with your training provider. The most current course manual is the ninth edition (published November 2010).

18. Q: What will the course and state test cover?

A: Oregon statute requires the course and test to cover business practices and laws, not trade skills. Topics include the Construction Contractor laws and regulations, taxes, record keeping, job site safety, OR-OSHA requirements, safety practices, building codes, environmental laws, project management, employer requirements, employee rights, contract law, lien law and Building Exterior Shell.

19. Q: How soon can I take the state test after completing the course?

A: You must wait three days for your training provider to send your course completion records to the CCB before you can contact Prometric to schedule a test. Once your completion record is in the database, you may be able to take the test the next day (you pay by credit card, your course completion data is in the database, and the test site you want has a test opening). The busier the testing site and the more requested the session (Saturdays and evenings are the most requested), the longer you may have to wait. Ordinarily, the wait to schedule a test shouldn't be more than seven to ten days from the request.

20. Q: How long do I have to pass the test after completing my course?

A: It is to your advantage to take the test shortly after completing the course. The training and testing is valid for 24 months from the date the training was completed. You may take the test within the 24 month period but must remember that once the 24 month period from the date the training was completed has past, the training and the test are not considered valid for the purposes of fulfilling ORS 701.005(15)(c)(A). You must have your completed licensing application to the CCB with all the proper documentation before the 24 month period from the date the training was completed.

21. Q: Who do I contact about scheduling the test?

A: You can contact Prometric at 800-462-8669 or www.prometric.com/Oregon. A *Candidate Information Bulletin* with more information about the test is available at the Prometric website or from training providers.

22. Q: When and where can I take the test?

A: Prometric gives the test at six testing centers in Oregon: Portland (2), Eugene, Medford, Bend and La Grande. They are open days and evenings Monday through Saturday.

23. Q: What about out-of-state contractors?

A: Tests are also given in other states. Contact Prometric for test sites outside Oregon.

24. Q: What should I study?

A: Currently, the test is based on the ninth edition of the course manual, the *Oregon Contractor's Reference Manual*. Check with your prerequisite training provider if the manual is part of the course fee. Providers are required to make sure you have the current edition manual. All the answers are found in the manual. Study it carefully. No test questions come out of material in the appendices.

25. Q: Is it a closed or an open book test?

A: Open book test.

26. Q: Can I get sample test questions to review?

A: Yes. There are some sample questions in the course manual. Most training providers also have practice tests for their students.

27. Q: How can I prepare for the test? How much should I study?

A: Pay attention and work hard. Study the manual. Write notes in it. Highlight different topics/subject areas with a colored marker so you can find them easily during the open book test. Study all of your provider's materials. Take their sample test(s). Ask your provider questions. Study with someone else or have them quiz you on the manual. Instructors report that most students study more than 16 hours. The amount of time you should study depends on your experience, background and how much you already know.

28. Q: How many different tests are there?

A: Every test is unique. The questions are randomly generated by computer from an item bank of nearly 350 questions).

29. Q: Are the different tests of equal difficulty?

A: Yes. The computer tracks how many times a question has been answered correctly or incorrectly to determine its difficulty level. Tests of equal difficulty (based on the difficulty level of the individual questions) are given to contractors. Each test has the same number of questions from each of the ten sections. Questions from the ten sections are in random order throughout the test and are not necessarily in the order in which they are covered in the manual. See the *Candidate Information Bulletin* for more details.

30. Q: What can I take into the testing area with me to use when I take the test?

A: Nothing except your course manual and, if English or Spanish is not your primary language, you may opt to use a translation book.

It is okay to have written notes, highlighted or underlined areas on the pages of your manual. You may attach purchased permanent tabs to help divide the sections for easier reference while you test. Do not use removable post-it type notes as tabs. You can also use colored markers to differentiate the sections of the manual. Besides the course manual and a translation book, absolutely no other papers, writing tools or other items can be taken into the testing area. Test candidates may not write anything in the course manual, on other pieces of paper, body parts or clothing during the test.

31. Q: Are there any math or calculation questions? Can someone use a calculator?

A: Yes, There are a few questions that require basic arithmetic, subtraction, multiplication or division. Your computer will be equipped with a calculator if needed.

32. Q: What other rules are there for the test site?

A: Test candidates cannot talk, pass notes or signal each other during the test. Candidates must take the test alone (except if they are using an approved translator). No test questions may be written down and taken out of the test area. Candidates cannot leave the test area during the test. Candidates should review the *Candidate Information Bulletin* for addition information.

33. Q: What do you do about cheating?

A: He/she automatically fails the test, must leave the testing area, must forfeit the test fee and have their cheating materials (notes, course manual, etc.) confiscated. The test administrator will notify the CCB of the incident. A proctor monitors candidates through a one-way mirror. Sound monitors and moving cameras can provide evidence if there is cheating.

34. Q: How long is the test? Is there a time limit?

A: The test has 80 multiple choice questions. Contractors have two hours to take the test. Test candidates who have thoroughly prepared, feel comfortable with the subject matter and are familiar with the course manual can finish the test in less than two hours. Candidates who are not prepared will probably fail the test because there is not enough time to look up every question in the manual.

35. Q: What is the current passing rate for the test?

A: The most recent statistics shows 83 percent of all candidates have passed. Don't assume that because the test is open book that it is easy. Most candidates say that they spent more than 16 hours studying for the test.

36. Q: What kind of questions are on the test?

A: All the questions are multiple-choice with four possible answers. Sometimes the answers are very similar except for one or two words. The questions and answers do not use exactly the same words as the course manual. Sometimes the answer can be found on more than one page. The questions and answers are not "tricky" to knowledgeable candidates. To someone who hasn't prepared, each of the four possible answers may seem reasonable and it will be hard to guess the correct answer.

37. Q: Anything else about the test questions?

A: Yes:

- There are a lot of “Which one of the following is ... ?” and “Which of the following ... EXCEPT ... ” types of questions.
- There are a few situation-type questions that require test candidates to apply what they learned in the course and manual to the situation in the question. For example, “A licensed contractor finds ... at a jobsite. What should the contractor do first?”
- All of the answers can be found in the ten chapters of the most current course manual. No questions are taken out of any of the appendix materials.

38. Q: Any other tips for preparing for the test?

A:

- Write legible notes in your manual—examples, vocabulary definitions, explanations of laws in your own words, etc.
- Be familiar with the manual. Study a lot so you know where information is without having to thumb through the entire manual.
- Be able to explain laws and requirements in your own words.
- Take your provider’s practice tests. Time yourself so you get a sense of how much time it will take you to answer each question.
- Have a plan going into the test. Answer all the questions you’re sure of or reasonably sure of without using the manual; then check how many questions are unanswered and how much time you have left. Use the manual to look up the remaining questions. If any time is left over, go back and check any questions you’re still unsure of. Use your entire two hours and always be aware of how much time is left.
- Ask your provider and/or instructor questions if you don’t fully understand something. They want to help you. Use their materials and services.
- Get a good night’s sleep the night before. Give yourself plenty of time to get to the test site so you aren’t stressed about finding the test center, slow traffic, etc. Expect to be at least a little nervous—most people are when they take tests. The more prepared you are, the more confident you’ll be.

39. Q: Who writes the test questions?

A: The questions are written by a testing vendor that develops and gives contractor and other professional licensing tests throughout the United States. Each question is then reviewed at a workshop held in Oregon by a group of Oregon contractors from throughout the state who do different kinds of construction work. They review each question for difficulty, clarity and relevance. They change or eliminate a lot of questions.

40. Q: What if I need a translator for the course or test because English is not my primary language?

A: Currently, there are providers offering courses in English and Spanish. Some tutoring may be available through your local community college or small business development center. The test has been translated into Spanish. For candidates whose primary language is not English or Spanish, there are qualified translators available for the test. Translators cost an additional fee per test and must be requested at the time the test is scheduled. Students may opt to use a translation book instead of a translator (see Question 30: What can I take into the testing room with me?) For additional information see Prometric’s *Candidate Information Bulletin*.

41. Q: What about candidates with disabilities?

A: Training providers and the test sites are required to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For the course, call providers and ask how they will accommodate a disability. Candidates with disabilities or those who would otherwise have difficulty taking the test should contact Prometric to make alternative arrangements. Requests for any special accommodations should be made in writing, describing the specific accommodations needed. All requests must include supporting documentation from a licensed professional. All requests for special testing arrangements must be made when the candidate registers for the test.

42. Q: What if I have never taken a test on a computer before? Can I take a paper test instead?

A: There are no paper tests for security reasons except for some ADA-documented disabilities. You will have time to get familiar with the computer using practice (non-scored) questions before starting the actual test. Directions on the computer screen will explain what to do. If you need help, testing center staff will help you during your practice time. People who have never used a computer before find the process easy to use. For more information see the Prometric *Candidate Information Bulletin*.

43. Q: What's the passing score?

A: 70 percent (56 out of 80 questions correct).

44. Q: How soon can I find out if I passed?

A: You will get your Score Report immediately after completing the test.

45. Q: Do I have to get licensed with the CCB within a certain amount of time after taking the training and passing the test?

A: Yes. You must become licensed within 24 months from the date the training was completed.

46. Q: How soon can I get licensed with the CCB after passing the test?

A: You can come to the CCB office the same day you pass the test (except Saturdays) to get your license. Bring your Score Report with you, along with a correctly completed CCB application, your fee and any other documents required.

47. Q: How do I prove to the CCB that I've passed the test?

A: When you bring in or mail your license application and other documents to the CCB, also include a copy of the Score Report that you get from Prometric. This is proof you passed the state test.

48. Q: What if I fail? Can I take the test again? If so, how soon?

A: If you fail the test, you are permitted to test again. You must wait two business days before scheduling in order for the initial test result to be processed.

49. Q: Can I review my test to find out what questions I missed?

A: No. Oregon law does not allow a review. Very few state professional licensing tests provide a review. You will receive information on your Score Report when you finish the test that shows you how well you did in each of the ten sections.

50. Q: Are contractors required to complete the training and/or pass the state test more than once?

A: No, as long as they keep their CCB license current. If a contractor has more than a 24-month license lapse with the CCB, however, the contractor must complete the training and pass the test again. No additional training or test is required if a contractor voluntarily puts his/her license on an inactive status. Call the CCB at 503-378-4621 for more information about inactive licenses.

51. Q: I completed the training but haven't tested yet, and now there is a newer edition manual. What can I do?

A: First, be sure that your training is still valid or you will have enough time to become licensed before the training is no longer valid. (See question 20)

If you don't have a current edition, you can order a new one at Builders Depot at 1-800-284-3434 or buildersbookdepot.com. You may also contact your training provider and ask if they have updated materials. You may write notes in your course manual but cannot take your provider's notes/updates into the test area with you.

MISCELLANEOUS

52. Q: Can veterans get reimbursed for the CCB test fee?

A: Many vets can get reimbursed for the cost of any CCB tests. Contact www.gibill.va.gov, 1-888-442-4551 (US Dept. of Veterans Affairs) or 1-800-828-8801 (Oregon Dept. of Veterans Affairs) for more information. You must pay Prometric and take the test before applying for reimbursement with the Dept. of Veterans Affairs.

53. Q: Do contractors have to complete continuing education courses to renew their licenses?

A: The Oregon Legislature mandated a continuing education requirement for contractors in the 2007 session. Commercial contractors are required to complete continuing education prior to renewal. Residential contractors will be required to complete continuing education prior to license renewals beginning on or after October 1, 2011.

54. Q: Who is responsible for the testing requirement?

A: The Oregon Building Industries Association proposed the legislation requiring the test. The 1999 Oregon Legislature passed the law. The CCB's Training Board, over a period of 1½ years, held public meetings and discussed course and testing issues. (The Training Board was an advisory committee composed of seven people who were actively licensed contractors and/or educators.) The Training Board made recommendations to the CCB's Policy Board (six licensed contractors, one elected official, and two consumer representatives) which heard public testimony and adopted the final rules.

55. Q: Who's giving the training and administering the state test, and who created the curriculum, state test and course manual?

A: Private sector businesses, schools and organizations experienced in contractor training and testing.

56. Q: If I have more questions, where can I get answers?

A:

- Check the CCB website.
- Call a training provider about the training. They are listed in the CCB application instructions and on the CCB website.
- Call CCB staff at 503-378-4621.
- Contact Prometric to schedule a test and ask test related questions.

57. Q: How can a school become approved to offer the CCB course?

A: A school can download a prerequisite provider application from the CCB website under Education Requirements.