Tennessee Board for Licensing Contractors  
Classification Outline with Trade Exam Requirements

The following is a list of classifications utilized by the Board with the applicable “Trade” exam, if required. The exams are offered by PSI Services, LLC. A “Business and Law” exam is required by all contractor new license applicants. A “trade exam” waiver (reciprocal) agreement exists with several states and more information is available at: http://www.tn.gov/regboards/contractors/documents/BLCReciprocationwithTN.pdf

All contractors are assigned a license “classification” and “monetary limit”. The license status may be confirmed at the “Verify a License” search online at: http://verify.tn.gov/ This same information, in addition to the name and expiration date, is required to be listed on the outside of the prime contractor’s bid envelope, as well as their subcontractor’s license information (see T.C.A. § 62-6-119).

The classification outline is compiled from T.C.A. § 62-6-112, Rule 0680-01-.12 and also Rule 0680-01-.16 of Appendix A. These rules are available online at the Secretary of State’s publications: http://www.tn.gov/sos/rules/0680/0680-01.20140220.pdf

License Classification System with Exam Requirements

I. BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

► (BC) - (Exam Required)
The “BC” classification requires a combined BC exam that covers all areas of contracting listed below for Residential, Commercial and Industrial building. The BC classification includes all 34 “Building Categories” (see pages 2-3); and MU or MU-B (Municipal Utility and Sewer Systems – see page 5). A contractor with a full BC or BC-B (Commercial) may bid on any project, however, would be required to subcontract work not classified when those portions are $25,000 or more (see T.C.A. § 62-6-111(d)).

► Residential (BC-A) - (Exam Required)
Residential building contractors are those whose services are limited to construction, remodeling, repair, or improvement of one, two, three, or four family unit residences, not exceeding three stories in height and accessory use structures in connection therewith.
   o Combined exams to include Residential are available: BC-A,B; BC-A,b(sm); or BC
   o BC-A contractors may bid and perform any of the 34 “Building Categories” for Residential projects, only (see pages 2-3)

► Limited Residential (BC-A/r) - (Course from Approved Provider in Lieu of Exam)
In lieu of passing the residential building trade exam, a contractor may take an approved course from a state community college (see list of providers at: http://www.tn.gov/commerce/article/cont-forms-and-downloads). BC-A/r contractors are authorized to bid on and contract for construction, remodel, repair, or improvement of a single family dwelling. The monetary limit assigned cannot exceed $125,000. This is a restricted license as outlined in Rule 0680-01-29., with no 10% bid tolerance; no joint ventures; and must pass exams to increase limit or add classifications.
   o BC-A/r contractors may bid and perform any of the 34 “Building Categories” on single family dwellings, only (see pages 2-3)

► Commercial (BC-B) - (Exam Required) (May take a combined exam, such as “BC” or “BC-A,B” or BC-B)
Commercial building contractor is authorized to bid on and contract for the construction, erection, alteration, repair or demolition of any building or structure for use and occupancy by the general public, including residential construction with more than four (4) units or greater than three (3) stories in height. This classification allows performing any of the 34 building subcategories for commercial.
   o Combined exams to include Commercial are available: BC-A,B or BC
   o BC-B contractors may bid and perform any of the 34 “Building Categories” for Commercial (see pages 2-3); also MU or MU-B (Municipal Utility and Sewer Systems - see page 5); and see also T.C.A. § 62-6-111(d) for bidding other non-commercial work.
Small Commercial (BC-b(sm) - (Exam Required)
A small commercial building contractor is authorized to bid on and contract for the construction, erection, alteration, repair or demolition of any building or structure for use and occupancy by the general public, the total cost of which does not exceed $1,500,000.00. The monetary limited is based upon the financial statement and experience, but is limited to $1,500,000 (or less) and would require passing the full commercial BC-B trade exam to increase the monetary limit, as well as a new financial statement for a revision request.
  o Combined exam to include Small Commercial and Residential: BC-A.b(sm)
  o BC-b(sm) contractors may bid and perform any of the 34 “Building Categories” for Commercial (see page 2); see also T.C.A. § 62-6-111(d) for bidding non-commercial work.
  o In order to obtain a monetary limit increase more than $1,500,000, it would require passing the full BC-B commercial trade exam (and providing financial statement for revision).

Industrial (BC-C) - (Exam Required)
A contractor under this classification is authorized to bid on and contract for the erection, alteration, repair and demolition of buildings or structures used for industrial production and service, such as manufacturing plants.
  ▪ Combined exams are available to include Industrial: BC-B,C or BC
  o BC-C contractors may bid and perform any of the 34 “Building Categories” for Industrial (see pages 2-3)

BC - BUILDING CATEGORIES (No Exam Required for up to 5 of 34 Categories)
Each “Building Category” may apply to any major construction classification:
  • Residential (BC-A); Commercial (BC-B or BC-(sm)b); or Industrial (BC-C).
      o For example, a BC-A contractor may bid and perform any of the 34 categories below whenever it is a Residential project.
  • No trade exam is required for up to five (5) building categories (T.C.A. § 62-6-112).
      o For example, a trade exam is not required to have up to 5 of the 34 classifications, such as: BC-5; BC-7; BC-12; BC-20; and BC-28.
          ▪ Business and Law exam and experience required
      o As a “subcontractor”, a contractor’s license is not required to perform the type of work classified below, unless it is for roofing or masonry (as indicated).

The following are classifications for each of the Building Categories:

1. Acoustical Treatments (BC-1)
2. Carpentry, Framing and Millwork, etc. (BC-2)
3. Drywall (BC-3)
4. Floor Covering (BC-4)
5. Foundations (BC-5)
6. Glass, Window and Door Construction (BC-6)
7. Institutional and Recreational Equipment (BC-7)
8. Lathe, Plaster, Stucco and Aluminum Siding (BC-8)
9. Masonry under $100,000, materials & labor (BC-9) *
10. Ornamental and Miscellaneous Metal (BC-10)
11. Painting, Interior Decorating (BC-11)
12. Roof Decks (BC-12)
13. Site and Subdivision Development (BC-13)
14. Special Coatings and Waterproofing (BC-14)
15. Tile, Terrazzo and Marble (BC-15)

*BC-9 – Masonry “prime” contractors must be licensed for projects $25,000 or more. Masonry “subcontractors” must also be licensed, however, only when the total masonry cost is $100,000 or more, pursuant T.C.A. § 62-6-102(4)(A)(ii) and (5). Masonry projects, more than $100,000 require the “LMC” (Licensed Masonry Contractor) trade exam and classification (see page 3).

Continued →
16. Insulation (BC-16)
17. Elevators, Escalators, and Dumbwaiters (BC-17)**
18. Erection and Fabrication of Structural Steel (BC-18)
19. Concrete (BC-19)
20. Sheet Metal (BC-20)
21. Roofing – includes gutters & vinyl siding (BC-21)***
22. Conveyors (BC-22)
23. Sandblasting (BC-23)
24. Golf Courses (BC-24)
25. Tennis Courts (BC-25)
26. Swimming Pools (BC-26)
27. Outdoor Advertising (BC-27)
28. Excavation (BC-28) ****
29. Landscaping (BC-29)
30. Fencing (BC-30)
31. Demolition (BC-31)
32. Millwright (BC-32)
33. Irrigation (BC-33)
34. Scaffolding (BC-34)

**BC-17 – Elevator contractors must register with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development at: https://www.tn.gov/workforce/article/elevators

***BC-21 – Roofing "prime" and "subcontractors" are required to be licensed pursuant T.C.A. § 62-6-102(4)(A)(ii) and (9), when the amount is $25,000 or more.


II. MASONRY (LMC) – (Exam Required)

Masonry exam required and license required by both a prime or subcontractor performing work in excess of $100,000. As a prime, a BC-9 non-tested classification (see page 2) is acceptable for projects $25,000 to less than $100,000 (see T.C.A. §§§ 62-6-102,103,112, and 119).

III. SPECIALTY (S) – (No Exam)

The Board will utilize the system of classifications set forth in Appendix A. The Board reserves the right to depart from the classification system in appropriate individual cases.

If there is not a classification designated in the rules for the type of specialty work performed, a “Specialty” classification may be assigned (pursuant to none of the above licensing classifications cover the scope of work, the Board may assign a “Specialty” classification. A trade exam is not required for specialties; only the Business and Law, as well as experience, and in some cases, certifications.

The following are many of the “Specialty” license classifications utilized by the Board:

S-Above Ground Tanks
S-Audio Visual Systems
S-Awning & Canopy Installation
S-Boring/Directional /Tunneling
S-Building Automation
S-Communication/Cell Towers
S-Cold Storage Buildings
S-Cooling Towers
S-Detention Equipment
S-Erosion Control
S-Equipment Installation
S-Fiber Optics
S-Furniture/Fixture Install
S-Food Service Equipment
S-Generator Equipment Install
SPECIALTY (S) (continued)

- S-Granite/Limestone/Monuments
- S-Grain Conveying Systems
- S-Greenhouses
- S-House Moving
- S-Industrial Equipment Install
- S-Laboratory Equipment
- S-Lightning Protection
- S-Leak Detection Systems
- S-Liners
- S-Low Voltage Cabling
- S-Maintenance
- S-Mass Transit Equipment
- S-Medical Gas
- S-Metal Building Installation
- S-Meter Installation
- S-Parking Lot Equipment
- S-Paint Finishing Equipment
- S-Pipeline
- S-Playground Equipment Installation
- S-Poultry Equipment
- S-Pressure Washing
- S-Refinery Maintenance
- S-Refactory
- S-Repair
- S-Right of Way Clearing
- S-Robotic Equipment
- S-Scale Weigh Systems
- S-Sewer & Storm Water Cleaning & Inspection
- S-Shelving & Storage Racks
- S-Solar Panel Installations
- S-Synthetic Turf Installation
- S-Theatre/Stage/Studio Construction
- S-Telecommunications
- S-Toilet Partitions
- S-Tree Trimming
- S-Utility Poles & Inspection
- S-Warehouse Storage
- S-Water Tanks
- S-Water Meter Installation
- S-Well Drilling

IV. HEAVY CONSTRUCTION (HC) – (No Exam)

A. Marine (wharves, docks, harbor improvements & terminals) (HC-A)
B. Tunnel and Shaft (HC-B)
C. Energy and Power Plants (HC-C)
D. Dams, Dikes, Levees and Canals (HC-D)
E. Mining Surface and Underground (HC-E)
F. Oil Field Construction (HC-F)
G. Oil Refineries (HC-G)
H. Storm Damage Cleanup (HC-H)
I. Landfill Construction (HC-I)

► Heavy Construction Categories (HC) - Apply to All Areas
1. Structural Steel Erection (HC-1)
2. Tower and Stack Construction (HC-2)
3. Foundation Construction, Pile Driving, Foundation Drilling, and Stabilization (HC-3)
4. Demolition and Movement of Structures (HC-4)
5. Clearing, Grubbing, Snagging and Rip Rap (HC-5)
6. Slipform Concrete Structures (HC-6)
7. Rigging and Crane Rigging (HC-7)
8. Welding (HC-8)

Continued →
V. HIGHWAY, RAILROAD AND AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION (HRA) – (No Exam)

Contractors bidding to the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) may obtain prequalification, bid lettings and other information at: https://www.tn.gov/tdot/section/tdot-construction-division

Also check with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) for NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit requirements at: https://tn.gov/environment/article/permit-npdes-stormwater-construction-permit

Highway, Railroad and Airport Construction (HRA) – (No Exam)

A. Grading and Drainage [HRA-A]
   Includes grading, drainage pipe and structures, clearing and grubbing.

B. Base and Paving [HRA-B]
   1. Base Construction [HRA-B.1]
   2. Hot and Cold Mix Asphalt [HRA-B.2]
   3. Surface Treatment Asphalt [HRA-B.3]
   4. Concrete Paving [HRA-B.4]

C. Bridges and Culverts [HRA-C]
   1. Painting [HRA-C.1]
   2. Repair [HRA-C.2]
   3. Demolition [HRA-C.3]
   4. Bridge Deck Overlay (Sealant) [HRA-C.4]
   5. Gunite [HRA-C.5]
   6. Cofferdam [HRA-C.6]
   7. Steel Erection [HRA-C.7]

D. Railroad Construction and Related Items [HRA-D]

E. Miscellaneous and Specialty Items [HRA-E]
   1. Traffic Safety [HRA-E.1]
      (a) Pavement Markers [HRA-E.1(a)]
      (b) Signing [HRA-E.1(b)]
      (c) Guardrail and Fencing [HRA-E.1(c)]
      (d) Attenuators, signalization and roadway lighting [HRA-E.1(d)]
   2. Landscaping [HRA-E.2]
      Includes seeding, sodding, planting, and chemical weed and brush control.
   3. Pavement Rehabilitation [HRA-E.3]
      Includes pressure grouting, grinding and grooving, concrete joints, and underdrains.
   4. Well Drilling [HRA-E.4]*
   5. Miscellaneous Concrete [HRA-E.5]
      Includes sidewalks, driveways, curb and gutter, and box culverts.

*Well Drilling also requires a license from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). Their requirements are at: https://tn.gov/environment/article/permit-well-driller-or-installer-license. Note: Pursuant T.C.A. 62-6-119, geothermal closed loop contractors must list the well driller’s TDEC license information on the bid envelope.

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VI. MUNICIPAL AND UTILITY CONSTRUCTION (MU) – (BC-B Exam Required)

Municipal and Utility Construction includes all supervision, labor, material and equipment to complete underground piping, water and sewer plants and sewer disposal, grading and drainage, and paving (unless restricted to specific areas named). A commercial (BC-B or BC) is considered an acceptable classification to bid and perform any of the work within these categories, including the MU-B.

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MUNICIPAL AND UTILITY CONSTRUCTION (MU) *(Exam Required BC-B or BC for full MU or MU-B)*

A. Underground Piping *(MU-A) (No Exam)*
   Furnish supervision, labor, material and equipment to complete all underground piping for municipal and utility construction (unless restricted to specific areas names).
   1. Gas Distribution and Transmission Lines *(MU-A.1) *
   2. Sewer Lines, Storm Drains, Rehabilitation and Structures *(MU-A.2) *
   3. Waterlines *(MU-A.3) *
   4. Underground Conduit *(MU-A.4) *

B. Water and Sewer Systems *(MU-B or BC-B or BC) – (BC-B or BC Exam Required)*

C. Grading and Drainage *(MU-C) * *(No Exam)*
   - Includes grading, drainage pipe and structures, clearing and grubbing.

D. Base and Paving *(MU-D) (No Exam)*
   1. Base Construction *(MU-D-1) *(No Exam)*
   2. Hot and Cold Mix Asphalt *(MU-D-2) *(No Exam)*
   3. Surface Treatment Asphalt *(MU-D-3) *(No Exam)*
   4. Concrete Pavement *(MU-D-4) *(No Exam)*
   5. Miscellaneous Concrete (sidewalks, driveways, curb, gutter, box culverts) *(MU-D-5) *(No Exam)*

*Grading contractors should also check with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) for NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit requirements at: [https://tn.gov/environment/article/permit-npdes-stormwater-construction-permit](https://tn.gov/environment/article/permit-npdes-stormwater-construction-permit)

VII. MECHANICAL CONTRACTING (CMC) – *(Exam Required)*

The classification CMC is noted on licenses issued after 1992 and represents that the licensee has passed the Board licensing exam and that no county or municipality shall require such state licensee or its employees to pass any county or municipal Exam or examination pursuant to TCA § 62-6-111(i)(2)(C).

- *Pre-approved is required to take CMC (mechanical) or CMC-A (plumbing) exam at: [http://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/commerce/attachments/ContPlumbingExpApprovalWeb.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/commerce/attachments/ContPlumbingExpApprovalWeb.pdf)*

- *Prime and Subcontractors performing mechanical work must be licensed as a contractor. In addition, Plumbers, HVAC and Geothermal TDEC Well Drillers must be listed on the bid envelope (see TCA 62-6-119).*

- *Must also obtain permits from local government for inspections.*

Mechanical Contracting (CMC) – *(Exam Required for full CMC)*

A. Plumbing and Gas Piping *(CMC-A) - (Exam Required) * Exam pre-approval required for CMC-A and CMC

B. Process Piping *(CMC-B) – (No Exam)*

C. HVAC, Refrigeration and Gas Piping *(CMC-C) - (Exam Required)*
   - Solar HVAC (Geothermal) – *(Exam Required)*
     Geothermal – Well Drillers refer to Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) for additional requirements at: [https://tn.gov/environment/article/permit-well-driller-or-installer-license](https://tn.gov/environment/article/permit-well-driller-or-installer-license)

D. Sprinklers & Fire Protection *(CMC-D) - (Exam Required)*
   - Must also obtain licenses as a Firm and RME with the Tennessee Division of Fire Prevention. More information at: [http://www.tn.gov/commerce/article/fire-licensing](http://www.tn.gov/commerce/article/fire-licensing)

E. Insulation of Mechanical Work *(CMC-E) – (No Exam)*

Continued →
MECHANICAL CONTRACTING (Continued)

F. Pollution Control (CMC-F) – (No Exam)

G. Pneumatic Tube Systems (CMC-G) – (No Exam)

H. Temperature Controls (Pneumatic) (CMC-H) - (No Exam)

I. Boiler Construction & Repairs (CMC-I) - (No Exam)
   ▶ Also check with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development for additional requirements
   https://www.tn.gov/workforce/article/boilers

J. Fuel Gas Piping and Systems (CMC-J) - (No Exam)

VIII. ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING (CE) – (Exam Required)

Electrical contracting classification CE is noted on licenses issued after 1992 and represents that the licensee has passed the Board licensing exam and that no county or municipality shall require such state licensee or its employees to pass any county or municipal test or examination pursuant to TCA 62-6-111(i)(2)(C). (Note: Prior to 1992, the “E” or “E-B” classification was the designation for prior exam.) The CE designation covers all electrical categories (A – L) for residential, commercial and industrial projects:

▶ Prime and Subcontractors must both be licensed as a contractor to perform electrical work. In addition, electrical contractor’s license information must be listed on the outside of the bid envelope (pursuant TCA § 62-6-119)
▶ Permits are obtained with local government for inspections

Electrical Contracting (CE) – (Exam Required for full CE)

A. Electrical Transmission Lines (CE-A,H) - (Exam Required) - CE-A,H or CE

B. Electrical Work for Buildings and Structures – (CE) (Exam Required)

C. Underground Electrical Conduit Installation (CE-C) – (No Exam)

D. Sound and Intercom Systems, Fire Detection Systems, Signal and Burglar Alarm Systems, and Security Systems up to (70) volts. (CE-D)* – (No Exam) – Please note that a separate license issued by the Tennessee Alarm Systems Contractors Board is also required for alarm systems.

E. Electrical Signs (CE-E) – (No Exam)

F. Telephone Lines and Ducts (CE-F) – (No Exam)

G. Cable T.V. (CE-G) – (No Exam)

H. Substations (CE-A,H) – (Exam Required ) – CE-A,H or CE

I. Electrical Temperature Controls (CE-I) - (No Exam)

J. Fire Detection Systems, Signal and Burglar Alarm Systems and Security Systems with conduit and wiring above (70) volts require an electrical exam. (CE-J / CE)* - (CE Exam Required)

*Alarm Systems Contractors, pursuant T.C.A. § 62-6-135, Alarm System Contractors are not required to obtain the CE-D or CE-J license with the Board for Licensing Contractors, which states in part: “The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to entities certified under chapter 32, part 3, of this title, when such entities are performing functions for which such entities are certified.” In addition, pursuant T.C.A. § 62-32-305(7), exclusion from the Alarm Contractors Licensing Act is available to Electrical (CE), Mechanical (CMC) and HVAC (CMC-C) Contractors licensed under Tenn. Code Ann. § 62-6, who do provide direct sales, monitoring, installation and/or maintenance service of alarm systems, but who derive less than fifty percent (50%) of their gross annual revenues from such business. In order to be eligible to file for the exclusion the company must hold a valid Electrical, Mechanical or HVAC contractor’s license, and must file an affidavit of exclusion with the Alarm Systems Contractors Board.

A separate license or registration for exclusion is needed and more information is available at: http://www.tn.gov/commerce/section/alarm-systems-contractors

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ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING (CE) (Continued)

K. Roadway Lighting, Attenuators and Signalization (CE-K / CE) – (CE Exam Required)

L. Electric Meter Installation (CE-L / CE) (CE Exam Required)

Note: The CE classification covers all categories of electrical contracting.

IX. SPECIALTY/ENVIRONMENTAL (S) - (No Exam)

Contractor licenses issued by the Board with the “Specialty/Environmental” license classification do not require a “trade” exam (Business and Law exam, only). However, the contractor must provide their experience, training and certifications with the contractor’s license application.

Refer to the TN Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) for accreditation, training, or additional information relating to environmental contracting activities in the following areas with the exception of Mold Remediation at: http://www.tn.gov/environment/

A. Asbestos Material Handling/Removing (S-A)
   TDEC information is at: http://tn.gov/environment/topic/sw-asbestos-program; http://tn.gov/environment/article/permit-air-notification-of-asbestos-demolition-or-renovation

B. Underground Storage Tank (S-B)
   TDEC information is at: http://www.tn.gov/environment/section/underground-storage-tanks

C. Lead-Based Paint Abatement (S-C)
   TDEC information is at: http://www.tn.gov/environment/article/lead-hazard-program

D. Hazardous Waste Removal (S-D)
   TDEC information is at: http://www.tn.gov/environment/topic/sw-hazardous-waste-management

E. Air, Water or Soil Remediation (S-E)
   TDEC information is at: http://www.tn.gov/environment/

F. Mold Remediation (S-F)
   EPA information http://www.epa.gov/mold/moldguide.html

The Board does not have a list of approved training providers, however, you may check with community colleges, technical schools or with the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) at: https://www.osha.gov/dte/outreach/

X. Specialty/Medical Gas Piping (S-Medical Gas Piping) - (No Exam - Certification Required)

A. Medical Gas Piping Installer Certification Requirements.
   1. The minimum qualifications for board certification are the qualifications for certification established by the American Medical Gas Institute (AMGI) or the Piping Industry Progress and Education Trust Fund (PIPE).

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Specialty/Medical Gas Piping (Continued)

A minimum of thirty-two (32) hours of training, with eight (8) of such hours in brazing, shall be required for board certification. The board shall from time to time revise minimum qualifications for board certification to include the most current edition of NFPA 99C “Standard on Gas and Vacuum Systems.”

(a) The minimum of thirty-two (32) hours of training for board certification as a medical gas installer shall include training in the following areas from the most current edition of NFPA 99C, Gas and Vacuum Systems:

1. Medical Gas Systems.
3. Installation of Pressurized Gas Systems.
4. Vacuum Piping.
5. Brazing Techniques for Medical Gas Systems.
6. Requirements for Levels of Patient Care.

2. The board may designate and approve independent examining agencies, as necessary, to provide the training and examinations necessary for board certification required by T.C.A. § 68-11-253.

EXAMINATIONS

The Examination vendor for Tennessee is PSI. You may review their Exam information, for registration and study materials offered, from our website or at the following links:

Website of PSI (Online Registration)
https://candidate.psiexams.com/index.jsp

“Candidate Information Bulletin” of PSI’s Exam Information [pdf]

All candidates obtaining a new “Contractor” license are required to take the “Business and Law” exam. The exam is open book and based upon the reference manual, “Contractor’s Guide to Business, Law and Project Management” the Tennessee edition, published by NASCLA. Information on ordering the book is available on both of the above referenced websites. The contractor applicant may have an owner or a full time employee act as the Qualifying Agent to take the exam. The license is issued to the entity supplying the financial statement.

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