Texas Board Of Engineering Laws & Rules

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Module 1: Texas Engineering Laws and Licensing Requirements

1.1 The Texas Engineering Practice Act and Board Rules

Before accepting an engineering assignment, an engineer should be able to answer three questions:

- Does the assignment involve the practice of engineering?
- Is the individual authorized to perform the work?
- Is the business offering the services properly registered?

These questions address separate obligations. A project can involve a qualified engineer and still present a compliance problem if the business offering the services has not met its registration requirements.

The Texas Engineering Practice Act, found in Chapter 1001 of the Texas Occupations Code, establishes the statutory framework. The Board Rules, in Title 22, Part 6 of the Texas Administrative Code, provide requirements for implementing that framework. Engineers should consult both when evaluating a practice question. Relevant subjects include licensing, firm registration, professional conduct, sealing, and enforcement.

A useful approach is to begin with the specific activity rather than the project's name. Calling an assignment a "technical review," "feasibility study," or "consulting engagement" does not explain what judgment the work actually requires. Examine the proposed tasks, intended use of the deliverables, and responsibilities being accepted.

1.2 Role of the Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors

The Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors administers the engineering licensing and regulatory program. Its responsibilities include issuing licenses, registering firms, establishing rules, and addressing violations of the Act and Board Rules. See Texas Occupations Code §§1001.201–1001.202 and §1001.451.

For practicing engineers, the Board is also an important source of information. Its website provides rules, guidance, frequently asked questions, and individual and firm records.

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When researching a question, frame it around the facts. For example, “Can I review another engineer’s work?” is less useful than identifying who prepared the work, who supervised it, what changes are proposed, and who will issue the final document. Specific facts make it easier to identify the applicable provision.

Recommended practice: Record the provision consulted, the relevant project facts, and the basis for an important compliance decision. This creates a useful reference if responsibilities or project conditions later change.

1.3 What Constitutes the Practice of Engineering

Section 1001.003 defines engineering practice broadly in terms of work requiring engineering education, training, experience, and specialized scientific or mathematical judgment. The Board’s guidance directs engineers to evaluate the actual services involved.

Consider these hypothetical assignments:

Assignment	Question to examine
Evaluating whether a treatment system can handle increased flow	Does the evaluation require engineering analysis of capacity, performance, or safety?
Preparing equipment operating instructions	Are the instructions based on engineering judgments about operating limits and system behavior?
Reviewing a proposed structural modification	Is the reviewer evaluating loads, stability, or other engineering considerations?
Compiling inspection photographs	Does the assignment stop at collecting information, or include engineering conclusions about the condition observed?

These examples illustrate an important distinction: similar-looking deliverables can involve different responsibilities. A photograph log and a report evaluating structural adequacy may both describe the same facility, but their purpose and required judgment differ.

Before preparing a proposal, identify where the assignment moves from collecting information to interpreting it and recommending action. That boundary deserves particular attention when defining the scope, staffing the work, and assigning responsibility.

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1.4 Individual Licensure and Use of Professional Titles

Under §1001.301, engineering practice generally requires a Texas license unless an applicable exception or exemption permits the activity. Professional representations are also regulated. Engineers should evaluate how titles, proposals, websites, and other communications describe their authority.

An engineering degree, a job title, and professional licensure communicate different qualifications. The Board identifies circumstances in which qualifying graduates may use “graduate engineer” or “engineer.” It also explains that an engineer licensed elsewhere may identify that license with an appropriate jurisdictional disclaimer, without offering Texas engineering services on that basis. See §1001.406 and the Board’s enforcement guidance.

Example - Reviewing a proposal biography

A consulting team includes a person who holds a PE license in another state. Before using “PE” after the person’s name in a Texas proposal, the proposal manager should review how the licensing jurisdiction is disclosed and what role the person is being offered to perform.

A useful internal review asks:

- What credential does the individual actually hold?
- What authority would a prospective client reasonably understand from the description?
- Does the proposed role match that authority?

Treat biographies and marketing materials as professional representations that deserve the same care as the technical scope.

1.5 Engineering Firm Registration

Individual licensure and firm registration serve different functions. The Board states that firms must register before offering or providing engineering services to the public in Texas. This includes sole practitioners. Establishing an LLC or another business entity does not, by itself, complete engineering firm registration.

The Board’s firm guidance explains that engineering services must be performed or directly supervised by a Texas PE who is a regular, full-time employee of the firm. A sole practitioner must also register and identify the responsible engineer. See §1001.405 and Board Rule §137.77.

Example - Starting a consulting practice

A Texas PE forms a consulting business and prepares to send proposals. The engineer should verify the business’s registration before offering services, rather than treating registration as a task to complete after winning the first project.

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For an established firm, a useful management procedure is to assign responsibility for checking registration status and changes in responsible engineering personnel. Project teams should know whom to contact when staffing or business arrangements change.

1.6 Exemptions and Their Limitations

The Act contains exemptions for specified activities and circumstances. Section 1001.051 limits Subchapter B exemptions to persons who do not offer engineering services to the public. Exemptions should therefore be evaluated against the actual work and business relationship.

For example, §1001.057 addresses certain activities associated with a private business's facilities or manufactured products. Its language includes conditions concerning the activity, the property, public

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Module 2: License Renewal and Continuing Education

2.1 License Renewal and the Transition to Two-Year Cycles

Continuing education is part of maintaining professional competence. For a Texas Professional Engineer, renewal planning involves more than accumulating course certificates. The engineer must identify the applicable renewal period, complete qualifying activities, satisfy the ethics requirement, and maintain supporting records.

Texas is transitioning to two-year license renewals, with expiration dates moving to the end of January or July. During the transition, engineers will encounter different renewal periods. The Board's transition guidance states:

Renewal situation	Total education required	Included ethics requirement
2026 PE renewal	15 PDH	At least 1 PDH
Following transitional renewal covering less than two years	15 PDH	At least 1 PDH
Following renewal covering a full two-year period or longer under the transition schedule	30 PDH	At least 2 PDH

The Board's published schedule and the licensee's assigned dates should be used together to determine the applicable requirement.

Example - An extended transitional period

The Board's schedule moves a September 2026 PE expiration to January 2028. This is an extended transitional period, rather than a full two-year cycle. The engineer should use the Board's transitional education guidance instead of assuming that every changed expiration date triggers 30 PDH.

Recommended practice: At each renewal, record the next expiration date and the education requirement for the period ahead. Set an interim reminder to review progress well before the deadline.

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