

Ontario's Licensing Regulation and the Proposed Regulatory Amendments

Q&As

Q1: Why was Ontario's licensing regime implemented?

A1: Through province wide consultations and with industry support across the province, it was determined that consistent province wide licensing would better protect the public, workers and consumers because of the potential dangers inherent in the work of electrical contractors and electricians.

The province wide system replaces an uneven patchwork of municipal licensing requirements and establishes consistent standards, and qualifications for electrical contractors;

The province-wide licensing system helps address the underground economy to protect consumer and industry interests.

Q2: When was Ontario's licensing regime put in place?

A2: Ontario's Licensing of Electrical Contractors and Master Electricians Regulation, O.Reg 570/05, became effective on January 1, 2007 and included a five-year transitional period to assist those contractors that operated in areas where licensing or a Master Electrician requirement was not previously required. This provided time for them to become fully compliant with the new requirements. Those who qualified were issued a provisional licence that could be renewed up to five years.

Q3: What is a provisional Licence?

A3: A Provisional Licence was created to facilitate the transition of those electrical contractors who had been operating businesses in parts of Ontario that did not previously require a licence or a Master Electrician to operate their business and provided them with time to meet all of the requirements to obtain an Electrical Contractor Licence.

A five-year transitional period was established to give contractors time to meet the requirements.

To be issued a provisional electrical contractor licence the applicant must:

- i. In the case of an individual, be at least 18 years of age;
- ii. "Have a place of business in Ontario" or an address for service
- iii. Have public liability and property damage insurance coverage of at least \$2,000,000;
- iv. Be registered with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, if the applicant is required to register under the Work Place Safety and Insurance Act, 1997;
- v. Not be in default of filing a return with the Minister of Revenue or of paying any tax, penalty or interest assessed under the Retail Sales Tax Act or the Corporations Tax Act, if applicable, for which payment arrangements have not been made; and
- vi. Not owe the ESA any money for which payments arrangements have not been made.
- vii. Must have operated a business in a part of Ontario that did not previously require a licence; and
- viii. Demonstrates that the applicant has been in compliance with the requirements of Rule 2-004 of the Electrical Safety Code for at least five years.

Q4: How did ESA determine who should get a provisional Licence?

A4: A Provisional Electrical Contractor Licence was issued to applicants who:

- met defined requirements,

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- performed electrical work that requires a licence as defined in the regulation,
- operated a business in Ontario and met the transitional requirements as set out in the regulation.

Q5: How will the proposed regulatory amendments affect those who hold a provisional licence?

A5: The proposed regulatory amendments do **NOT** affect all provisional licence holders. Only a small group of provisional licence holders would be affected by the proposed regulatory amendment. Only those contractors who were issued a Provisional Electrical Contractor Licence and undertake work that falls within the scope of 434A Powerline Technician Certificate of Qualification would be affected if the amendment were passed.

Q6: If an electrical contractor has a Certificate of Qualification (C of Q), why should he/she be required to pass another exam?

A6: The Master Electrician exam tests different areas of knowledge compared to testing of electricians to obtain a C of Q. The electrician C of Q testing required by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities is intended to test apprentice electricians on their practical skills and on their knowledge of the Canadian Electrical Code.

The master electrician exam is more comprehensive and is intended to test supervisory knowledge of Ontario's Electrical Safety Code (Ontario's variations to the Canadian Electrical Code), the Building Code, the consumer protection legislation, other pertinent legislation, electrical calculations, trade and business practices, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act Regulations.

Q7: How can I obtain further information regarding the 434A Powerline Technician Certificate of Qualification (CofQ) and verify whether I can obtain this trade qualification?

A7: To verify whether the type of work you do relates to a 434A Powerline Technician C of Q, please contact the [Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities](#) apprenticeship office by calling the Employment Ontario Hotline (toll-free: 1-800-387-5656; Toronto: 416-326-5656; TTY: 1-866-533-6339 or 416-325-4084) or go to: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/search.asp?chosen=4..>

Q8: What are the C of Q's that are currently accepted under the Master Electrician Licence requirements?

A8: The C of Q's that are recognized under section 11 of the regulation include: 309A, 309C, 309D, 309E and the 442A. Any questions regarding your C of Q please contact the [Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities](#) apprenticeship office by calling the Employment Ontario Hotline (toll-free: 1-800-387-5656; Toronto: 416-326-5656; TTY: 1-866-533-6339 or 416-325-4084) or go to: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/search.asp?chosen=4>. Those applying for a Master Electrician licence must meet all of the requirements for obtaining the licence.

Q9: Other than "electricians", what other qualifications are accepted under the ME Licence requirements?

A9: The other qualifications that are accepted under the Master Electrician Licence are: a licensed Professional Engineer, registered with the Professional Engineers of Ontario and a Certified Engineering Technologist and a Certified Engineering Technician, registered with The Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists.

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Q10: What is a Master Electrician and why is a business required to have one?

A10: A master electrician is responsible for the planning and direct supervision of electrical work carried out on behalf of the electrical contractor and for ensuring that the electrical work is carried out in accordance with applicable law, including the Ontario Electrical Safety Code and the laws relating to health and safety and consumer protection.

Regulation 570/05 stipulates that every electrical contracting business must designate a Master Electrician in order to be granted an Electrical Contractor licence.

Q11: What are the requirements for obtaining a Master Electrician Licence?

A11: To be eligible for a Master Electrician Licence, an applicant must:

1. Be at least 18 years of age;
2. Demonstrate at least 3 years experience:
 - a. as a construction and maintenance electrician, a domestic and rural electrician or an industrial electrician carrying out work under a valid Certificate of Qualification, or
 - b. working for an electrical contractor as a licensed professional engineer, and be registered with the Professional Engineers of Ontario, or
 - c. working for an electrical contractor in the capacity of a certified engineering technician or a certified engineering technologist, and be registered with the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists;
3. Have passed the master electrician qualifying examination within the 12 month period preceding the date of the licence application; and
4. Not owe ESA any money.

Q12: Why is a Master Electrician designation required?

A12: O.Reg 570/05 established a consistent province-wide system and standards for electrical contracting business in Ontario.

The Master Electrician has explicit responsibility on behalf of the electrical contractor for ensuring that the electrical work is carried out in accordance with the Electrical Safety Code, and health and safety and consumer protection laws;

The requirement for a Master Electrician for all licenced contractors ensures a standard level of qualification and expertise.

Q13: How much does it cost for an ME Licence?

A13: The Master Electrician Licence fee is \$84.75 (including HST) for 1 year, or \$169.50 (including HST) for 2 years.

Q14: What does a business need to do to meet the requirements that will enable them to transition from a Provisional Licence to a full Electrical Contractor Licence?

A14: A Provisional Contractor Licence holder must meet all of the requirements defined under the regulation for obtaining the Electrical Contractor Licence.

If a contractor currently holds a Provisional Contractor Licence they must designate a Master Electrician to their business to qualify for the full Electrical Contractor Licence or hire one in addition to meeting all other requirements stipulated in the regulation.

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Q15: What are the steps and associated costs for becoming licenced?

A15: The owner of the Electrical Contracting business must fill out the required application form(s) provide proof of the items as set out in the application, meet the requirements as set out in the regulation, pay the required fees, and submit it to ESA.

It must designate a Master Electrician on staff. This individual must have a valid Master Electrician licence and must have passed the Master Electrician's exam within one year of applying for the licence.

The Electrical Contractor Licence fee is \$412.45 (including HST) per year.

The Master Electrician Licence fee is \$84.75 (including HST) for 1 year, or \$169.50 (including HST) for 2 years.

Q16: What if someone is unable to pass the Master Electrician's test?

A16: In order to be licenced, an electrical contracting business must have a designated Master Electrician on staff.

The ME ensures the electrical work is carried out in accordance with applicable law, including the Electrical Safety Code, and the laws relating to health and safety and consumer protection, on behalf of the electrical contractor.

ESA and external providers provide ME exam training programs to assist contractors with preparing for the exam.

Individuals can write the test again if they do not pass the first time.

Q17: What if the ME exam covers topics that are not relevant to a contractor's business?

A17: The ME exam covers fundamentals deemed necessary for any electrical contracting business including knowledge of applicable laws such as the Ontario Electrical Safety Code, and the laws relating to health & safety and consumer protection.

Q18: Who administers the Master's exam and how was the content developed?

A18: The Master Electrician exam is administered under the Electrical Contractor Registration Agency (ECRA) of ESA.

An Advisory Committee made up of representatives including the Electrical Contracting Industry, Municipalities, Consumer Interest Groups, Utility Contractors and the Electrical Safety Authority is responsible for establishing the Master Examining Board and oversees the content of the master electrician exam of the Master Electrician Licence Exam.

Q19: What is the pass rate for the Master's exam?

A19: Currently **83%** of the individuals who write the Master Electrician Exam are successful. An applicant taking the exam needs to achieve **70%** on the exam to pass. The average mark for individuals who have passed the exam is **75%**.

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Q20: Would the proposed regulatory amendments be in compliance with the *Ontario Labour Mobility Act*?

A20: Yes, the proposed regulatory amendment would be compliant with the *Ontario Labour Mobility Act*.

Q21: How can I provide a comment on the proposed regulatory amendment?

A21: If you would like to make a comment regarding the proposed regulatory amendment, please visit Ontario's Regulatory Registry at: <http://www.ontariocanada.com/registry/>.

Q22: How can I receive further information about the proposed regulatory amendment?

A22: If you would like to receive further information about the proposed regulatory amendment, please contact: Mary Beth Fazzari, Senior Policy Advisor, at the Ministry of Consumer Services at marybeth.fazzari@ontario.ca or 416-326-8873.

Q23: How can I receive further information related to the issuance of Licenses?

A23: For further information related the issuance of licences, please visit ESA's website or contact ESA directly via email at ESA.Licensing@electricalsafety.on.ca, or by calling ESA's Licensing and Certification department at 1-877-ESA-SAFE (1-877-372-7233) – press option "3".

Q24: How can I receive further information related to the administration of the Licensing Regulation?

A24: For further information related the administration of the Licensing Regulation, please visit ESA's website or contact ESA directly via email at ESA.Licensing@electricalsafety.on.ca, or by calling ESA's Licensing and Certification department at 1-877-ESA-SAFE (1-877-372-7233) – press option "3".