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CHAPTER 28.

 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

**SECTION 40‑28‑10.** Definitions.

Unless the context or subject matter otherwise requires:

(a) “Landscape architect” means a person who is licensed to practice landscape architecture in this State.

(b) “Landscape architecture” means the performance of professional services, such as consultation, investigation, research, planning, design, preparation of drawings and specifications, and responsible inspection in connection with the development of land areas where, and to the extent that, the dominant purpose of the services is the preservation, enhancement, or determination of proper site design, natural land features, planting, naturalistic and aesthetic values, the settings and approaches to structures or other improvements, the setting of grades and determining drainage and providing for drainage structures, and the consideration and determining of environmental problems. This practice includes the design of tangible objects, drainage structures and systems, and features as are incidental and necessary to an overall or ongoing landscape plan and site design, and the landscape architect may certify the design of the tangible objects, drainage structures and systems, features as to structural soundness and as to compliance with all requirements and standards of a government or subdivision of it. This practice does not include the design of structures, drainage structures and systems, and features which are not incidental and necessary to an overall landscape plan and site design and which have separate and self‑contained purposes such as are ordinarily included in the practice of engineering or architecture and does not include the making of land surveys or final plats for official approval or recordation. Nothing contained in this definition precludes a duly licensed landscape architect from performing the services described in the first sentence of this definition in connection with the settings, approaches, or environment for buildings, structures, or facilities. Nothing contained in this chapter may be construed as authorizing a landscape architect to engage in the practice of architecture, engineering, or land surveying as these terms are defined in Section 40‑28‑150 of this chapter, except that a landscape architect may prepare and certify all design, grading, drainage, and construction plans for roads and site‑related projects which are incidental and necessary to an overall or ongoing landscape plan and site design.

(c) “Department” shall mean the Department of Natural Resources.

(d) “Council” shall mean a body of five qualified professional landscape architects appointed by the department to serve as advisors to the department, as provided for in Sections 40‑28‑30 through 40‑28‑70.

(e) “Responsible charge” shall mean direct control and personal supervision of landscape architecture.

**SECTION 40‑28‑20.** Landscape architects required to be licensed.

In order to safeguard public welfare, health and property and to promote public good, any person practicing or offering to practice landscape architecture, privately or in public service, shall be required to submit evidence that he is qualified to practice and shall become registered as hereinafter provided. It shall be unlawful for any person to practice landscape architecture or to use the term or title “Landscape Architect” unless duly licensed under the provisions of this chapter.

**SECTION 40‑28‑30.** Department to administer chapter; council to be appointed; composition of council; terms of office.

The department shall serve as the board of registration for landscape architects and shall administer the provisions of this chapter. The department shall appoint a council of five qualified professional landscape architects who shall have the qualifications required in the following section to recommend certification of those eligible to become registered landscape architects. The five members of the council shall be appointed for five years and until their successors have been appointed and qualify; provided, that the initial terms shall be made so that the term of one member shall expire on June thirtieth of each year.

**SECTION 40‑28‑40.** Qualifications for members of council.

Each member of the council must be a registered landscape architect who has been actively engaged in the practice of landscape architecture for a period of at least five years and who has been in responsible charge of landscape architecture for at least three years.

**SECTION 40‑28‑50.** Compensation of council members.

Each member of the council may receive an amount as provided for in the annual General Appropriations Act for each day actually and reasonably engaged in the services of the department and must be reimbursed for all actual traveling, incidental, and clerical expenses necessarily incurred in carrying out the provisions of this chapter. These expenses must be paid from general appropriations to the department.

**SECTION 40‑28‑60.** Vacancies on council.

Vacancies in the membership of the council shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term in the manner of the original appointments.

**SECTION 40‑28‑70.** Council meetings; officers; quorum.

The council shall hold at least two regular meetings each year. Special meetings may be held as the bylaws of the council provide. The council shall elect annually a chairman, a vice chairman and a secretary. A quorum of the council shall consist of three members.

**SECTION 40‑28‑80.** Powers of board.

The department shall have the following powers:

(a) To adopt and amend bylaws, rules of procedure and regulations to administer and carry out the provisions of this chapter and for the conduct of its affairs and functions consistent with the Constitution and laws of this State or this chapter which may be reasonably necessary for the performance of its duties and the regulation of its proceedings, meetings, records, examinations and the conduct thereof, and to adopt and promulgate a code of ethics which shall be binding upon all persons registered under or subject to this chapter.

(b) To affix its official seal to each numbered certificate or license issued.

(c) To apply in the name of the state for relief by injunction to enforce the provisions of this chapter or to restrain any violation thereof. In such proceedings it shall not be necessary to allege or prove either that an adequate remedy at law does not exist or that substantial or irreparable damage would result from the continued violation thereof. The members of the department shall not be personally liable under this proceeding.

**SECTION 40‑28‑90.** Revenue and expenditures.

All funds derived under the provisions of this chapter shall be remitted to the State Treasurer as collected. Such funds may be expended as directed by the department upon warrant requisitions directed to the Comptroller General who shall, after being satisfied of the propriety of payment, issue his warrant on the State Treasurer.

**SECTION 40‑28‑100.** Department records.

The department shall keep a record of its proceedings and of all applications for registration, which records shall show the name, age, and last known address of each applicant, the place of business of applicant, education, experience, and other qualifications, type of examination required, whether or not a license was granted, whether or not the applicant was denied a license, the date of the action of the department, and other information considered necessary by the department. The record of the department is evidence of the proceedings of the department and a transcript duly certified by the secretary under seal is admissible as evidence with the same force and effect as the original.

**SECTION 40‑28‑110.** Requirements of applicants for registration and licensing as professional landscape architect.

To be eligible for registration and licensing as a professional landscape architect in South Carolina an applicant shall read and write the English language and:

(1) be a graduate of an accredited landscape architectural curriculum approved by the department and have had two years of varied landscape architectural experience under the supervision of a landscape architect registered under this chapter or other qualified person, or experience approved by the department, and satisfactorily pass a written examination as prescribed by the department; or

(2) be a high school graduate or have an equivalent education as determined by the department and, in addition, at least eight years of varied landscape architectural experience under the supervision of a landscape architect registered under this chapter or other qualified person or experience approved by the department, and satisfactorily pass a written examination as prescribed by the department;

A maximum of three years of the experience requirement contained in subsection (2) of this section may be satisfied by proof of education or nonaccredited degree, as considered appropriate by the department; or

(3) hold a license or certification to practice landscape architecture issued to him upon examination by a legally constituted board of examiners of another state or the District of Columbia, or a territory or possession of the United States and if requirements of the state, district, territory, or possession in which the applicant is licensed or registered are substantially equivalent to those of this State; or

(4) submit certification documents from the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB) verifying his qualifications for registration, and an individual holding such a certification may be accepted at the discretion of the department.

**SECTION 40‑28‑120.** Examinations.

Examinations must be offered at least annually, the time and place to be established by the department.

At the discretion of the department, the written examination may be administered to candidates who are eligible for registration under Section 40‑28‑110. The department may admit to the examination a person who may complete the experience requirements within ninety days after the examination.

Administration and evaluation of the examination must be conducted in a manner prescribed by the department.

Candidates shall retain credit for any parts of the examination passed and may be permitted to retake a failed part of the examination.

Upon proper application, the department, at its discretion, may credit to a candidate a prescribed part of the examination successfully passed and properly attested to by another state, territory, or possession of the United States or the District of Columbia. The candidate then may take the remaining examination parts and, if successfully completed, may be registered and licensed by the department. The department shall accept the transfer of grades only from the state of original application.

**SECTION 40‑28‑130.** Reciprocity.

The department, subject to the provisions of this chapter and the rules and regulations of the department promulgated thereunder prescribing the qualifications for a landscape architect license, may permit the practice of landscape architecture in this State under a landscape architect license issued under the laws of any other state, upon payment of the current fee established by the department, and upon submission of evidence satisfactory to the department:

(1) That the other state maintains a system and standard of qualifications and examinations for a landscape architect license which were substantially equivalent to those required in this State at the time the license was issued by the other state;

(2) That the other state gives similar recognition and endorsement to landscape architect licenses of this State.

**SECTION 40‑28‑140.** Seals; certificates; identification cards.

Each landscape architect, upon registration, shall obtain a seal of the design authorized by the department, bearing the name of the registrant, number of certificate or license, and the legend “South Carolina Registered Landscape Architect”. The seal may be used only while the registrant’s certificate or license is in full force and effect. Certificates of registration, licenses, and identification cards must be signed by the chairman of the department and the secretary of the council. Nothing in this chapter may be construed to authorize the use or acceptance of the seal of the landscape architect in lieu of the seal of an architect, engineer, or land surveyor.

**SECTION 40‑28‑150.** Exemptions.

This chapter shall not be construed to require licensing in the following cases:

(a) the practice of landscape architecture by any person who acts under the supervision of a registered landscape architect or by an employee of a person lawfully engaged in the practice of landscape architecture and who in either event does not assume responsible charge of design or supervision;

(b) the practice of architecture by a duly registered professional architect and the performing of landscape architectural work by a registered architect or by an employee under supervision of a registered architect, when such work is incidental to their practice;

(c) the practice of engineering by a duly registered professional engineer and the performing of landscape architectural work by a registered engineer or by an employee under supervision of a registered engineer, when such work is incidental to their practice;

(d) the practice of surveying by a duly registered professional land surveyor and the performing of landscape architectural work by a registered professional land surveyor or by an employee under supervision of a registered professional land surveyor, when such work is incidental to their practice;

(e) the practice of landscape architecture by employees of the United States or South Carolina Government while engaged within this State in the practice of landscape architecture for the government or projects sanctioned by or totally sponsored by the Government;

(f) the practice of planning as customarily done by regional or urban planners;

(g) the practice of arborists, foresters, gardeners, home builders or horticulturists;

(h) the practice of any nurseryman, general or landscape contractor, such practice to include design, planning, location and arrangements of plantings or other ornamental features.

**SECTION 40‑28‑160.** Practice by partnerships and corporations.

The right to engage in the practice of landscape architecture is a personal right, based upon the qualifications of the individual evidenced by his license.

(1) The license is not transferable. All final drawings, specifications, plans, reports or other papers or documents involving the practice of landscape architecture, as defined in Section 40‑28‑10, when issued, or filed for public record, must be dated, and bear the name and seal of the landscape architect or landscape architects who prepared or approved them.

(2) Partnerships and corporations which meet the following conditions may be formed as a vehicle for the practice of landscape architecture:

(a) The practice of or offer to practice landscape architecture for others as defined in Section 40‑28‑10 by individual landscape architects licensed under this chapter through a corporation as officer, employees, or agents, or through a partnership as partners, officers, employees, or agents, or the offering or rendering of landscape architecture services by corporation or partnership through individual landscape architects licensed under this chapter is permitted, subject to the provisions of this chapter if (i) one or more of the corporate officers in the case of a corporation, or one or more of the partners in the case of a partnership, are designated as being responsible for the professional services described in Section 40‑28‑10 of the corporation or partnership and are landscape architects under this chapter; and (ii) all personnel of the corporation or partnership, who act in its behalf as landscape architects, are licensed under this chapter; and (iii) the corporation or partnership has been issued a certificate of authorization by the department. The requirements of this chapter do not prevent a corporation and its employees from performing landscape architectural services for the corporation or subsidiary or affiliated corporations.

(b) A corporation or partnership issued a Certificate of Authorization to provide or offer to provide landscape architectural services to the public in this State shall:

(1) submit an initial fee and file with the department, on a form prescribed by the department, a listing of names and addresses of all principals and officers, as well as all principals, officers, agents, and employees, who are in responsible charge of the practice in this State and are licensed to practice landscape architecture in this State;

(2) insure that all documents involving the practice of landscape architecture which are prepared for the use of the corporation or partnership bear the signature and seal of a landscape architect registered and licensed in this State;

(3) advise the department in writing within thirty days of a change in status of a principal, officer, agent, or employee registered and licensed under this chapter;

(4) have a resident landscape architect duly registered to practice in this State in responsible charge of a place of business maintained in this State for the purpose of providing or offering to provide landscape architectural services to the public;

(5) file a form giving current information, as prescribed in (1) above, with the annual renewal fee to be determined by the department.

(c) No corporation or partnership is relieved of responsibility for conduct or acts of its agents, employees, or officers by reason of its compliance with the provisions of this section nor is an individual practicing landscape architecture as defined in Section 40‑28‑10 relieved of responsibility of landscape architectural services performed by reason of his employment or relationship with the corporation or partnership.

(d) Disciplinary action against a corporation or partnership must be administered in the same manner and on the same grounds as disciplinary action against a registered landscape architect.

**SECTION 40‑28‑170.** Penalty for using title of landscape architect without license.

A person who, without possessing a valid, unrevoked certificate or license as required by this chapter, uses the title or term “Landscape Architect” in a sign, card, listing, advertisement, or in any other manner states that he is a landscape architect, as defined in this chapter, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, fined not less than fifty dollars nor more than five hundred dollars or imprisoned for not exceeding six months or both.

**SECTION 40‑28‑180.** Disciplinary action.

Each of the following facts constitutes a ground for disciplinary action against a holder of a license or certificate:

(1) he is practicing in violation of the provisions of this chapter;

(2) he has obtained the certificate or license by fraud or misrepresentation;

(3) he is impersonating a landscape architect or a former landscape architect of the same or similar name, or is practicing under an assumed, fictitious, or corporate name;

(4) he has aided or abetted, in the practice of landscape architecture, a person not authorized to practice landscape architecture under the provisions of this chapter;

(5) in the practice of landscape architecture, he has been guilty of fraud or deceit, negligence, wilful misconduct, or gross incompetence;

(6) he has affixed his seal to plans, drawings, specifications, or other instruments of service which have not been prepared by him or under his immediate and responsible direction or has permitted his name to be used for the purpose of assisting a person, not a landscape architect, to evade the provisions of this chapter.

**SECTION 40‑28‑190.** Fees.

The department annually shall prescribe reasonable fees, not to exceed the following prescribed limits, in an amount sufficient to pay for the costs of administering the provisions of this chapter in the following categories:

 (1) Initial license fee 50.00

 (2) Annual license renewal fee 100.00

 (3) Initial certificate of authorization fee 200.00

 (4) Annual certificate of authorization renewal fee 200.00

 (5) Temporary license fee 100.00

 (6) Initial examination fee Cost of exam + 200.00

 (7) Examination retake fee Cost of section(s) + 100.00

 (8) File transfer fee 50.00

 (9) Duplicate license/certificate fee 25.00

 (10) Late fee 20.00

An additional amount not to exceed one hundred dollars may be charged each out‑of‑state applicant in each of the above categories.

**SECTION 40‑28‑200.** Annual license fees; delinquencies; suspensions.

(A) Every landscape architect shall pay an annual license fee to the department. The fee is due and payable on the first day of January of each year and becomes delinquent after the thirty‑first day of January.

(B) If the annual license fee is not paid before it becomes delinquent, a penalty of twenty dollars must be added to the amount of the fee.

(C) If the annual certificate or license fee and penalty are not paid within ninety days of the expiration date, the landscape architect’s certificate or license must be suspended after the expiration of thirty days from the date of mailing of notice of the delinquency by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, postage prepaid and addressed to the landscape architect at his address as it appears in the records of the department. The notice of delinquency must state that upon the expiration of time allowed his certificate or license must be suspended unless, within time allowed, the annual certificate or license fee and penalty are remitted.

(D) After the certificate or license has been suspended, it may be reinstated upon the payment of the annual renewal fee for each delinquent year, plus the penalty for each year, and such proof of the landscape architect’s qualification as required by the department. A landscape architect whose license has been suspended and who was registered by methods other than prescribed in Sections 40‑28‑110 and 40‑28‑130, is required to pass a written examination prescribed by the department.

(E) The department shall issue a receipt to each landscape architect promptly upon payment of the annual certificate or license fee.

**SECTION 40‑28‑210.** Advice and assistance of Attorney General.

The Attorney General shall act as legal advisor to the department and render such legal assistance as may be necessary in carrying out the provisions of this chapter.