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Georgia Standards of Practice, Laws, and Rules for Professional Land Surveyors

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Chapter 1

Overview of the Georgia Land Surveying Standards, Laws and Rules

Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board

The Georgia Legislature created the Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors, renamed the Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board under House Bill 476 in 2022, with the charge of safeguarding life, health, and property and promoting the public welfare in the licensing and regulation of engineering and land surveying practice in Georgia. The Board has the power to adopt rules, set minimum technical standards for land surveying, and investigate and discipline unauthorized, negligent, or incompetent practice. The Board reviews applications, administers examinations, licenses qualified applicants, and regulates the professional practice of licensees throughout the state. The Board consists of nine members appointed by the Governor of Georgia for five-year terms: six professional engineers, two professional land surveyors, and one member appointed from the public at large.

Georgia Statutory Authority

The Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) is a collection of state laws organized by subject area into a code made up of titles, chapters, and sections. Title 43, Chapter 15 of the O.C.G.A. was enacted by the Georgia Legislature in the interest of public health and safety to regulate the practice of engineering and land surveying in the State of Georgia. It is continuously updated by laws that create, amend, or repeal statutory material. Under this chapter, the Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board is responsible for reviewing applications, administering examinations, licensing qualified applicants, and regulating the practice of professional land surveying throughout the state. Selected provisions of O.C.G.A. Title 43, Chapter 15, along with the related plat-recording requirements of O.C.G.A. §15-6-67, are presented in Chapter 3 below.

Georgia Board Rules

The Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia are a compilation of the rules of Georgia's regulatory agencies. They are organized by department and chapter, with Department 180 representing the Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board. Chapter 180-7 of the Board's Rules, titled Technical Standards for Property Surveys, establishes the minimum degrees of accuracy, completeness, and quality required of surveys, maps, plats, and related writings prepared in connection with real property in Georgia. These rules are continuously updated by the Board. The Georgia Minimum Technical Standards are presented in Chapter 2 below, and selected additional Board Rules governing licensure qualifications, procedure, compliance, continuing competency, and the sealing of documents are presented in Chapter 3 below.

Georgia Board Disciplinary Authority

The Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board is charged with the duty of issuing licenses to those professional land surveyors it has determined to be qualified. Under O.C.G.A. §43-15-24, the Board may reprimand, fine, place on probation, suspend, or revoke the license of a professional land surveyor found to have committed fraud or deceit in obtaining licensure, gross negligence, incompetency, or misconduct in the practice of land surveying, or a violation of Title 43, Chapter 15 or the Board's rules. The Board is not authorized to settle boundary line disputes, establish costs for services, correct miscalculations or errors in a survey of real property, or settle contractual disputes. These types of problems are civil matters and are usually settled between the parties involved either in or out of the courts. If wrongdoing by a licensee is proven in court, the Board would like to have certified copies of any orders issued to prevent the wrongdoing from happening again and to take other action as considered appropriate. Likewise, the Board has no powers of restitution, as these are reserved for the courts.

Selected disciplinary case studies illustrating violations of Georgia's minimum technical standards, board rules, and state laws for land surveyors are presented in Chapter 4 below.

Chapter 2

Georgia Standards of Practice for Land Surveyors

Georgia Rules and Regulations, Department 180, Chapter 180-7: Technical Standards for Property Surveys

The following are excerpts from the Technical Standards for Property Surveys of the Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board, governing the minimum degrees of accuracy, completeness, and quality required of surveys, maps, plats, and related writings prepared in connection with real property in Georgia. If you wish to review the complete Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Chapter 180-7, please visit the website at:

<https://rules.sos.ga.gov/gac/180-7>

§Rule 180-7-.01: Preamble

In order to assure the public that proper and adequate surveys, maps, plats and writings are executed in connection with property, for whatever purpose, Technical Standards are hereby established. These standards establish the minimum degrees of accuracy, completeness and/or quality in the several areas of concern in order to be considered acceptable.

§Rule 180-7-.02: Land Titles and Location

1. (1)

- (a) Every parcel of land whose boundaries are surveyed by a land surveyor should be made conformable with the record title boundaries of such land. The land surveyor prior to making such a survey shall acquire the following prerequisite data: deeds, maps, certificates of title, centerline data, right of way data, adjacent descriptions, and other boundary line locations in the vicinity as necessary or available. The land surveyor shall compare and analyze all of the data obtained and make most nearly correct legal determination possible of the position of the boundaries of such parcel. He shall make a field survey traversing and connecting all available monuments appropriate or necessary for the location, and coordinate the facts of such survey with the pre-determined analysis. Not until then shall the monuments marking the corners or such parcel be set, and such monuments shall be set in accordance with the full and most satisfactory analysis obtainable. It shall be the responsibility of the land surveyor to evaluate conformity with adjacent tracts for overlaps and gores and to report the same on all maps, plats, and reports.

- (b) In the event that the land surveyor determines that it is not possible to make the survey of a parcel of land conformable with the record title of such land or that it is not possible to coordinate the predetermined analysis with the field survey, the surveyor shall explain the reason for his determination and shall denote in indisputable language, the source and reason for the corners, lines, and/or areas as shown on the plat. Such reasons may include, but are not limited to, the following: Disputed, property lines or areas; possession lines; acquiescence; adverse possession; unrecorded deeds; proposed purchase (new parcels); dubious and nebulous deed descriptions; and any adverse claim. This paragraph shall not be construed in any way to allow the surveyor to evade his/her responsibilities under the law.
2. (2) Any description written for conveyance or other purpose, defining land boundaries, shall be complete and accurate from a title standpoint, providing definite and unequivocal identification of the lines or boundaries, and definite recitals as to use or rights to be created through such descriptions. A description shall include the general location of the tract or lot with sufficient accuracy such that the tract can be readily located on the ground. The land lot, district, section, militia district number (in Headright Grant areas), city (if known to be within the city limits) and county shall be called out in said description. Description shall start at a point of commencement and/or a point of beginning that can be readily re-established. The description shall include the names of adjoining subdivision and/or property owners on all lines, as can be determined at the time of commencement of the survey through public records such as the county tax assessor and/or clerk of court records. (A title search is not required for this.) A metes and bounds description shall describe all courses in logical sequence around a tract or lot in a clockwise direction such that the ending point is the beginning point, the exception to this would be a description for a linear easement. The monument at each corner shall be described. All lines adjacent to streets, roads, or other rights-of-way shall be referenced to these and all pertinent distances and curve data shall be listed (arc length, chord length, chord bearing and radius) in addition to the parcel's area. All descriptions, being a form of report, shall bear the land surveyor's name, address, seal and signature.

§Rule 180-7-.03: Measurements: Horizontal

Measurements shall be made with instruments capable of attaining the required accuracy for the particular problem involved. Angles and distances shall be measured to obtain an accuracy of not less than 1:10,000 in urban or suburban areas and 1:5,000 in rural areas except as follows:

- (a) The allowable positional tolerance of property corners with respect to each other within a given survey may not be greater than:
1. 0.1 foot in urban blocks wherein buildings can be erected along the property line, or where high land values so warrant;
 2. 0.25 foot in suburban subdivisions interior blocks and/or suburban lots or parcels;

3. 0.50 in rural areas, except as follows:

- (i) Closer tolerance is required where land value in rural areas is increased by adjacency to major highway intersections or thruway complexes, building congestion, oil or mineral rights or any other reason;
- (ii) When a parcel of land is extremely long or narrow, closer tolerance is required on the shorter narrow dimensions to qualify acceptable corner positioning in relation to the narrow width;
- (iii) Where original surveys in rural areas were made with a compass, retracement may be made by compass in order to "follow the footsteps" of the original surveyor. However, such retracement also must be reduced to a non-magnetic traverse so that the error of closure as specified above is obtained.

§Rule 180-7-.04: Topography and Vertical Measurements

(1) Definitions. As used in this rule, the following definitions apply.

- (a) Field run precision leveling. A circuit of levels between precise benchmarks or a circuit closed upon the initial benchmark shall not differ more than 0.02 foot multiplied by the square root of the number of miles in the circuit, and in no case to exceed 0.05 foot.
- (b) Field run local or temporary benchmark leveling. Levels run for control to topographic mapping of a site or project shall have an error of closure of not less than 0.1 foot per square root of the number of miles. The surveyor and client may agree upon different precision specifications that are deemed to be more applicable to individual situations.
- (c) Positional check. A position whose location and elevation is determined by traditional or GNSS surveying equipment independently of the remainder of the survey effort or data collection exercise. When determining where to measure positional checks, the surveyor may use whatever approach and location choice that is deemed to be most applicable and feasible for the individual project. Running cross sections through a surveyed area is considered to be the most desirable, though most intensive, positional check approach. Positional checks should not be limited to easily visible and accessible areas but should include a reasonable portion in areas with ground cover and within the interior of the project. If firms or individuals are employed in the production of topographic or elevation surveys which are not regular employees under the direct supervision of the surveyor who is responsible for the work, special care must be given to providing adequate Direct Supervisory Control as defined by Rule 180-6-.03(6). Production of contour maps and elevation data to typical survey precision or for use in applications typical for surveying works, and the advertising thereof, is considered to be the practice of Land Surveying and must be performed by properly licensed individuals and authorized firms.

- (2) This rule applies to all topographic maps and plats, delineated either by contours or by points, digital terrain models, or other geospatial format with indicated elevation data, whether prepared from traditional surveying techniques or other remote sensing techniques including but not limited to aerial photography, Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR), or any other remote sensing technology whether implemented from fixed stations, vehicles, manned aircraft, or unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and also includes existing data obtained from public agencies.
- (3) All drawings or electronic work product which depict or provide contours or elevation data shall contain the following information:
- (a) The vertical datum of the elevations provided or reported, how the datum was verified or placed on the site (whether by level loop, GNSS observations, published benchmark, etc.),
 - (b) The type of survey performed to produce contours or elevation data (see paragraph 4 for each type).
 - (c) The contour interval or vertical precision. Contours and elevation data provided shall be of such accuracy that no more than 10% of the area covered shall be in error by more than one half (1/2) of the contour interval shown; or such that no part of the surveyed area fails to achieve a 95% confidence level in the three-dimensional positioning provided. If initial results do not confirm required accuracy, the surveyor may either:
 - 1. collect replacement data and retest for precision
 - 2. identify areas which are not reliable in accordance with subparagraph e below
 - 3. or increase the contour interval until measured precision conforms
 - (d) Depiction of the location of at least 3 fixed positions which can be used to situate future works into the vertical datum of the survey. Such fixed positions should include at least one stable survey monument and can also include fixed artificial positions such as fire hydrant bolts, pipe inverts, concrete surfaces, or finished floor elevations of structures.
 - (e) A clear explanation and delineation of any portion of the contours or elevation data which is not certified or reliable, such as areas which are obscured, shadowed, or otherwise which cannot be certified to the required mapping precision. This shall also apply to data which was obtained from a public agency or other lawful source. The following statement shall accompany any such obscured or uncertified topographic map or portion thereof: "The topographic and elevation data shown hereon was obtained from (state source) and is not certified as correct by this surveyor. Users of this data do so at their own risk".
 - (f) All pertinent data that may be required particular to the type of survey as set forth in paragraph 4).

(4) The following types of elevation surveys are envisioned by this rule. Should any equipment or methodology be considered which is not clearly addressed, the most applicable type shall apply.

(a) Field run topographic surveys. Traditional surveying equipment and techniques are employed to produce a contour map. Field run topographic surveys must state the date(s) of field work and the equipment used. Additional positional checks are not required for field run topographic surveys.

(b) Traditional stereo photogrammetric maps. Traditional or digital photography of sufficient specifications is obtained by a manned aircraft. Contours and features are generated using stereoscopes or software. A minimum of four (4) three-dimensional ground control targets or photo-identifiable positions (known as "control points") shall be surveyed and incorporated into the preparation of such maps, and more are required as dictated by project size, photo overlap, and height of camera. The surveyor responsible for the accuracy of the survey shall perform positional checks at a number of locations that is at least that of the number of control points required, and shall report the vertical accuracy of each point or an average of the points checked. Such photogrammetric maps shall state the date of photography, the height flown, the firm or individual who performed portions of the survey, including which portions, if not the surveyor or firm issuing the map, and the results of the positional checks by the surveyor either listed individually or as an average.

(c) Ground based remote sensing (LIDAR, laser scanning, etc.). LIDAR equipment is used either from motor vehicles or fixed tripods to survey an area. Control points shall be placed and surveyed sufficiently along the perimeter of the mapped area to ensure adequate confidence level of the contours or elevation data. Positional checks shall be measured at positions deemed relevant by the surveyor who shall report the vertical accuracy of each point or an average of the points checked. Surveys and reports produced under this section shall provide the type of equipment used, the date(s) of data collection, the firm or individual who performed portions of the survey, including which portions, if not the surveyor or firm issuing the map, and the results of the positional checks by the surveyor either listed individually or as an average.

(d) Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) data collection. LIDAR, optical camera, or other remote sensing equipment is used to collect data used to prepare contour maps or elevation data. The surveyor shall survey ground control targets or photo-identifiable positions (known as "control points") along the flight lines of the UAS sufficient to provide adequate three-dimensional constraint of the data used to prepare the contours or elevation data.

1. The surveyor shall perform positional checks along the perimeter of and within the surveyed area. The minimum number of such positional checks shall be determined as follows:

(i) For project size 1-10 acres, a minimum of 4 positional checks are required

- (ii) (For project size 10-25 acres, a minimum of 8 positional checks are required
 - (iii) For project size 25-100 acres, a minimum of 12 positional checks are required
 - (iv) For project size 100-200 acres, a minimum of 24 positional checks are required
 - (v) For project size 300 acres or more, a minimum of 36 positional checks are required
2. Topography or elevation data produced in this manner must provide the date(s) of UAS data collection, the type of UAS including model or other identifying description, the type of LIDAR sensor or camera used, how many ground control points were used, the firm or individual who performed portions of the survey, including which portions, if not the surveyor or firm issuing the map, and the results of the positional checks by the surveyor either listed individually or as an average.
- (5) Incorporation of publicly available contour or elevation data. When the surveyor incorporates contour or elevation data into a survey, map, or electronic work product, and such data is from a public source which is exempt from professional licensing and oversight by O.C.G.A. 43-15-29(b)(7), the surveyor must state the source of the data (such as the specific agency or department), the date of data acquisition if known, the contour interval shown, the type of collection used for such data (such as photogrammetric, LIDAR, etc.), and any other pertinent information available. The work product (whether map, electronic drawing file, or other terrain model format) shall include the following statement: "The topographic and elevation data shown hereon was obtained from (state source) and is not certified as correct by this surveyor. Users of this data do so at their own risk". Failure to provide this statement and the required data shall be both a violation of this rule and an acceptance of responsibility for the depicted work by the surveyor. The surveyor may also identify which portion(s) of elevation data is from a public source in situations where the surveyor has also verified some of the data provided.

§Rule 180-7-.06: Coordinates and Triangulation

- (1) The use of state plane coordinates may be incorporated in any land survey.
- (2) State plane coordinates used and shown on surveys shall meet the requirements of O.C.G.A. Sections 44-4-1 through 44-4-31.

§Rule 180-7-.07: Maps and Plats

All maps, plats and similar documents which depict and describe real property boundaries shall comply with all requirements of O.C.G.A. § 15-6-67 and conform to the following minimum standards and specifications: The sealing of documents, reports, preliminary subdivision plats, topographic surveys, and other drawings that do not depict and describe real property boundaries shall be subject to Rule 180-12 (Sealing of documents). Preliminary subdivision plats shall state the source of the boundary information shown thereon and also bear a note to the effect that it is a preliminary subdivision plat that has been prepared for the purpose of review and approval, is not to be recorded, and is not to be used to convey property. Topographic surveys shall state the source of the boundary information shown thereon and also bear a note to the effect that the surveyor's certification extends only to the topographic and/or geospatial aspects shown thereon, and that the topographic survey does not constitute a boundary survey and is not to be recorded or used to convey title or interest in the property.

(a) Material.

1. Any such surveys, maps, or plats shall be clearly legible;
2. The minimum line widths and letters or character heights delineated on such maps or plats shall be sufficient to be legible when copied or scanned at a resolution of 300 d.p.i.

(b) Required Data. The maps or plats shall have a title or name, and shall also provide the following information:

1. The name of the entity who authorized the survey, the entity for whom the survey is prepared, or the subject of the survey such as a subdivision name or site name;
2. The county, municipality; land district and land lot (if within an area of Georgia that is divided into land lots and districts); Georgia Militia District, Reserve, or other qualifying notation (if within an area of Georgia that is not divided into land lots and districts); and subdivision, if the property lies within a particular subdivision;
3. The date(s) of field work, plat preparation and all subsequent revisions including a brief explanation of each revision;
4. A square box three inches by three inches shall be placed in the upper left-hand corner of the map or plat, which shall be left blank and reserved for recording information by the Clerk of court;
5. The scale, stated and shown graphically;
6. The name, address, telephone number, and registration number of the registered land surveyor who prepared and sealed the survey and, if working for a firm, the name and Certificate of Authorization Number of the firm that prepared the survey (the address and telephone number of the firm are acceptable in lieu of the individual surveyor's address and telephone number) or the statement that he is the county surveyor and is not required by law to be a registered surveyor; and

7. All maps or plats are to contain the applicable Surveyor Certification from O.C.G.A. § 15-6-67(b)(2) and signature in accordance with Board Rule 180-12-.02, in order to be a valid and recordable map or plat. The original maps or plats shall be retained by the land surveyor or land surveying firm in either hard copy or electronic file, along with all applicable work material which includes, but is not limited to, field notes, field data, computations, coordinate data, electronic drawing files and property research for a period of six years from the more recent date on the map or plat.

(c) Size. Maps and plats shall be of a size that is commonly available. The map or plat shall be drawn to a scale in feet commonly found on an engineer's scale or to a scale in chains commonly found on a forester's scale. Scans or images created electronically shall be at full size and legible at a resolution of 300 d.p.i., so that future users may be able to plot all or part of the map or plat at full size and resolution. The issue of printed reductions of maps or plats which meet this requirement is allowable.

(d) Required Content. All maps and plats shall be made in a professional manner and in accordance with the standards of good drafting procedures and shall show the following information, as specified:

1. The direction and distance from a point of reference to a point on the boundary of the individual survey, and such additional data as may be required to relocate the boundary point from the point of reference with the same degree of accuracy required of the parcel surveyed. The point of reference shall be an established, monumented position which can be identified or relocated from maps, plats or other documents on public record, including state plane coordinates when applicable. The point of reference may lie on or within the boundary of the survey;

2. Bearings of all lines of the boundary or lot lines, and distances of all boundary or lot lines, and area of the parcels expressed in acres or square feet. All bearings, distances, and areas shown on the survey shall be based upon the measurements of the surveyor, except that both the measured and the record measurements may be shown if the surveyor feels that such comparison is necessary or otherwise required, in which case a clear distinction shall be made as to which are measured and which are record. Distances that are shown for proximity purposes only and have not been measured shall be clearly labeled as "approximate";

3. The closure precision of the field survey as the ratio of one foot to the traversed distance in which an error of one foot would occur, angular error, and a statement as to the method of adjustment. The field closure stated shall be the actual linear error of closure calculated from the surveyor's actual field measurements, whether a closed traverse or otherwise, and shall not be a generalization.

If the surveyor determines that a closure precision statement is not appropriate for the survey because a substantial portion of the field measurements were obtained using Global Positioning Systems, then a note of precision or positional accuracy may be placed in compliance with Rule 180-7-.09; or if the surveyor feels that a closure precision statement is not appropriate for the survey because redundant linear measurements were used to verify accuracy, the calculated positional tolerance shall be stated and shall comply with Rule 180-7-.03;

4. The closure precision of the data shown on the map or plat. The closure may be stated as follows: "This map or plat has been calculated for closure and is found to be accurate within one foot in _____ feet". The closure precision placed on the survey shall be based on an actual map closure that has been independently calculated by the surveyor by using the bearings and distances from the face of the plat, and shall not be a generalization. All lots or parcels shown on the plat shall be map checked for closure and area. In the case of a subdivision plat or a survey that depicts more than one tract, the closure precision stated may be that of the exterior or an average of the tracts;
5. The width and the former widths, if pertinent, of easements or rights-of-way adjacent to or crossing the property;
6. Apparent encroachments and observed evidence of human burials or cemeteries;
7. In the case of curved lines, the curve shall be defined by curve data to include the radius, arc length, chord bearing, and distance of regular curves. Chord distances and directions shall be given for irregular curves;
8. All land lot lines, land district lines, land section lines, and city, county, and state boundaries intersecting or adjacent to the surveyed property indicated by lines drawn upon the map or plat with appropriate words and figures, it shall be acceptable for the surveyor to label such lines as "apparent", "accepted", or "approximate", or other such qualifying language as the surveyor considers necessary or appropriate;
9. All corner markers and markers of pertinent reference points shall be fully described and indicated as to the material or types, size or dimensions, and whether set, found, or replaced. In the case of badly disturbed or deteriorated monuments that are replace for the purpose of position preservation, the survey shall indicate the size, type, and material of both the found monument and the monument with which it was replaced;
10. An arrow to indicate the principal meridian and a notation as to the reference of bearings to magnetic north, astronomic north, record or grid north. A grid north reference shall indicate the zone. Record north shall reference the document or survey to which the meridian is oriented and the line of the survey to which the "record bearing" was applied;
11. All linear distances shown on maps or plats shall be expressed as follows:
 - a. Distances shall be horizontal distances.
 - b. Distances shall be stated as "ground" distances (which shall also be the basis for any corresponding area calculations). Should it be necessary to state "grid" distances, both "ground" and "grid" distances shall be stated, along with the grid scale factor used, the elevation scale factor used, and the combined factor used.
 - c. When expressed in feet, the definition of the foot shall be based on the conversion of the meter equals 3.280839895 feet or 1 foot equals 30.48 centimeters. Nothing in this rule shall prohibit the stating of distances in meters or units other than feet, provided that a conversion factor to the foot must be stated;

12. All angular directions shall be represented in degrees, minutes, and seconds. All angular directions shall be referenced to the meridian of the survey and be denoted starting with the letter N or S (for North or South), and the degrees, minutes, and seconds, followed by the letter E or W (for East or West). All bearings and distances around the perimeter of the property shall progress consistently in either a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction so as to form a closed shape. Azimuths, or interior (or exterior) angles may also be shown for reference but not in lieu of bearings and shall also be stated in degrees, minutes, and seconds;

13. A statement to indicate the type of equipment used to obtain the linear and angular measurements used in the preparation of the map or plat, or the proper notations required by Rule 180-7-.09 when GPS equipment is used in performing the survey;

14. The names of adjacent property owners on all lines, along with a notation as to what documents were reviewed for each adjacent property as required by Rule 180-7-.02(1)(a). Such notation may be the deed book and page of the record title description, recorded plats, and other documents or surveys that were obtained through the course of the survey. In cases where the adjacent property is a recorded subdivision, it is sufficient to state the name, phase if applicable, and recording information of the subdivision plat, along with lot lines and lot numbers. (A title search is not required for this.);

15. All water boundaries or similar irregular boundaries shown in sufficient detail to clearly identify the surveyed tract and the adjoining tract;

16. The character of any and all evidence of possession along or related to boundary lines clearly depicted and stated, and overlaps and gores in property lines along or within the surveyed property in compliance with Rule 180-7-.02;

17. Any features within or along the boundary located as requested by the client, or in conformity with the rules or requirements of any mortgagor or insurer, provided the technical standards of such rules or requirements are not less than those provided for by this chapter;

18. The surveyor shall state the type of survey depicted, whether it is a retracement survey of an existing tract (or combination of tracts), a subdivision plat, a division from a parent tract, a depiction of a disputed area or other special purpose limited survey, a utility or easement survey, or other classification of land survey as may be deemed necessary. The source of title description of the property depicted shall be stated, along with the name of the current owner(s) as indicated by the tax records or deeds.

§Rule 180-7-.09: Global Positioning Systems

It shall be acceptable practice to incorporate the use of Global Positioning Systems (commonly known as GPS) equipment into any survey. The precision of all measurements made with such equipment must, at a minimum, meet all other precision standards required otherwise by law or rules under Chapter 180-7. When using GPS equipment in the course of a survey, the Land Surveyor shall state on the face of the plat, or within the report in cases where there is no plat, the following:

- a. A note stating what portion (or all) of the survey was performed using GPS equipment.
- b. The type of GPS equipment used, including manufacturer and model number, and whether single or dual frequency receivers were used.
- c. The type of GPS survey that was performed, such as static, real time kinematic ("RTK"), network adjusted real time kinematic, etc.
- d. A note that discloses the precision of the GPS work done, either in relative positional accuracy, vector closure, or other mathematical expression chosen by the Land Surveyor.

Chapter 3

Georgia Board Rules and State Law for Land Surveyors

Official Code of Georgia Annotated, Title 43, Chapter 15, and Georgia Rules and Regulations, Department 180

The following are excerpts from the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, Title 43, Chapter 15, and the Rules and Regulations of the Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board, governing the licensure, practice, and regulation of professional land surveyors in Georgia. If you wish to review the complete Official Code of Georgia Annotated and Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, please visit the websites at:

<https://rules.sos.ga.gov/gac/180>

<https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-43/chapter-15/>

§Chapter 180-10: Compliance and Enforcement

(1) As used in O.C.G.A. § 43-15-23.1(c), the phrase "responsible charge" means the independent control, direction and supervision, by the use of initiative, skill and independent judgment of the practice of land surveying as defined in O.C.G.A. § 43-15-2(6).

(2) In order to be considered eligible for a certificate of authorization, any individual who shall be in responsible charge of the practice of land surveying for the firm, corporation, professional corporation, partnership, association or other entity shall be a full-time employee of the firm, corporation, professional corporation, partnership, association or other entity, regularly engaged in the practice of professional land surveying. Such individual shall not be:

(a) available to perform land surveying services only on a part-time, independent contractor basis at the call of such firm, corporation, partnership, association or other business entity; or

(b) available on an if-and-when needed consulting basis; or,

(c) not actively practicing land surveying with such firm, corporation, partnership, association or other business entity.

(3) The practice of land surveying for any firm, corporation, partnership, association or other business entity shall not be considered to be under the direction of a land surveyor unless such land surveyor bears a continuing bonafide relation thereto and has such authority from the governing body of such business entity as would result in its being legally liable for all such land surveyor's professional acts and judgments.

§Chapter 180-11: Continuing Professional Competency

Rule 180-11-.02 - Definitions

(a) Professional Development Hour. A contact hour (nominal) of instruction or presentation. The common denominator for other units of credit. The numerical unit of measure used in calculating compliance with this Chapter is a Professional Development Hour or PDH. All units and hours attributed to the courses and activities acceptable in satisfying this Chapter's requirement are translated into PDH's by operation of Rule 180-11-.04 of this Chapter.

(b) Course/Activity. Any qualifying course or activity with a clear purpose and objective which will maintain, improve, or expand the skills and knowledge relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.

(c) Continuing Education Course/Unit.

1. Continuing Education Course. A course, seminar, workshop or other professional or technical presentation or activity taken or attended for the purpose of maintaining, improving, or expanding the skills and knowledge relevant to the registrant's practice.

2. Continuing Education Unit. The unit of measure attributed to Continuing Education Courses is a Continuing Education Unit or CEU. Ten (10) hours of class in a Continuing Education Course equals one (1) Continuing Education Unit.

(d) College Courses/Unit Measure.

1. College Course. When used in this Chapter, a College course is a technical course in a curriculum which has been accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, or a technical course that is specifically relevant to engineering or surveying, which is offered by a college, university, or other institution.

(e) College/Unit Semester/Quarter Hour. A College/Unit Semester/ Quarter Hour is a unit of measure attributed by the offering college, university, or institution, to a particular course, which is translated into PDH's by operation of Rule 180-11-.04 of this Chapter.

(f) Registrant. When used in this Chapter, a person who is licensed as either a professional engineer or a land surveyor is deemed to be a registrant.

(g) Dual Registrant. When used in this Chapter, a person who is licensed as both a professional engineer and a land surveyor is deemed to be a dual registrant.

(h) Board. The State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors.

(i) Sponsor. A sponsor is an organization, college, university, institution, or individual which provides a course/activity for which the professional engineer or land surveyor seeks to obtain Professional Development Hour credit.

(j) Successful Completion of a Course/Activity. Satisfactory completion of a course/activity taken for the purpose of obtaining PDH's means fulfilling the course or activity's requirements and obtaining a certificate of completion or its equivalent

Rule 180-11-.03 – Requirements

(1) Professional Engineers. Every professional engineer is required to obtain fifteen (15) PDH's each twelve (12) month (Annual) renewal period. If a professional engineer exceeds the requirements in any annual renewal period, a maximum of seven and one half (7.5) PDH's may be carried forward into the subsequent renewal period.

(2) Land Surveyors. Every land surveyor is required to obtain seven and one half (7.5) PDH's each twelve (12) month annual renewal period. In addition, every land surveyor must ensure that, once every two (2) years, at least three (3) PDH's in "Minimum Technical Standards" be included in their PDH's acquired. The "Minimum Technical Standards" material shall include a review of all board rules and applicable state laws pertaining to the practice of land surveying specific to the state of Georgia. If a land surveyor exceeds the requirements in any annual period, a maximum of three and three quarters (3.75) PDH's may be carried forward into the subsequent renewal period.

(3) Dual Registrants. The person with a dual license is required to obtain fifteen (15) PDH's each twelve (12) month (Annual) renewal period. If a dual registrant exceeds the requirement in any annual renewal period, a maximum of seven and one half (7.5) PDH's may be carried forward into the subsequent renewal period. At least one-third (1/3) of the PDH's in a renewal period must be obtained in engineering, and one-third (1/3) in surveying. The remaining units may be in either field, at the discretion of the registrant.

(4) PDH's may be earned as follows:

(a) Successful completion of college courses.

(b) Successful completion of continuing education courses.

(c) Successful completion of correspondence, televised, videotaped, audiotaped, and other short courses/tutorials taken for the purpose of maintaining, improving, or expanding the skills and knowledge relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.

(d) Presenting or attending seminars, in-house courses, workshops, or professional or technical presentations made at meetings, conventions or conferences which are relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.

(e) Teaching or instructing in any area relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.

(f) Authoring published papers, articles, or books in any area relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.

(g) Active participation in professional or technical societies. (For professional engineers only).

(h) Receiving patents in any area relevant to the land surveyor's or professional engineer's practice.

Rule 180-11-.06 - Recordkeeping

To ensure compliance of continuing education, the Board shall randomly audit a number of registrants. Registrants licensed by way of examination or comity, shall be exempt from continuing education requirements for their first renewal period. Maintaining records to be used to support PDH's Claimed, is the responsibility of the registrant. Records required include:

(a) A log showing the type of activity, sponsoring organization, location, duration, instructor's or speaker's name, and PDH's earned.

(b) Attendance verification records in the form of completion certificates, or other documents supporting evidence of attendance; or records as maintained by professional organizations, or other similar repositories designated by the Board.

(c) The log and records described in Rule 180-11-.06(a) and (b) must be maintained for a period of four years and copies may be requested by the Board for audit verification purposes.

Rule 180-11-.07 - Exemptions

A registrant is exempt from the professional development education requirements under any of the following circumstances:

(1) Registrants licensed by way of examination or comity, shall be exempt for their first renewal period.

(2) A professional engineer serving on temporary duty in the armed forces of the United States for a period of time exceeding one hundred twenty (120) consecutive days shall be exempt from obtaining 15 of the professional development hours required during that biennial period in which the majority of the days of duty fall. Likewise, a land surveyor shall be exempt from obtaining 7.5 professional development hours during that biennial period.

(3) Registrants experiencing physical disability, illness, or other extenuating circumstances as approved by the Board may be exempt. Supporting documentation must be furnished to the Board.

(4) Registrants over the age of 65 who have applied for an inactive license, who list their occupation as "Retired" or "Inactive" on the Board-approved renewal form, and who further certify that they are no longer receiving any remuneration from providing professional engineering or land surveying services shall be exempt from professional development hours. In the event such a person elects to return to active practice of professional engineering or land surveying, professional development hours must be earned as described in "180-11-.08 Reinstatement" before returning to active practice.

(5) Individuals who qualify for exemption by way of paragraph (4) above may continue to use the words Professional Engineer (or P.E.), or Land Surveyor (or L.S.) as appropriate, after their names as long as they continue to fall under the restrictions specified and are not actively practicing engineering or land surveying.

(6) Registrants over the age of 65 who are engaged in the active practice of their profession and who have held a valid Georgia license for the previous 25 consecutive years shall be exempt from professional development requirements.

§Chapter 180-12: Sealing of Documents

(1) The term, "documents," as used herein shall mean engineering and/or land surveying work issued in the form of plans, drawings, maps, surveys, reports, specifications, design information, and calculations, including such work issued in digital form.

(2) The term "issued" as used herein shall mean documents in the final form which bear the seal, signature and date of the registrant and the entity's Certificate of Authorization Name, Authorization Number and Expiration date of the COA (as required by GA Law 43-15-23. Practice of professional engineering by or through firm, corporation, or other entity for COA requirements.)

(3) The registrant shall seal, sign and date and provide COA name, Authorization Number and expiration date of the COA all original final documents which are issued to a client or any public agency. The sealing of documents by the registrant shall certify that the work was performed by the registrant or under the direct supervisory control of the registrant on a daily basis. For engineering documents, the date of signature shall be placed immediately under the seal and signature.

(4) No registrant shall issue or allow to be issued draft, incomplete, preliminary, in-progress, or for-review document or any type that contains the seal of the registrant unless such document does not contain a signature. Further, any such draft shall display the date of issue and a notation under or adjacent to the seal in bold lettering, such as "PRELIMINARY", "DRAFT", "NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION or "FOR REVIEW ONLY," which clearly identifies the purpose for which the document is issued. Any document containing a seal, signature, date and COA information as required in (2) above shall be considered to be issued.

(5) Seals, signatures, dates, COA Information and/or other notations required by this Rule shall be placed on original documents such that the seal, signature, date, COA Information and/or notations, will be reproduced when copies or scans are made. A "facsimile signature" that is to be placed on a property survey map or plat in accordance with O.C.G.A. 15-6-67 may be a scanned image of an actual signature or a computer generated signature, and must be kept in the strict control of the land surveyor.

(6) Each drawing sheet, whether bound or unbound, shall be sealed, signed and dated by the registrant(s) responsible for the work on that sheet and contain the entity's COA information. If necessary due to number of sheets, in lieu of providing a seal, signature, date, and COA information on each drawing sheet, a summary sheet may be included in the form of a clearly drafted table or other format that identifies each registrants seal, signature, date, and COA information and which includes a narrative that clearly describes the element of work for which each registrant is responsible and indicates the most current version of each sheet. This summary sheet shall be included within the final documents. If a document is sealed, signed and dated and contains the entity's COA information by more than one registrant, the portion of the work for which each registrant is responsible shall be clearly noted.

(7) Each document that is sealed, signed and dated by a registrant shall contain the name, address, and contact information of the firm or sole practitioner certifying the work. Each document shall have the entity's COA information included.

(8) Documents as defined in Paragraph (1) that are transmitted electronically beyond the direct control of the licensee shall have the computer-generated seal removed from the original file, unless signed with an electronic signature as defined in Paragraph (9) of this Rule. After removal of the seal the electronic media shall have the following inserted in lieu of the signature and date: "This document originally issued and sealed by (name of sealer), (license number), on (Date of sealing) and the entity's COA Information. This medium shall not be considered a certified document." Hardcopy documents containing the original seal, signature, date and entity's COA information of the licensee may be duplicated by photocopy or electronic scanning processes and distributed either in hardcopy or electronic medium. The scanned digital files of certified documents are not subject to the requirements of this Paragraph. The electronic transmission beyond the direct control of the licensee of CAD, vector or other files subject to easy editing are subject to the requirements of this paragraph. Easy editing is based on the file consisting of separate elements that can be individually modified or deleted.

(9) Documents to be electronically transmitted beyond the direct control of the licensee that are signed using an electronic signature shall contain the authentication procedure in a secure mode and a list of the hardware, software and parameters used to prepare the document(s). Secure mode means that the authentication procedure has protective measures to prevent alteration or overriding of the authentication procedure. This paragraph does not apply to property survey maps and plats governed by O.C.G.A. 15-6-67 which may be submitted in an electronic file format that is regulated by the Georgia Superior Court Clerks Cooperative Authority. The term "electronic signature" shall be an electronic authentication process that is attached to or logically associated with an electronic document. The electronic signature shall be:

- (a) Unique to the licensee using it;
- (b) Capable of verification;
- (c) Under the sole control of the licensee; and
- (d) Linked to a document in such a manner that the electronic signature is invalidated if any data in the document is changed.

§O.C.G.A. §43-15-1: Definitions

As used in this chapter, the term:

- (1) "Board" means the Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board created in subsection (a) of Code Section 43-15-3.
- (2) "Certificate" means any certificate issued under Code Section 43-15-8 or 45-15-13.
- (3) "Certificate of registration" means any certificate issued under Code Section 43-15-9 or 43-15-16.

(4) "Current certificate of registration" means a certificate of registration which has not expired or been revoked and the rights under which have not been suspended or otherwise restricted by the board.

(4.1) "Current license" means a license issued under Code Section 43-15-13 which has not expired or been revoked and the rights under which have not been suspended or otherwise restricted by the board.

(5) "Engineer-in-training" means an individual who meets the qualifications for and to whom the board has duly issued an engineer-in-training certificate.

(5.1) "Executive director" means the executive director appointed by the Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board pursuant to Code Section 43-15-3.

(6) "Land surveying" means any service, work, or practice, the adequate performance of which requires the application of special knowledge of the principles of mathematics, the related physical and applied sciences, and the requirements of relevant law in the evaluation and location of property rights, as applied to:

(A) Measuring and locating lines, angles, elevations, natural and manmade features in the air, on the surface of the earth, in underground works, and on the beds of bodies of water, for the purpose of determining and reporting positions, topography, areas, and volumes;

(B) Establishing or reestablishing, locating or relocating, or setting or resetting of monumentation for any property, easement, or right of way boundaries, or the boundary of any estate or interest therein;

(C) The platting and layout of lands and subdivisions thereof, including alignment and grades of streets and roads, excluding thoroughfares;

(D) The design, platting, and layout, incidental to subdivisions of any tract of land by a land surveyor, of:

(i) Grading plans and site plans;

(ii) Erosion and sediment control plans, including detention ponds, provided that no impoundment shall be designed on a live (perennial) stream; provided, further, that such detention ponds:

(I) Contain no more than five acre-feet of water storage at maximum pool (top of dam) or are no more than ten feet in height for a dry storage pond;

(II) Are no more than six feet in height for a permanent (wet) storage pond; or

(III) Contain no more than three acre-feet of water storage at maximum pool (top of dam) if the height is more than ten feet but less than 13 feet for a dry storage pond;

(iii) Storm-water management plans and facilities, including hydrologic studies and temporary sediment basins, provided that the contributing drainage area shall not be larger than 100 acres; and

(iv) Extension of existing water distribution piping and gravity sewers, eight inches in diameter or smaller, provided that off-site length shall not exceed 1,000 feet, the design and construction of which shall conform to the local government ordinances and regulations, and such extensions shall be subjected to the review and approval of a local government which has been delegated approval authority by the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources,

provided that the design of any storm-water management plans, facilities, water distribution lines, and sanitary sewer collection systems shall be performed only by such professional land surveyors who are qualified to do so as provided in Code Section 43-15-13.1;

(E) Conducting horizontal and vertical control surveys, layout or stake-out of proposed construction, or the preparation of as-built surveys which relate to property, easement, or right of way boundaries;

(F) Utilization of measurement devices or systems, such as aerial photogrammetry, geodetic positioning systems, land information systems, or similar technology for evaluation or location of property, easement, or right of way boundaries; or

(G) The preparation and perpetuation of maps, record plats, drawings, exhibits, field notes, or property descriptions representing these services.

(7) "Land surveyor intern" means an individual who meets the qualifications for and to whom the board has duly issued a certificate as a land surveyor-in-training.

(8) "Person" means an individual or any legal or commercial entity, including, by way of illustration and not limitation, a partnership, corporation, association, or governmental agency.

(9) "Professional engineer" means an individual who is qualified, by reason of knowledge of mathematics, the physical sciences, and the principles by which mechanical properties of matter are made useful to mankind in structures and machines, acquired by professional education and practical experience, to engage in the practice of professional engineering and who possesses a current certificate of registration as a professional engineer issued by the board.

(10) "Professional engineering" means the practice of the arts and sciences, known as engineering, by which mechanical properties of matter are made useful to mankind in structures and machines and shall include any professional service, such as consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, designing, or responsible supervision of construction or operation, in connection with any public or private utilities, structures, buildings, machines, equipment, processes, works, or projects, wherein the public welfare or the safeguarding of life, health, or property is concerned or involved, when such professional service requires the application of engineering principles and data and training in the application of mathematical and physical sciences. An individual shall be construed to practice or offer to practice professional engineering, within the meaning of this chapter, who by verbal claim, sign, advertisement, letterhead, card, or in any other way represents or holds himself or herself out as a professional engineer or engineer or as able or qualified to perform engineering services or who performs any of the services set out in this paragraph. Nothing contained in this chapter shall include the work ordinarily performed by individuals who operate or maintain machinery or equipment.

(11) "Professional land surveyor" or "registered land surveyor" or "land surveyor" means an individual who is qualified to engage in the practice of land surveying and who possesses a current license as a professional land surveyor issued by the board. An individual shall be construed to practice or offer to practice land surveying within the meaning of this chapter who by verbal claim, sign, advertisement, letterhead, cards, or in any other way represents or holds himself or herself out as able or qualified to perform or who does perform land surveying services.

(12) "Professional structural engineer" means a professional engineer with specialized knowledge and expertise in the practice of structural engineering. Such person shall be qualified by reason of knowledge of mathematics, physical sciences, and principles by which mechanical properties of matter are made useful to man in structures, acquired through professional education and practical experience, to engage in the practice of structural engineering. Such persons shall further possess a current certificate of registration as a professional structural engineer issued by the board.

(13) "Structural engineering" means the practice of a specialized branch of professional engineering involving the design or analysis of designated structures as defined by the board, and shall include any professional service, such as consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, designing, analyzing, or responsible supervision of construction or operation, in connection with any public or private designated structures, wherein the public welfare or the safeguarding of life, health, or property is concerned or involved, when such professional service requires the application of structural engineering principles and data and training in the application of mathematical and physical sciences. A person shall be construed to practice or offer to practice structural engineering, within the meaning of this chapter, who by verbal claim, sign, advertisement, letterhead, card, or in any other way represents or holds himself or herself out as a professional structural engineer or as able or qualified to perform structural engineering services or who does perform any of the services set out in this paragraph.

§O.C.G.A. §43-15-6: General powers of board; injunctions; continuing education

(a) In carrying out this chapter, in addition to other powers conferred upon it under this chapter, the board shall have the power:

(1) To adopt and enforce regulations implementing this chapter, including regulations governing the professional conduct of those individuals registered by it;

(2) Under the hand of its chairperson or his or her delegate and the seal of the board, to subpoena witnesses and compel their attendance and to require thereby the production of books, papers, documents, and other things relevant to such investigation in order to investigate conduct subject to regulation by the board; the chairperson or the member of the board who is his or her delegate may administer oaths to witnesses appearing before the board; and the board may secure the enforcement of its subpoenas in the manner provided by Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act";

(3) To maintain in its name an action for injunctive or other appropriate legal or equitable relief to remedy violations of this chapter and, in pursuing equitable remedies, it shall not be necessary that the board allege or prove that it has no adequate remedy at law; and

(4) Through the executive director, to hire investigators for the purpose of conducting investigations. Any person so employed shall be considered to be a peace officer and shall have all powers, duties, and status of a peace officer of this state; provided, however, that, notwithstanding Code Sections 16-11-126 and 16-11-129, such investigators shall only be authorized to carry firearms in the performance of their duties upon written approval of the executive director.

(b) In addition to other powers conferred upon the board under this chapter, the board shall through rules and regulations require each individual seeking renewal of a certificate of registration as a professional engineer or a professional structural engineer or a license as a professional land surveyor to complete board approved continuing education of not more than 15 hours annually for professional engineers and professional structural engineers and not more than 7.5 hours annually for professional land surveyors. The board shall be authorized to approve courses offered by institutions of higher learning or offered by other institutions or organizations. The board shall randomly audit some applications for renewal of a certificate of registration or license to enforce compliance with this subsection. The continuing education requirements adopted by the board shall recognize the continuing education requirements imposed by other states to the extent that such continuing education courses meet the requirements imposed by the board. The board shall be authorized to waive the continuing education requirements in cases of hardship, disability, or illness or under such other circumstances as the board deems appropriate. The board shall waive the continuing education requirement for individuals over the age of 65 who have retired from active practice and who apply for an inactive license and for individuals over the age of 65 who are engaged in the active practice of their profession who have had a valid active license for the previous 25 consecutive years. The requirement for continuing education including the exemptions provided for in this subsection shall apply to each licensing renewal cycle which begins after the 1996 renewal cycle.

§O.C.G.A. §43-15-13: Licensure as a professional land surveyor; land surveyor intern certification

(a) To be eligible for licensure as a professional land surveyor, an applicant shall:

(1) Complete the education and training requirements of subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of this paragraph as follows:

(A)

(i) Earn a bachelor's degree in a curriculum approved by the board. Such applicant shall complete a minimum of 18 semester hours in land surveying subjects acceptable to the board as a part of or separate from such degree; and

(ii) Acquire not less than three years of combined office and field experience in land surveying of a nature satisfactory to the board;

(B)

(i) Earn an associate's degree in a curriculum approved by the board. Such applicant shall complete a minimum of 18 semester hours in land surveying subjects acceptable to the board as a part of or separate from such degree; and

(ii) Acquire not less than five years of combined office and field experience in land surveying of a nature satisfactory to the board; or

(C)

(i) Earn a high school diploma or its equivalent. Such applicant shall complete a minimum of 18 semester hours in land surveying subjects acceptable to the board; and

(ii) Acquire not less than eight years of combined office and field experience in land surveying of a nature satisfactory to the board; and

(2)

(A) Pass each of the following board approved examinations:

(i) The fundamentals of surveying examination;

(ii) The principles and practices of land surveying examination; and

(iii) The laws and history of land surveying in Georgia examination.

(B) The examinations listed in divisions (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph may be taken after completion of the education requirements of paragraph (1) of this subsection; provided, however, that the examination in division (i) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall be taken and passed before the examination in division (ii) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph is taken, and the examination listed in division (ii) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall be taken and passed before the examination in division (iii) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph is taken.

(b) The board may issue a land surveyor intern certificate to an applicant who has:

(1) Completed the education requirements set forth in division (a)(1)(A)(i), (a)(1)(B)(i), or (a)(1)(C)(i) of this Code section;

(2) Passed the board approved fundamentals of surveying examination as required under division (a)(2)(A)(i) of this Code section; and

(3) Completed such additional requirements as may be required by the board through rules and regulations.

§O.C.G.A. §43-15-23.1: Land surveying firms, corporations, or other entities; application; fee; certificate of authorization

(a) The practice of or offer to practice land surveying, as defined in this chapter, by individual professional land surveyors licensed under this chapter through a firm, corporation, professional corporation, partnership, association, or other entity offering land surveying services to the public or by a firm, corporation, professional corporation, partnership, association, or other entity offering land surveying services to the public through individual professional land surveyors as agents, employees, officers, members, or partners is permitted subject to the provisions of this chapter; provided, however, that one or more of the principals, officers, members, or partners of said firm, corporation, professional corporation, partnership, association, or other entity and all personnel of such firm, corporation, professional corporation, partnership, association, or entity who act in its behalf as professional land surveyors in this state shall be licensed as provided in this chapter; and further provided that said firm, corporation, professional corporation, partnership, association, or entity has been issued a certificate of authorization by the board as provided in this chapter.

(b) A firm, corporation, professional corporation, partnership, association, or other entity desiring a certificate of authorization shall file with the board an application upon a form to be prescribed by the board and accompanied by the registration fee prescribed by the board.

(c)

(1) A corporation or professional corporation shall file with the board, using a form provided by the board, the names and addresses of all officers and board members of the corporation, including the principal officer or officers duly licensed to practice land surveying in this state and of an individual or individuals duly licensed to practice land surveying within this state who shall be in responsible charge of the practice of land surveying in this state by said corporation.

(2) A partnership shall file with the board, using a form provided by the board, the names and addresses of all partners of the partnership, including the partner or partners duly licensed to practice land surveying in this state and of an individual or individuals duly licensed to practice land surveying in this state who shall be in responsible charge of the practice of land surveying in this state by said partnership.

(3) Any firm, limited liability company, association, or entity which is not a corporation, professional corporation, or partnership shall file with the board, using a form provided by the board, the names and addresses of all principals or members of the firm, association, or entity duly licensed to practice land surveying in this state who shall be in responsible charge of the practice of land surveying in this state by said firm, association, or other entity.

(4) The forms provided in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subsection must accompany a biennial renewal fee prescribed by the board. In the event there shall be a change in any of these persons, such change shall be designated on the same form and filed with the board by the firm, corporation, professional corporation, partnership, association, or entity within 30 days after the effective date of the change.

(d)

(1) After all of the requirements of this Code section have been complied with, the board shall issue to such firm, corporation, professional corporation, partnership, association, or other entity a certificate of authorization.

(2) The board may refuse to issue a certificate if any facts exist which would entitle the board to suspend or revoke an existing certificate of authorization or if the board shall determine that any of the officers, directors, principals, members, agents, or employees of the entity to be licensed are not individuals of good character.

(3) Every firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity which performs or offers to perform land surveying services shall have a resident professional land surveyor in responsible charge in each separate branch office in which land surveying services are performed or offered to be performed. As used in this Code section, the term "resident" means a registrant who spends the majority of his or her normal working time at his or her place of business. The registrant can be the resident licensee at only one place of business at one time.

§O.C.G.A. §43-15-19: Revocation, suspension, or denial of certificates, certificates of registration, or licenses; reprimands

(a) The board shall have the power, after notice and hearing, to deny any application made to it, to revoke or suspend any certificate, certificate of registration, or license issued by it, or to reprimand any individual holding a certificate, certificate of registration, or license issued by it, upon the following grounds:

(1) Commission of any fraud or deceit in obtaining a certificate, certificate of registration, or license;

(2) Any gross negligence, incompetency, or unprofessional conduct in the practice of professional engineering or land surveying as a professional engineer or a professional land surveyor, respectively;

(3) Affixing a seal to any plan, specification, plat, or report contrary to Code Section 43-15-22;

(4) Conviction of a felony or covered misdemeanor as defined in Code Section 43-1-1 in the courts of this state, the United States, or any state or territory of the United States or the conviction of an offense in another jurisdiction which, if committed in this state, would be deemed a felony. "Conviction" shall include a finding or verdict of guilt, a plea of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere in a criminal proceeding but shall not include a conviction that has been pardoned; or

(5) Any violation of this chapter or any rule or regulation promulgated by the board pursuant to the powers conferred on it by this chapter.

(b) "Unprofessional conduct," as referred to in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section, includes a violation of those standards of professional conduct for professional engineers and professional land surveyors adopted by the board pursuant to the power conferred upon it to promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate the duties and powers conferred on it by this chapter.

§O.C.G.A. §15-6-67: Recordation of Plats: Specifications

(a) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) "Condominium plan" means a drawing that is required to be recorded prior to the first conveyance of a condominium unit pursuant to subsection (b) of Code Section 44-3-83, including, but not limited to, a condominium floor plan, condominium plot plan, or condominium site plan.

(2) "Plat" means a drawing prepared by a land surveyor that describes and depicts real property boundaries, including, but not limited to, a map, condominium plat, subdivision plat, as-built survey, easement survey, or retracement survey.

(b) All plats and condominium plans submitted for filing with the clerk of superior court shall be submitted electronically. The clerk of superior court shall file and record plats and condominium plans relating to real estate in the county when submitted for filing as provided in this Code section and accompanied with any required filing fees or costs.

(c) Each plat and condominium plan to be filed and recorded in the office of the clerk of superior court shall be in conformance with the following requirements:

(1) Format for plats and condominium plans. All images of a plat or condominium plan submitted for filing shall be at full size of the drawing scale stated thereon and shall:

(A) Be an electronic image of a plat or condominium plan presented to the clerk electronically in conformance with all specifications set forth in any rules and regulations promulgated by the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority; and

(B) Provide a box of not less than three inches square, if at full size, in the upper left-hand corner which shall be reserved for the clerk to append filing information;

(2) Required data for plats. Each plat shall comply with the minimum standards and specifications adopted in the rules and regulations of the State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors and provide the following information:

(A) The county where the property lies;

(B) Any municipality wherein the property lies;

(C) The name of the property owner or owners of the subject property as stated on the most current or applicable title instrument;

(D) The type of plat;

(E) The name of any subdivision if the property lies within a named subdivision or if the plat is creating a new subdivision;

(F) The name of any condominium if the property is within a condominium development;

(G) The applicable units, pods, blocks, lots, or other subdesignations of any named subdivision or condominium;

(H) The name or names of the developer or developers of any new subdivision or condominium;

(I) All applicable land lots, land districts, sections, reserves, or militia districts wherein the platted property lies;

(J) The date of initial preparation and issuance, and any revision dates, including a brief explanation of each revision;

(K) The name, address, and telephone number of the land surveyor who prepared and sealed the plat and, if working for or through a firm, corporation, partnership, association, limited liability company, or other entity, then also the certificate of authorization number of that entity, in which case the address and telephone number of such entity are acceptable in lieu of the individual surveyor's address and telephone number;

(L) The registration number of the land surveyor or a statement that he or she is the county surveyor and is not required by law to be a registered surveyor;

(M) The seal of the land surveyor who has prepared the plat and is signing the surveyor certification, which shall be placed within or next to the surveyor certification box;

(N) If the plat has multiple pages, the page number for each applicable page and the total number of sheets in the set shall be placed on each sheet in the same or similar location. The information required by this paragraph may be placed on all sheets or on different sheets within the set submitted for filing; and

(O) The scale of the plat stated and shown graphically; and

(3) Land surveyor certifications required for plats.

(A) Surveyor certification box for plats. Each plat shall have depicted thereon a box which contains one of the following applicable certifications of the land surveyor:

(i) As required by subsection (d) of O. C. G. A. Section 15-6-67, this plat has been prepared by a land surveyor and approved by all applicable local jurisdictions for recording as evidenced by approval certificates, signatures, stamps, or statements hereon. Such approvals or affirmations should be confirmed with the appropriate governmental bodies by any purchaser or user of this plat as to intended use of any parcel. Furthermore, the undersigned land surveyor certifies that this plat complies with the minimum technical standards for property surveys in Georgia as set forth in the rules and regulations of the Georgia Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors and as set forth in O. C. G. A. Section 15-6-67.

(ii) As required by subsection (d) of O. C. G. A. Section 15-6-67, this plat has been prepared by a land surveyor. This plat has been approved by all applicable local jurisdictions that require prior approval for recording this type of plat or one or more of the applicable local jurisdictions do not require approval of this type of plat. For any applicable local jurisdiction that requires approval of this type of plat, the names of the individuals signing or approving this plat, the agency or office of that individual, and the date of approval are listed in the approval table shown hereon. For any applicable local jurisdiction that does not require approval of this type of plat, the name of such local jurisdiction and the number of the applicable ordinance or resolution providing that no such approval is required are listed in the approval table shown hereon. Such approvals, affirmations, or ordinance or resolution numbers should be confirmed with the appropriate governmental bodies by any purchaser or user of this plat as to intended use of any parcel. Furthermore, the undersigned land surveyor certifies that this plat complies with the minimum technical standards for property surveys in Georgia as set forth in the rules and regulations of the Georgia Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors and as set forth in O. C. G. A. Section 15-6-67.

(iii) This plat is a retracement of an existing parcel or parcels of land and does not subdivide or create a new parcel or make any changes to any real property boundaries. The recording information of the documents, maps, plats, or other instruments which created the parcel or parcels are stated hereon. RECORDATION OF THIS PLAT DOES NOT IMPLY APPROVAL OF ANY LOCAL JURISDICTION, AVAILABILITY OF PERMITS, COMPLIANCE WITH LOCAL REGULATIONS OR REQUIREMENTS, OR SUITABILITY FOR ANY USE OR PURPOSE OF THE LAND. Furthermore, the undersigned land surveyor certifies that this plat complies with the minimum technical standards for property surveys in Georgia as set forth in the rules and regulations of the Georgia Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors and as set forth in O. C. G. A. Section 15-6-67.

(iv) The property hereon lies completely within a jurisdiction which does not review or approve any plats or this type of plat prior to recording. RECORDATION OF THIS PLAT DOES NOT IMPLY APPROVAL OF ANY LOCAL JURISDICTION, AVAILABILITY OF PERMITS, COMPLIANCE WITH LOCAL REGULATIONS OR REQUIREMENTS, OR SUITABILITY FOR ANY USE OR PURPOSE OF THE LAND. Furthermore, the undersigned land surveyor certifies that this plat complies with the minimum technical standards for property surveys in Georgia as set forth in the rules and regulations of the Georgia Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors and as set forth in O. C. G. A. Section 15-6-67.

(B) Other certification information required for plats.

(i) The land surveyor shall sign on a line immediately beneath the certification on the plat. At the discretion of the land surveyor and in conformity with local regulations, the surveyor may electronically sign the certification using a facsimile signature. The facsimile signature may be a reproduction of an original signature or an electronically created signature. If the land surveyor elects to use a facsimile signature, the surveyor must maintain full control over the application and use of such signature.

(ii) Additional dates, certifications, and signatures, which may be electronically created signatures, may be placed on plats. Such certifications may include, but are not limited to, those that may be required by local jurisdictions or agencies, the United States Small Business Administration, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the American Land Title Association.

(iii) The approval table required by division (c)(3)(A)(ii) of this Code section shall be data in a tabular format which shall include the name of each governmental body or agency that has approved the plat, the name of each individual who issued such approval, and the date that each approval was granted.

(iv) Plats that meet the requirements of a municipal or county governing authority ordinance or resolution specifying that no approval of such plat is necessary prior to recording may be recorded using the certification set forth in division (c)(3)(A)(ii) or (c)(3)(A)(iv) of this Code section, as applicable.

(v) In the case of a plat that is a retracement survey, the land surveyor shall state clearly the recording information of any document, map, plat, or other instrument which created any of the parcels depicted. The depiction of gores, overlaps, or other parcel delineation as may be necessary to remedy or address title issues or deficiencies shall be allowed as part of the retracement function. Plats that depict existing or proposed easements for utilities or for conservation purposes may be recorded using the certification set forth in division (c)(3)(A)(iii) of this Code section, provided that there are no changes to any real property boundaries.

(vi) Plats bearing the certification provided for in division (c)(3)(A)(iii) of this Code section shall be entitled to recordation without further review or local approval.

(d) Whenever the municipal planning commission, the county planning commission, the municipal-county planning commission, or, if no such planning commission exists, the appropriate municipal or county governing authority prepares and adopts subdivision regulations or land use regulations, or both, then no plat of a subdivision of land within the municipality or the county shall be presented for filing with the office of the clerk of superior court of a county without the approval of the municipal planning commission, county planning commission, municipal-county planning commission, or appropriate municipal or county governing authority.

(e) Any land surveyor who fraudulently makes any certification required under this Code section shall, upon conviction thereof, be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(f) The clerk of superior court shall make available a public computer terminal which provides a filer access to the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority's electronic filing portal.

(g) The Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority shall have the power and authority to promulgate such rules and regulations deemed necessary or convenient for implementation of the provisions of this Code section.

(h) The clerk of superior court shall be held harmless for the filing of any plat or condominium plan that fails to meet any requirement of this Code section.

(i) Any plats or condominium plans prepared prior to May 8, 2017, in compliance with previous statutory requirements may be recorded pursuant to this Code section so long as such documents are submitted as electronic images and presented to the clerk of superior court electronically.

Chapter 4

Review of Disciplinary Cases

The following cases were extracted from the official records of the Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board, its Public Disciplinary Actions page and its March 12, 2026 Board meeting minutes. The Board regulates professional engineers and professional land surveyors under one shared complaint and enforcement system, and several of the cases below do not specify which profession the respondent belongs to; this is noted honestly for each case rather than assumed.

CASE 1: Joe Jarrett (Tate, Georgia); Confirmed Land Surveyor

Case Review: The Board determined Mr. Jarrett engaged in the unlicensed practice of land surveying in the State of Georgia, in violation of O.C.G.A. §43-15-2.

Board Decision: Cease and Desist Order issued by the Board.

CASE 2: Complaint No. PELS250090, Fraud/Misrepresentation; Profession not specified in Board records

Case Review: A complaint alleging fraud or misrepresentation was brought before the Board's Investigations Committee.

Board Decision: The Board determined that additional information was needed from the complainant before further action could be taken.

CASE 3: Complaint No. PELS260145, Quality of Care/Substandard Practice; profession not specified in Board records

Case Review: A complaint alleging substandard professional practice and deficient quality of care was reviewed by the Board's Inspector.

Board Decision: The matter was referred to the Attorney General's Office for formal proceedings, indicating the Board found sufficient basis to pursue the case beyond internal review.

CASE 4: Complaint No. PELS250094 – Failure to Meet Qualifications; Profession not specified in Board records

Case Review: A complaint alleged that a licensee failed to meet the qualifications required for licensure or continued practice.

Board Decision: Referred to the Attorney General's Office for formal proceedings.

CASE 5: Complaint No. PELS240045, Unlicensed Practice / Unprofessional Conduct / Other; Profession not specified in Board records

Case Review: A complaint combined allegations of unlicensed practice with unprofessional conduct and other unspecified concerns.

Board Decision: The Board closed the case with no further action, determining it to be a civil matter outside the Board's jurisdiction to resolve.

Appendix A

References

Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board. (n.d.). *Chapter 180-7: Technical standards for property surveys*. Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia. <https://rules.sos.ga.gov/gac/180-7>

Georgia General Assembly. (n.d.). *Official Code of Georgia Annotated, Title 43, Chapter 15: Professional engineers and land surveyors*. <https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/title-43/chapter-15/>

Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board. (n.d.). *Department 180: Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board, Rules and Regulations*. Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia. <https://rules.sos.ga.gov/gac/180>

Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board. (n.d.). *Public Disciplinary Actions*. <https://pels.georgia.gov/online-services/cease-desist-orders-and-consent-orders/>

Georgia Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors Board. (2026, March 12). *Open Session Minutes*. <https://pels.georgia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/March-12-2026-Minutes.pdf>