

**RULES
OF
THE STATE BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL AND
ENGINEERING EXAMINERS**

**CHAPTER 0120-05
CONTINUING EDUCATION**

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0120-05-.01 PURPOSE. The Tennessee State Board of Architectural and Engineering Examiners is authorized by Tenn. Code Ann. § 62-2-203(d) (Acts 1995, Public Chapter 129), to establish continuing education requirements and standards for architects, engineers, landscape architects and registered interior designers in order to safeguard life, health and property and to promote the public welfare. The purposes of this chapter are to prescribe the basic continuing education requirements for present and future architects, engineers, landscape architects and registered interior designers and to establish standards by which continuing education programs will be evaluated for the awarding of credit.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997.

0120-05-.02 DEFINITIONS.

- (1) "ACTIVE" means a registered architect, engineer, landscape architect or registered interior designer who has complied with the continuing education requirements described herein.
- (2) "BOARD" means the Tennessee State Board of Architectural and Engineering Examiners.
- (3) "INACTIVE" means a registered architect, engineer, landscape architect or registered interior designer who has obtained inactive status from the Board and is not required to comply with the continuing education requirements prescribed herein. An inactive registrant may not engage in the practice of architecture, engineering, landscape architecture or use the title "registered interior designer" in the State of Tennessee.
- (4) "PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOUR (PDH)" means a contact (clock) hour consisting of not less than fifty (50) minutes of instruction or presentation acceptable to the Board. Registrants will not receive credit for activities less than one (1) PDH in duration.
- (5) "REGISTRANT" means a person licensed by the Board as an architect, engineer, landscape architect or registered interior designer.
- (6) "SPONSOR" means an individual, organization, association, institution or other entity which provides an educational activity for the purpose of fulfilling the continuing education requirements of these rules.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997. Amendment filed September 11, 2009; effective December 10, 2009.

0120-05-.03 CONTINUING EDUCATION REVIEW.

- (1) The Board may review and may approve sponsors and programs as being relevant to the practice of the represented profession. The Board shall establish a format for documentation needed to comply with these rules. The Board shall also adopt guidelines for auditing continuing education credits claimed. The Chairman of the Board shall, for each represented profession, appoint one (1) member of the Board who is a member of the represented profession to serve as the chairman of any committee appointed to review continuing education.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997.

0120-05-.04 BASIC REQUIREMENTS.

- (1) Basic Requirements-Architects
 - (a) A registered architect seeking biennial renewal for the first time shall, as a prerequisite to renewal, submit satisfactory evidence to the Board of having obtained twelve (12) PDHs the two (2) years immediately following initial registration and immediately preceding application for renewal. All twelve (12) PDHs must be completed in Health, Safety, and Welfare subjects acquired in structured educational activities.
 - (b) A registered architect seeking biennial renewal for each two (2)-year period thereafter shall, as a prerequisite to renewal, submit satisfactory evidence to the Board of having obtained twenty-four (24) PDHs the two (2) years immediately preceding application for renewal. All twenty-four (24) PDHs must be completed in Health, Safety, and Welfare subjects acquired in structured educational activities. PDHs earned in excess of the required amount may not be carried over to a future renewal period.
 - (c) A new registrant is not required to satisfy the continuing education requirements prescribed in this chapter as a prerequisite for initial registration. However, at the time of first registration renewal, the registrant must demonstrate completion of the required continuing education in this rule.
 - (d) Individuals reapplying for registration shall, as a prerequisite to registration, submit evidence satisfactory to the Board of having obtained twenty-four (24) PDHs during the twenty-four (24) months immediately preceding reapplication. All twenty-four (24) PDHs must be completed in Health, Safety, and Welfare subjects acquired in structured educational activities.
 - (e) As an alternative to the requirements listed in 0120-05-.04(1)(a)–(d), a registered architect may meet the continuing education requirement by obtaining twelve (12) PDHs per calendar year, all twelve (12) of which shall be completed in Health, Safety, and Welfare subjects acquired in structured educational activities. PDHs earned in excess of the required amount may not be credited to a future calendar year.
 - (f) For purposes of this rule, a structured educational activity is one (1) in which at least seventy-five percent (75%) of an activity's content and instructional time must be devoted to Health, Safety, and Welfare subjects related to the practice of architecture, including courses of study or other activities under the areas identified as Health, Safety and Welfare subjects and provided by qualified individuals or organizations, whether delivered by direct contact or distance learning methods.

(Rule 0120-05-.04, continued)

- (g) For purposes of this rule, Health, Safety, and Welfare subjects are technical and professional subjects that the Board deems appropriate to safeguard the public and that are within the following enumerated areas necessary for the proper evaluation, design, construction, and utilization of buildings and the built environment.
 - 1. Building Systems: Structural, Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, Communications, Security, Fire Protection
 - 2. Construction Contract Administration: Contracts, Bidding, Contract Negotiations
 - 3. Construction Documents: Drawings, Specifications, Delivery Methods
 - 4. Design: Urban Planning, Master Planning, Building Design, Site Design, Interiors, Safety and Security Measures
 - 5. Environmental: Energy Efficiency, Sustainability, Natural Resources, Natural Hazards, Hazardous Materials, Weatherproofing, Insulation
 - 6. Legal: Laws, Codes, Zoning, Regulations, Standards, Life Safety, Accessibility, Ethics, Insurance to Protect Owners and Public
 - 7. Materials and Methods: Construction Systems, Products, Finishes, Furnishings, Equipment
 - 8. Pre-Design: Land Use Analysis, Programming, Site Selection, Site and Soils Analysis, Surveying
 - 9. Preservation: Historic, Reuse, Adaptation
- (2) Basic Requirements-Engineers
 - (a) A registered engineer seeking biennial renewal for the first time after initial registration shall, as a prerequisite to renewal, submit satisfactory evidence to the Board of having obtained twelve (12) PDHs the two (2) years immediately following initial registration and immediately preceding application for renewal. At least seven (7) of the PDHs claimed shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency.
 - (b) A registered engineer seeking biennial renewal for each two (2)-year period thereafter shall, as a prerequisite to renewal, submit satisfactory evidence to the Board of having obtained twenty-four (24) PDHs the two (2) years immediately preceding application for renewal. At least thirteen (13) of the PDHs claimed shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency. PDHs earned in excess of the required amount may not be carried over to a future renewal period.
 - (c) A new registrant is not required to satisfy the continuing education requirements prescribed in this chapter as a prerequisite for initial registration. However, at the time of first registration renewal, the registrant must demonstrate completion of the required continuing education.
 - (d) Individuals reapplying for registration shall, as a prerequisite to registration, submit evidence satisfactory to the Board of having obtained twenty-four (24) PDHs (thirteen (13) of which shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency) during the twenty-four (24) months immediately preceding reapplication.

(Rule 0120-05-.04, continued)

- (e) As an alternative to the requirements listed in 0120-05-.04(2)(a)–(d), a registered engineer may meet the continuing education requirement by obtaining twelve (12) PDHs per calendar year, at least seven (7) of which shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency. PDHs earned in excess of the required amount may not be carried over to a future renewal period.
- (3) Basic Requirements-Landscape Architects
- (a) A registered landscape architect seeking biennial renewal for the first time after initial registration shall, as a prerequisite to renewal, submit satisfactory evidence to the Board of having obtained twelve (12) PDHs the two (2) years immediately following initial registration and immediately preceding application for renewal. At least seven (7) of the PDHs claimed shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency.
 - (b) A registered landscape architect seeking biennial renewal for each two (2)-year period thereafter shall, as a prerequisite to renewal, submit satisfactory evidence to the Board of having obtained twenty-four (24) PDHs the two (2) years immediately preceding application for renewal. At least thirteen (13) of the PDHs claimed shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency. PDHs earned in excess of the required amount may not be carried over to a future renewal period.
 - (c) A new registrant is not required to satisfy the continuing education requirements prescribed in this chapter as a prerequisite for initial registration. However, at the time of first registration renewal, the registrant must demonstrate completion of the required continuing education in this rule.
 - (d) Individuals reapplying for registration shall, as a prerequisite to registration, submit evidence satisfactory to the Board of having obtained twenty-four (24) PDHs (thirteen (13) of which shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency) during the twenty-four (24) months immediately preceding reapplication.
 - (e) As an alternative to the requirements listed in 0120-05-.04(3)(a)–(d), a registered landscape architect may meet the continuing education requirement by obtaining twelve (12) PDHs per calendar year, at least seven (7) of which shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency. PDHs earned in excess of the required amount may not be carried over to a future renewal period.
- (4) Basic Requirement-Registered Interior Designers
- (a) A registered interior designer seeking biennial renewal for the first time after initial registration shall, as a prerequisite to renewal, submit satisfactory evidence to the Board of having obtained twelve (12) PDHs the two (2) years immediately following initial registration and immediately preceding application for renewal. At least seven (7) of the PDHs claimed shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency.
 - (b) A registered interior designer seeking biennial renewal for each two (2)-year period thereafter shall, as a prerequisite to renewal, submit satisfactory evidence to the Board of having obtained twenty-four (24) PDHs the two (2) years immediately preceding application for renewal (carryover hours, not exceeding twelve (12) hours, from the preceding renewal period may be included). At least thirteen (13) of the PDHs claimed shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency.

(Rule 0120-05-.04, continued)

- (c) A new registrant is not required to satisfy the continuing education requirements prescribed in this chapter as a prerequisite for initial registration. However, at the time of first registration renewal, the registrant must demonstrate completion of the required continuing education in this rule.
- (d) Individuals reapplying for registration shall, as a prerequisite to registration, submit evidence satisfactory to the Board of having obtained twenty-four (24) PDHs (thirteen (13) of which shall address Health, Safety and Welfare issues and technical competency) during the twenty-four (24) months immediately preceding reapplication.
- (e) As an alternative to the requirements listed in 0120-05-.04(4)(a)–(d), a registered interior designer may meet the continuing education requirement by obtaining twelve(12) PDHs per calendar year, at least seven (7) of which must be completed in Health, Safety, and Welfare and technical competency subjects acquired in structured educational activities. The remainder of the PDHs claimed may address general knowledge subjects relevant to the practice of interior design. Up to twelve (12) carryover PDHs from the preceding renewal period may be included in the total PDHs claimed.
 - 1. For purposes of this paragraph, a structured educational activity is one in which at least seventy-five percent (75%) of an activity’s content and instructional time must be devoted to Health, Safety, and Welfare subjects related to the practice of interior design, including courses of study or other activities under the areas identified as Health, Safety and Welfare subjects and provided by qualified individuals or organizations, whether delivered by direct contact or distance learning methods.
 - 2. For purposes of this paragraph, Health, Safety, and Welfare subjects are technical and professional subjects that the Board deems appropriate to safeguard the public and that are within the following enumerated areas necessary for the proper evaluation, design, construction, and utilization of buildings and the built environment.
 - (i) Health/Safety—Includes topics related to protection of the public or the environment. Such topics may include, but are not limited to:
 - (I) Building and Life Safety Codes, regulations and standards of practice
 - (II) Building regulations
 - (III) Products or designs implemented to protect the public or the environment
 - (IV) Product performance standards and topics including, but not limited to, energy efficiency, acoustics, indoor air quality, lighting, or fire and life-safety systems
 - (ii) Welfare—Includes topics that enhance the social, psychological, financial and physical well-being of individuals and the environment. Such topics include, but are not limited to:
 - (I) Social

(Rule 0120-05-.04, continued)

- (II) Psychological
 - (III) Financial
 - (IV) Business practices
 - (V) Ethics
 - (VI) Space design
 - (VII) Budgets and estimating
 - (VIII) Construction administration
 - (IX) Environmental and sustainability issues
 - (X) Finish materials and methods of construction detailing
 - (XI) Special needs populations
- (iii) Topics that do not qualify as Health, Safety, and Welfare include, but are not limited to, computer software training and general business practices, firm marketing, personnel, and management issues.
3. A general knowledge PDH is one where the PDH covers general knowledge regarding interior design practice and process and where less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the PDH content covers Health, Safety, Welfare, barrier-free design or sustainability. The subject of a general knowledge PDH may include, but is not limited to, the five (5) phases of design, including programming, schematic design, design development, construction documents and contract administration.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997. Amendment filed May 20, 2004; effective August 3, 2004. Repeal and new rule filed March 14, 2005; effective May 28, 2005. Amendments filed October 29, 2020; effective January 27, 2021. Amendments filed March 5, 2026; effective June 3, 2026.

0120-05-.05 CONVERSION TABLE.

- (1) Conversions from other units of continuing education to PDHs are as follows:
- (a) One (1) university semester hour of credit.....15 PDH
 - (b) One (1) university quarter hour of credit..... 10 PDH
 - (c) One (1) Continuing Education Unit 10 PDH
 - (d) One (1) hour acceptable professional development education..... 1 PDH

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997.

0120-05-.06 TYPES OF ACCEPTABLE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUING EDUCATION.

- (1) The Board will grant PDH credit for only such professional development continuing education activities that satisfy the following criteria:
 - (a) There is clear purpose and objective for each activity which will maintain, improve or expand skills and knowledge obtained prior to initial licensure or to develop new and relevant skills and knowledge.
 - (b) The content of each presentation is well-organized and presented in a sequential manner.
 - (c) The presentation will be made by persons who are well-qualified by education or experience.
- (2) Continuing education activities for which PDH credit may be given by the Board include, but are not limited to the following:
 - (a) Successful completion or monitoring of college or university sponsored courses;
 - (b) Successful completion of courses which are awarded continuing education units (CEUs);
 - (c) Attendance at structured seminars, tutorials, short courses, correspondence courses, televised courses, Internet courses, or videotaped courses;
 - (d) Attendance at in-house educational programs sponsored by corporations or other organizations;
 - (e) Teaching or instructing as described in (a) through (d) above, unless teaching or instructing is the registrant's regular employment;
 - (f) Authoring published papers, articles, books, or accepted licensing examination items;
 - (g) Making presentations at technical meetings;
 - (h) Attendance at program presentations at related technical or professional meetings where program content is comprised of at least one (1) PDH;
 - (i) Attendance at Board meetings and professional society legislative events, and active participation in a technical/professional society or organization, or a technical or professional public board, as an officer or committee member;
 - (j) Active participation in educational outreach activities involving K-12 or higher education students;
 - (k) Patents granted; and
 - (l) All such activities as described in (a) through (k) above must be relevant to the practice of architecture, engineering, landscape architecture or interior design as determined by the Board and may include technical, ethical or managerial content unless otherwise noted.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997. Amendment filed May 20, 2004; effective August 3, 2004. However, stay of effective date to

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subparagraph (c) of paragraph (2) filed by the House and Senate Government Operations Committee of the Tennessee General Assembly on July 30, 2004; new effective date October 2, 2004. Amendment filed September 11, 2009; effective December 10, 2009. Amendment filed March 9, 2011; effective June 7, 2011. Amendment filed December 11, 2012; effective March 11, 2013. Amendments filed October 28, 2016; effective January 26, 2017. Amendments filed October 29, 2020; effective January 27, 2021. Amendments filed March 5, 2026; effective June 3, 2026.

0120-05-.07 CREDITS.

- (1) Professional Development Hours of credit for qualifying courses successfully completed which offer semester hour, quarter hour, or CEU credit are as specified above. All other professional continuing education activities will be credited one (1) PDH for each contact hour with the following exceptions:
 - (a) Monitoring of university or college courses will be credited at one-third (1/3) the above-stated conversion table.
 - (b) Teaching or instructing qualifying courses or seminars will be credited at twice the PDHs earned by a participating student and may be claimed for credit only once.
 - (c) Authorship of papers, articles, or books cannot be claimed until actually published. A maximum of ten (10) PDHs per biennium may be claimed for each published peer-reviewed paper, article, or book. A maximum of five (5) PDHs per biennium may be claimed for each published paper, article, or book that is not peer-reviewed.
 - (d) Correspondence course PDHs may be considered acceptable to the Board, but the registrant shall submit, upon request, supporting documentation to demonstrate high quality course content.
 - (e) A maximum of eight (8) PDHs per biennium may be claimed for attendance at Board meetings and professional society legislative events, and active participation in technical/professional societies or organizations, or technical or professional public boards, as an officer or committee member.
 - (f) A maximum of four (4) PDHs per biennium may be claimed for active participation in educational outreach activities involving K-12 or higher education students.
 - (g) A maximum of ten (10) PDHs per biennium may be claimed for each patent.
 - (h) A maximum of five (5) PDHs per biennium may be claimed for writing accepted licensing examination items.
- (2) PDHs may be acquired at any location. If the continuing education provider prescribes a customary time for completion of such an activity, then such prescribed time shall, unless the Board finds the prescribed time to be unreasonable, be accepted as the registrant's time for PDH purposes irrespective of actual time spent on the activity.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997. Amendment filed September 11, 2009; effective December 10, 2009. Amendment filed March 9, 2011; effective June 7, 2011. Amendment filed December 11, 2012; effective March 11, 2013. Amendments filed October 28, 2016; effective January 26, 2017. Amendments filed October 29, 2020; effective January 27, 2021.

0120-05-.08 EXEMPTIONS.

- (1) A registrant may be exempt from continuing professional development education requirements for any of the following reasons:
 - (a) A new registrant is not required to satisfy the continuing education requirements prescribed in this chapter as a prerequisite for initial registration. However, at the time of first registration renewal, the registrant must demonstrate completion of the required continuing education for professional development.
 - (b) A non-career military registrant serving on active duty in the armed forces of the United States for a period of time exceeding one hundred twenty (120) consecutive days in a calendar year shall be exempt from obtaining the PDH required during that year.
 - (c) A registrant employed as an architect, engineer, landscape architect or registered interior designer and assigned to duty outside the United States for a period of time exceeding one hundred twenty (120) consecutive days in a calendar year shall be exempt from obtaining the PDH required during that year.
 - (d) A registrant who lists the registrant's occupation as "retired" or "inactive" on the Board-approved renewal form and who further certifies that they are no longer practicing shall be exempt from the PDH required. In the event such a person elects to return to active practice, PDH must be earned for each year exempt, not to exceed the annual requirement for two (2) years before the person returns to active practice. Inactive or retired registrants returning to active practice must report PDH earned within no more than two (2) years of the request to reactivate.
 - (e) A registrant experiencing physical disability, a serious medical condition, or other extenuating circumstances may apply for an exemption or an extension of time to obtain the credits, subject to the review and approval of the Board. Supporting documentation must be furnished to the Board, and the Board reserves the right to deny requests lacking adequate documentation or justification. Registrants granted an exemption or extension may still be subject to disciplinary action for violations of this chapter that occurred outside the period of exemption or extension.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997. Amendment filed May 20, 2004; effective August 3, 2004. Amendment filed September 11, 2009; effective December 10, 2009. Amendment filed September 15, 2015; effective December 14, 2015. Amendments filed October 29, 2020; effective January 27, 2021.

0120-05-.09 CERTIFICATION.

- (1) A registrant seeking renewal shall complete the certification on the renewal form and indicate the number of PDHs claimed for the renewal period. If applicable, the registrant shall also indicate the number of carryover PDHs claimed for the renewal period. Upon completion of the certification, the registrant shall complete the renewal form and submit the appropriate fee.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997.

0120-05-.10 RECORDS.

- (1) Each registrant is responsible for maintaining records which may be used to support credits claimed.

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- (2) Required records include but are not limited to the following:
 - (a) A log showing the type(s) of activity claimed, sponsoring organization, location, duration, instructor's or speaker's name, description of the activity and PDH credit(s) earned; and
 - (b) A transcript or completion certificate or at least two (2) of the following types of documentation: attendance verification records in the form of signed attendance receipts, paid receipts, a copy of a listing of participants signed by a person in responsible charge, or other documents supporting evidence of attendance.
- (3) Records must be maintained for a period of four (4) years, and copies must be furnished to the Board for audit verification purposes within thirty (30) days of the Board's request.
- (4) Any registrant who fails to comply with the requirements of this rule may be deemed by the Board to have violated Rule 0120-02-.02 [Proper Conduct of Practice] or Rule 0120-04-.10 [Professional Conduct].

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 62-2-203(c) and (d) and 62-2-308. **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997. Amendment filed July 19, 2002; effective October 2, 2002. Amendment filed May 20, 2004; effective August 3, 2004. Amendment filed March 9, 2011; effective June 7, 2011.

0120-05-.11 DISALLOWANCE.

- (1) If the Board disallows claimed PDH credits, the registrant shall have ninety (90) days after notification to either substantiate the original claim or earn other credit to meet the minimum requirements.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997. Amendments filed October 28, 2016; effective January 26, 2017.

0120-05-.12 NONCOMPLIANCE.

- (1) Unless a request for inactive or retired status is made, any registrant failing to furnish the required certification during the renewal period, properly completed and signed, shall not be granted renewal of registration by the Board.
- (2) Certificates of registration shall be subject to late renewal for six (6) months following their expiration date by payment of the renewal fee, plus a late penalty as set by the Board, along with a properly completed and signed renewal form indicating that all continuing education requirements for the renewal period have been completed. The applicant for late renewal of certification may not offer to engage in the practice of or engage in the practice of architecture, engineering or landscape architecture, or use the title "registered interior designer," until all late renewal requirements have been met.
- (3) Any person wishing to renew a certificate later than six (6) months after its expiration shall reapply for registration.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 62-2-203(d), 62-2-307, and 63-2-308(a)(1)(E). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed April 25, 1997; effective July 9, 1997. Amendment filed July 19, 2002; effective October 2, 2002.

0120-05-.13 RECIPROCITY.

- (1) If a registrant resides in or has principal place of business in a state or territory of the United States, or another country, that has established mandatory continuing education requirements for architects, engineers, landscape architects or interior designers, and that

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registrant has met the continuing education requirements of the registrant's home jurisdiction and is in good standing in that jurisdiction, then that registrant shall be deemed to have met the continuing education requirements of Tennessee. Documentation that the registrant is in good standing in the registrant's home jurisdiction must be provided at the Board's request. If the registrant is exempt from the continuing education requirements in the registrant's home jurisdiction, the registrant must meet the requirements of Tennessee unless the registrant qualifies for an exemption in Tennessee.

- (2) This rule shall apply only to the acceptance of professional development hours for continuing education and shall not be construed to apply to the registration by comity of architect, engineer, landscape architect or interior designer applicants from another state, territory of the United States or country.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed February 26, 1999; effective May 12, 1999. Amendment filed March 9, 2011; effective June 7, 2011. Amendment filed September 15, 2015; effective December 14, 2015.

0120-05-.14 REPEALED.

Authority: T.C.A. § 62-2-203(d). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed November 11, 2014; effective February 15, 2015. A stay of the effective date was filed January 27, 2015; new effective date May 1, 2015. Repeal filed October 29, 2020; effective January 27, 2021.