

# Policy on Annual Registrations and Voluntary Suspension

**Version reference:** 1.0  
**Effective date:** 1 July 2022  
**Legislative reference:** Sections of the Registered Architects Act 2005  
Parts of the Registered Architects Rules 2006

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## Purpose

1. This policy defines and describes annual certificates of registration, voluntary suspension and expired registrations.
2. It outlines the requirements for a registered architect to renew their annual certificate of registration (ACR) and to enter and exit voluntary suspension. It also outlines the implications of late ACR payments and failure to submit 5-yearly competence review documentation.
3. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Initial Registration and Continuing Registration policies.

## Governance and Administration

### *Annual Registration*

4. Under the Registered Architects Act 2005 (the Act), Registration is defined as holding both registration and an Annual Certificate of Registration (ACR). A person is not registered for the purposes of the Act if their registration is suspended (voluntarily or not) or has expired.
5. It is a statutory requirement that architects hold a current Annual Certificate of Registration (ACR) in order to be able to use the title 'registered architect' (sections 6 and 7 of the Act). The fee for obtaining an ACR is set out in Schedule 2 of the Rules.
6. ACRs are issued for one year, from 1 July to 30 June, or for a part year if the ACR payment is received after 31 July.
7. An architect can elect to put their registration in voluntary suspension by completing the Voluntary Suspension Request form and emailing it the NZRAB Executive.
8. A person whose registration is in voluntary suspension will appear on the Register under the category of voluntary suspension, but as they are not registered for the purposes of the Act, they cannot use the title 'architect' if they are continuing to engage in building

services (designing buildings, preparing plans and specifications for buildings, or supervising the construction of buildings).

9. An architect can elect to cancel their registration, and have their name removed from the register. As with voluntary suspension, a previously registered architect cannot use the title architect if they are engaging in building services (as defined in paragraph 8) and cannot use any words, initials or abbreviations that could reasonably cause any person to believe that person is a registered architect
10. An architect's registration lapses and they cease to be registered if:
  - a. they fail to pay for their ACR and do not elect to enter voluntary suspension, or
  - b. their period of voluntary suspension expires before they either revive their registration or request that their registration be cancelled.
11. For administrative purposes, lapsed registrations are categorised as 'expired'. As 'expired' is not a formal registration status, it is not a searchable status on the public register.

## **Procedures**

### *Annual Certificate of Registration*

12. Invoices are issued to all registered architects for payment of their ACR in April, unless the architect has indicated that they wish to enter voluntary suspension or cancel their registration at the conclusion of the ACR year (30 June).
13. To enable the NZRAB's internal processes to be undertaken in time to renew every registered architect's ACR by 1 July, architects should ensure that their payment has been made to the NZRAB, accompanied by their correctly spelled surname and their registration number, at least 10 working days prior to the expiration of their ACR (on or about 17 June).
14. If an architect fails to pay their ACR by 30 June, their registration lapses, i.e. they cease to be a registered architect and cannot use the title. For administrative purposes their registration is recorded as 'expired'.
15. Newly registered architects and architects coming out of voluntary suspension part way through the ACR year are charged a pro rata fee, dependent on which quarter they make payment for an ACR.
16. ACR fees are not refundable. I.e. an architect cannot request a refund of the ACR fee in the event they cancel their registration or request to enter voluntary suspension part way through the year.

### *Voluntary Suspension*

17. An architect must submit their voluntary suspension notification at least seven working days before commencement of voluntary suspension (rule 41 of the Rules).<sup>[1]</sup> The Board provides a form for architects to signal their intention to enter voluntary suspension.
18. An architect can request to voluntarily suspend their registration for up to five 12 month periods (i.e a maximum of 5 consecutive years) (rule 42 of the Rules). There is no requirement

that the 12 month period(s) run from 1 July to 30 June, but this is the most practical period, given that an architect's current ACR will not expire until the close of 30 June.

19. Subsequent periods of voluntary suspension can be applied for, i.e an architect is not limited to only 5 years of voluntary suspension across their career, however it is strongly encouraged that an architect revives their registration to undergo their 5 yearly competence review. Keeping up with continuing professional development during voluntary suspension is encouraged and access to the CPD website remains open.
20. Competence reviews cannot be completed whilst an architect's registration is in voluntary suspension. A competence review is an assessment of whether or not an architect meets the standard for *continued* registration; someone in voluntary suspension is not registered for the purposes for the Act and the consequences for failing to meet the standard, and opportunity to provide further information assumes the candidate holds registration. The applicable rules and processes in for a candidate who is assessed as not meeting the minimum standards cannot be applied to a person who does not hold registration.
21. If an architect does not revive their registration to undergo their competence review, either when it is due, or after a successful application to defer, the Board will need to make an assessment of whether or not the architect meets the minimum standards for registration before granting an ACR. In this scenario the mechanism for assessment is via an application for registration as a formerly NZ registered architect (see [Pathway 4](#) on the NZRAB website).
22. The NZRAB Executive will email architects whose registration is in voluntary suspension to advise them that they are due for their competence review, and will invite them to revive their registration by making payment for an ACR before their review is due.

#### *Reviving a voluntarily suspended registration*

23. Although the period of voluntary suspension specified in the architect's notification must be in 12 month blocks an architect can request to revive their registration within a 12 month period. I.e. they do not need to wait for the expiration of their period of voluntary suspension.
24. An architect revives their registration simply by contacting the NZRAB ([info@nzrab.org.nz](mailto:info@nzrab.org.nz)) and paying for their ACR, provided less than five years have elapsed since they were first registered or since their last successful competence review. In this instance, the Board relies on the architect having passed their competency review (or if applicable the initial registration assessment) to determine that they meet the minimum standards for registration.
25. However, if by the time a person wishes to revive their registration, the due date for their five-yearly competence review has already passed, they will need to apply for registration as a formerly registered NZ architect to allow the Board to assess that they meet the minimum standard for registration before they can be granted an ACR.

#### *Expired Registration*

26. If the fee for an architect's ACR is not received and processed by the close of 30 June in any year, the architect's registration expires and they cease to be registered.
27. The Act doesn't contemplate late ACR payments and lapsed or expired registrations. Rather, the statutory expectation is that architects either remain registered (with a current ACR), have

had their registration suspended by the Board, have gone into voluntary suspension under rule 41, or have had their registration cancelled under section 14 of the Act.

28. Strict compliance with the Act and Rules would likely require the NZRAB to treat all people whose ACR has expired as former New Zealand registered architects, if they wish to be registered again. This seems unduly harsh, so the Board has established a **grace period** of 6 months for payment of the annual ACR fee. However, the onus is on each architect to ensure that they always hold a current ACR, as they cannot legally practise as an architect without one. This grace period is only applicable to architects who have submitted their five yearly competence review form.
29. In summary, the 6 month grace period only applies if the following conditions are met:
  - a. annual ACR fee is paid (and processed by the NZRAB Executive) by 31 December; and
  - b. the person is not overdue their 5 yearly competence review.
    - i. If the architect was due for their competence review that same year, their continuing registration competence review form and supporting documentation must have been submitted by 30 June.
30. If at the end of the grace period the architect has not paid for their ACR, or requested that their registration be put in voluntary registration or if the grace period doesn't apply, the person will need to apply for registration under the procedure for [Pathway 4: For Former New Zealand Registered Architects](#).

## Attachment 2

### Document control

#	Date	Author position	Approval method	Detailed changes/description
1.0	14 June 2022	Executive Officer: Public Protection	Board Meeting	<p>Information on voluntary suspension in the continuing registration policy redrafted into an independent policy.</p> <p>The new policy was updated to include the requirements to renew an ACR, and to reflect that a person cannot undergo a Competence Review whilst in voluntary suspension or if their registration has expired.</p>