



Ohio Administrative Code Rule 3745-7-06 Certification of operators.

Effective: July 3, 2025

In accordance with this chapter, the director shall provide for the examination of individuals applying for certification as facility specific or professional operators and the issuance of appropriate certificates to applicants who meet the appropriate requirements and pass the appropriate examination.

(A) Applicants for certification shall do the following:

(1) Submit an application in a format approved by the director. The complete application and appropriate fees as set forth in section 3745.11 of the Revised Code shall be submitted at least ninety calendar days prior to the date on which the examination is scheduled.

(2) Be responsible for furnishing additional documentation to the agency to verify information provided on the application when required by the council.

(3) Be disqualified from taking the examination as set forth in rule 3745-7-18 of the Administrative Code for submitting incomplete, false, or incorrect information on the application.

(B) To be eligible for examination and certification as a professional operator in accordance with this chapter the applicant shall fulfill the following:

(1) Not have been convicted of, or plead guilty to, a disqualifying offense, as determined in accordance with section 9.79 of the Revised Code, including criminal charges involving falsification, fraud, or terrorism.

(2) At the time of application and prior to the examination date, not have a revoked or currently suspended Ohio professional operator certification.

(3) Not have a professional operator certificate from any other state currently revoked or under



suspension.

(4) Not have performed the duties of a professional operator of record without a valid certificate of the appropriate field and classification, unless in accordance with the exemptions and exceptions contained in this chapter.

(5) Have a high school diploma or the equivalent. Either of the following shall be considered equivalent to a high school diploma.

(a) Documentation of successfully passing the general education development test or a statement of high school equivalence.

(b) Completion of a vocational training program in the field of application.

(6) Have the ability to do the following:

(a) Read and understand Chapters 6109. and 6111. of the Revised Code and the rules adopted thereunder.

(b) Perform mathematical calculations required to operate in the field for which certification is being sought.

(c) Complete and maintain records and regulatory reporting forms required to document the proper operation of a public water system, treatment works, or sewerage systems.

(7) All applicants to be a professional operator shall acknowledge completion of a review of the "Ohio EPA Operator Certification Training" course. This course outlines rule requirements that are specific to all certified operators.

(8) Have operating experience related to the field for which the application is being considered in accordance with the minimums in table A of this rule.

Certification	Operating experience required
---------------	-------------------------------



Class A	See paragraph (B)(8)(c) of this rule
Class I	1 year of operating experience
Class II	2 years of operating experience
Class III	4 years of operating experience
Class IV	See paragraph (C)(2) of this rule

(a) The director may accept post high school education or training as a substitute for operating experience in qualifying for examination under this rule. However, except as provided in paragraph (B)(8)(c) of this rule, all applicants for examination are required to have at least one year of operating experience by the date of the scheduled examination in the field for which certification is sought unless waived in accordance with rule 3745-7-07 of the Administrative Code.

(b) Applicants are required to describe in detail their operating experience at water treatment, water distribution, collection and wastewater treatment systems.

(c) To be eligible to take the class A examination for certification, applicants shall have education, and operating or work experience in accordance with the following chart:

Years of Education	Operating Experience		Work Experience *
High school diploma or equivalent	1040 hours **	OR	3 years **
Associate's degree***	780 hours **	OR	2 years **
Bachelor's degree***	520 hours	OR	1 year

* Work experience means time spent at a job where a portion of duties involve dealing with a public water system or treatment works.

** Successful completion of one or more of the Operator Training Committee of Ohio "Basic Water" or "Basic Wastewater" course, the California State University at Sacramento "Small Water System Operation and Maintenance" or "Small Wastewater System Operation and Maintenance, Volume I" course, or the equivalent shall reduce the experience requirement to one year of work experience or five hundred twenty hours of operating experience.



***Degrees shall meet the requirements of paragraph (C)(3) of this rule.

(C) Alternative eligibility requirements.

(1) An applicant for a class II or class III public water or wastewater examination or for a class II water distribution or wastewater collection examination, who holds a valid professional operator certificate, at the same or a higher classification in the other field, may be granted a fifty per cent reduction in actual operating experience requirements in the field applied for, on the basis of operating experience obtained in the other field, except that a minimum of one year of actual operating experience in the field applied for is still required.

(2) Applicants for class IV certification shall document two years of management experience at a class III or IV facility, while in possession of a valid class III certification in the field for which the application is submitted.

(3) Experience requirement reduction for post secondary education.

(a) The director may allow a reduction of the experience requirement for an applicant who demonstrates completion of a bachelor's degree from a four-year accredited institution in environmental, chemical, or civil engineering or a physical or natural science.

(b) An applicant may request a review of a degree and transcript that is not in the fields listed above in writing, provided the applicant has taken a significant number of courses in a physical or natural science or the degree can be determined to be specifically related to the field of water treatment or water reclamation.

(c) Reductions may be granted in accordance with paragraph (C)(4) of this rule.

(4) The director may allow the following reductions in the experience requirement for examination for certification. However, documented completion of at least one year of experience in the field for which they are applying is required to be certified as a class II and class III operator. Similarly, documented completion of at least one year of experience for the type of certificate and in the field for which an applicant has applied.



(a) The experience requirement to take the examination for class II operator certification is reduced by one year if an applicant meets the following:

- (i) Has post secondary education that meets the requirements of paragraph (C)(3) of this rule.
- (ii) Has a two-year technical degree in the field of water or wastewater treatment.

(b) The experience requirement to take the examination for class III operator certification is reduced by three years if an applicant meets either of the following:

- (i) Has post secondary education that meets the requirements of paragraph (C)(3) of this rule.
- (ii) Has a two-year technical degree in the field of water or wastewater treatment.

(c) The director may accept substitution of each year of college completed by an applicant, not holding an associate's or bachelor's degree, for one year of required experience. Substitution shall only be granted provided that the applicant meets the requirements of paragraph (C)(3) of this rule.

(d) The director may accept an applicant's completed drinking water or wastewater courses as a substitute for experience when applying for examination for class II or III operator certification on a case-by-case basis. The director may publish a list of courses that have been approved for substitution of experience.

(e) An applicant who passes the examination before showing the required operating experience shall be an operator in training, subject to the conditions of paragraph (C) of rule 3745-7-07 of the Administrative Code.

(D) An applicant who does not meet the required operating experience in paragraphs (B)(8) and (F)(3) of this rule may take the examination in accordance with the provisions in rule 3745-7-07 of the Administrative Code.

(E) Applicants who do not meet the examination prerequisites in the classification for which they



requested may be permitted, without re-applying, to take an examination in a lower classification for which they do meet the prerequisites.

(F) An applicant employed at a class III or IV public water system or treatment works may apply for a facility specific class I, II, or III certification, provided the following criteria are met:

(1) Meet the criteria in paragraphs (B)(1) to (B)(7) of this rule.

(2) A class III or IV certified professional operator who is a member of the system's management, or a professional operator of record for the public water system or treatment works, shall certify the applicant's ability to oversee the technical operation of the facility.

(3) To be eligible for a facility specific certification, applicants shall document experience described in paragraph (O)(2)(b) of rule 3745-7-01 of the Administrative Code in accordance with the following table:

Certification	Experience required
Class I	1 year of experience
Class II	2 years of experience
Class III	4 years of experience

(4) An operator who holds a valid facility specific certification may be designated as the backup operator of record for a facility, in accordance with the provisions of rules 3745-7-03 and 3745-7-04 of the Administrative Code, provided the operator of record for the facility certifies their ability on a form acceptable to the director.

(5) A facility specific certificate can be converted to a full certification once the applicant obtains operating experience as defined in paragraph (O)(2) of rule 3745-7-01 of the Administrative Code.

(6) An applicant shall pass an examination for the level of facility specific certification they are applying for.

(7) A facility specific certification does not supersede certificates described in paragraph (A) of rule



3745-7-05 of the Administrative Code.

(G) Exam format.

(1) The examinations for each classification shall be in a format accepted by the director. Alternate examination methods may be accepted by the director if an applicant has a disability that would prevent them from taking the standard examination.

(2) The director shall establish and publish criteria for exams and the associated score necessary to pass the exams.

(H) An applicant approved by the director to take the class IV certification examination shall submit the examination within two years of the date of the approval, unless an extension is granted prior to the end of the two-year period.