

**21 NCAC 02 .0206**

**REQUIREMENT FOR AND USE OF PROFESSIONAL SEAL BY AN ARCHITECT OR REGISTERED INTERIOR DESIGNER**

(a) An architect shall seal his or her work whether or not the work is for an exempt project as defined in G.S. 83A-13. An architect shall not sign nor seal drawings, specifications, reports, or other professional work that were not prepared by the architect or under his or her responsible control. Documents shall be sealed as follows:

- (1) An architect may seal those portions of the professional work that:
  - (A) were prepared by or under the responsible control of persons who are licensed architects in this State if the architect has reviewed in whole or in part such portions and has either coordinated their preparation or integrated them into his or her work; and
  - (B) are not required by law to be prepared by or under the responsible control of an architect if the architect has reviewed and adopted in whole or in part such portions and has integrated them into his or her work.
- (2) A registered interior designer may seal those portions of the professional work that were prepared by or under the responsible control of persons who are registered interior designers in this State if the registered interior designer has reviewed in whole or in part such portions and has either coordinated their preparation or integrated them into their work
- (3) Individual Architect Seal Design shall be as follows:
  - (A) The seal may be a rubber stamp, embossed seal, computer-generated seal, or other facsimile that becomes a permanent addition to original paper drawings or sets of specifications for use in this State. For the purposes of this Rule, the term "for use in this State" means drawings and sets of specifications prepared for bidding, procurement, permitting, or for construction. For purposes of this Rule, "original" means the version of drawings and sets of specifications from which all paper copies can be made.
  - (B) The standard design of the seal shall be two concentric circles in which "North Carolina" and the name of the licensee are placed within the outermost circle and in which the license number of the licensee and "Licensed Architect" placed within the innermost circle. The size shall be 1 ½ to 1 ¾ inches in diameter.
  - (C) The original, handwritten signature of the individual named on the seal shall be considered part of the individual seal and shall appear across the face of each original seal imprint along with the date of affixation. The use of signature reproductions such as rubber stamps, computer generated, or other facsimiles on paper copies are not permitted in lieu of actual handwritten and hand dated signatures.
- (4) Architecture Firm Seal Design shall be as follows:
  - (A) The seal may be a rubber stamp, embossed seal, computer-generated seal, or other facsimile that becomes a permanent addition to paper drawings or sets of specifications.
  - (B) The design of the firm seal shall be two concentric circles in which the architectural firm's approved name shall be between the inner and outer circles and the firm's license number is placed within the innermost circle. The size shall be 1 ½ to 1 ¾ inches in diameter. For a Professional Corporation the words "Architectural Corporation, North Carolina" shall be along the inside perimeter of the inner circle. For a Professional Limited Liability Company, the words "Architectural Company" shall be along the inside perimeter of the inner circle.
- (5) Individual Registered Interior Designer Seal Design shall be as follows:
  - (A) The seal may be a rubber stamp, embossed seal, computer-generated seal, or other facsimile that becomes a permanent addition to original paper drawings or sets of specifications for use in this State. For the purposes of this Rule, the term "for use in this State" means drawings and sets of specifications prepared for bidding, procurement, permitting, or for construction. For purposes of this Rule, "original" means the version of drawings and sets of specifications from which all paper copies can be made.
  - (B) The standard design of the seal shall be two concentric ovals in which "North Carolina" and the name of the registrant are placed within the outermost oval and in which the registration number of the registrant and "Registered Interior Designer" be placed within the innermost oval. The dimensions shall be two inches tall by 2.75 inches wide.
  - (C) The original, handwritten signature of the individual named on the seal shall be considered part of the individual seal and shall appear across the face of each original seal imprint along with the date of affixation. The use of signature reproductions such as

rubber stamps, computer generated, or other facsimiles on paper are not permitted in lieu of actual handwritten and hand dated signatures.

- (6) Registered Interior Design Firm Seal Design shall be as follows:
    - (A) The seal may be a rubber stamp, embossed seal, computer-generated seal, or other facsimile that becomes a permanent addition to drawings or sets of specifications.
    - (B) The design of the seal shall be two concentric ovals in which the registered interior design firm's approved name shall be between the inner and outer ovals and the firm's registration number is placed within the innermost oval. The size shall be 2 to 2 ¾ inches in diameter. For a Corporation the words "Registered Interior Design Corporation, North Carolina" shall be along the inside perimeter of the inner circle. For a Limited Liability Company, the words "Registered Interior Design Company" shall be along the inside perimeter of the inner oval.
  - (7) Architects and registered interior designers shall affix their seal on one original of all their drawings and sets of specifications prepared by them for use in this State as follows:
    - (A) on the cover sheet of each design and on each drawing prepared by the architect or registered interior designer for the design;
    - (B) on the index page identifying each set of specifications; and
    - (C) on the index page of all other technical submissions. For the purposes of this Rule, "technical submissions" refer to plans, drawings, specifications, studies, addenda, and other technical reports prepared in the course of practicing architecture or registered interior design.
  - (8) Presentation documents, such as renderings created by an architect or registered interior designer used to communicate conceptual information, shall not be sealed or signed.
  - (9) Documents considered incomplete by the architect or registered interior designer may be released for interim review without the architect's or registered interior designers seal or signature affixed, but shall be dated, bear the architect's or registered interior designer's name, and be marked or designated as follows "Incomplete - for interim review only and not intended for bidding, procurement, permit, or construction purposes."
  - (10) Those sheets or pages prepared by licensed professional consultants, such as structural, mechanical or electrical engineers, retained by the architect or registered interior designer shall bear the seal and registration or license number of the consultant responsible therefore and shall not be sealed by the architect or registered interior designer.
  - (11) The use of the prescribed seal on paper is an individual act whereby the architect or registered interior designer must personally sign over the imprint of the seal. By sealing documents for use in this State, an architect or registered interior designer is representing that he or she is in responsible control over the content of such documents and has applied the required professional standard of care. The architect or registered interior designer is responsible for security of the seal when not in use.
  - (12) Use of Firm Seal. The use of the firm seal does not replace the statutory requirement for an architect's or registered interior designer's individual seal as required in Rule .0203(4) of this Chapter. The firm seal must be affixed in addition to the individual seal on the cover sheet. A firm shall designate a principle or other authorized individual to be responsible for the security of the firm seal.
- (b) Prototypical building design documents prepared by architects or registered interior designers who are licensed or registered in this State or in their state of origin may be sealed by a succeeding licensed architect or registered interior designer in North Carolina provided:
- (1) the seal of the original architect or registered interior designer appears on the documents to authenticate authorship;
  - (2) the words "Prototypical Design Documents/Not for Construction" appear on each sheet of the documents by the original architect or registered interior designer;
  - (3) the succeeding North Carolina architect or registered interior designer identifies all modifications to the standard design documents;
  - (4) the succeeding North Carolina architect or registered interior designer assumes responsibility for the adequacy of the design for the specific application in North Carolina and for the design conforming with applicable building codes, local conditions, site condition; and

- (5) the succeeding North Carolina architect or registered interior designer affixes his or her seal to the prototypical design documents with a statement as follows: "These documents have been examined by the undersigned. I have determined that they comply with existing local North Carolina codes, and I assume responsibility for the adequacy of the design for the specific application in North Carolina."
- (c) Post construction record drawings prepared by an architect or registered interior designer, but based upon representations of contractors, are not plans that are for "bidding, procurement, permit, or construction purposes" and therefore shall not be sealed by the architect or registered interior designer. Post construction record drawings shall bear the name of the architect or registered interior designer and include language that states "these drawings are post construction record drawings and are based in part upon the representations of others and are not for bidding, procurement, permit, or construction purposes."
- (d) Documents to be electronically transmitted beyond the direct control of the licensee or registrant that are signed using a digital 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. The term "digital signature" shall be an electronic authentication process that is attached to or logically associated with an electronic document. Unlocked copies of sealed construction documents may be provided to entities to allow for electronic usage where document content is not effectively being altered, such as when presented for plan review approval stamps or contractor material takeoffs. An effective alteration means a change that may impact health, safety, or welfare, such as a change to egress or a change to window placement. The digital signature shall be:
- (1) Unique to the person using it;
  - (2) Capable of verification;
  - (3) Under the sole control of the person using it; and
  - (4) Linked to a document in such a manner that the digital signature is invalidated if any data in the document is changed.
- (e) Documents for use in this State, that are transmitted electronically beyond the direct control of the licensee or registrant shall have the computer-generated image of the seal removed from the original file, unless signed with a digital signature as defined in this Rule. After removal of the image of the seal the electronic media shall have the following inserted in lieu of the signature and date: "This document was originally issued and sealed by (name of sealer), (license or registration number), on (date of sealing). This medium shall not be considered a certified document." Hardcopy documents containing the original seal, signature and date of the licensee or registrant 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 or registrant of Computer Aided Design (CAD), vector, or other files subject to easy editing are subject to the requirements of this Paragraph. A file subject to "easy editing" is one consisting of separate elements that can be individually modified or deleted. Documents that are excepted from certification by a statement meeting the following requirements are not subject to the requirements of this Paragraph:
- (1) "Preliminary - Do not use for construction";
  - (2) "Progress Drawings - Do not use for construction";
  - (3) "Final Drawing - Not released for construction";
  - (4) "Final Drawing - For Review Purposes Only";
  - (5) "Not a Certified Document – This document was originally issued and sealed by (name of licensee or registrant), (license or registration number), on (date of sealing). This document shall not be considered a certified document";
  - (6) "Not a Certified Document as to the Original Document but Only as to the Revisions - This document originally issued and sealed by (name of licensee or registrant), (license or registration number), on (date of sealing). This document is only certified as to the revisions".

*History Note: Authority G.S. 83A-6; 83A-10; 83A-12;  
Eff. February 1, 1976;  
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