
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CALIFORNIA COUNCIL FOR INTERIOR DESIGN CERTIFICATION

NOTE: There will not be any recommendations from the Department of Consumer Affairs because the California Council for Interior Design Certification (CCIDC) is a private, nonprofit organization and the Department has no authority or jurisdiction over them.

JOINT COMMITTEE STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

ISSUE #1: (CONTINUE THE VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION SYSTEM?) Should the certified interior designer law be continued?

Recommendation #1: *The certified interior designer law should be continued. CCIDC should report back to the JLSRC by September 1, 2005.*

Comments: The certified interior designer law can provide helpful guidance to consumers selecting interior designers in California.

ISSUE #2: (MODIFY THE EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION?) What should be the minimum necessary education and experience required for interior design certification?

Recommendation #2: *Amend the Business and Professions Code Section 5801 to allow interior designers that have a two year degree plus four years of work experience to obtain a stamp and call themselves a "certified interior designer"(CID).*

Comments: Pursuant to Section 5801, in order for an individual to obtain a stamp from an interior design organization and to call himself/herself a CID, the individual must provide the interior design organization with evidence of passage of an interior design examination approved by that interior design organization and certain, specified education and/or experience. The education and/or experience allowed is as follows: a four of five year degree plus two years of experience (4+2); a three year certificate plus three years of work experience (3+3); or any combination of education and work totaling eight years. The law does not recognize a two year degree, and instead requires applicants to wait the same amount of time as those with no education at all, eight years, before licensure.

ISSUE #3: (REVIEW AND ASSESS THE BENEFITS AND ALTERNATIVES TO THE CALIFORNIA CODES AND REGULATIONS EXAMINATION (CCRE)?) Is the CCRE the most cost efficient and effective way to ensure an adequate understanding of California codes and regulations relevant to interior design?

Recommendation #3: *CCIDC should review and assess the value of the CCRE examination and explore feasible alternatives.*

Comments: According to CCIDC, the examination is given twice a year, typically in April and October. The exam is administered by paid proctors who are not involved in the design profession. After the proctors collect the exam, the exams are sent back to CCIDC. CCIDC then forwards the exams to Castle Worldwide, a professional psychometric evaluation company, for scoring. The results are faxed to CCIDC when complete, and CCIDC sends out a letter and certificate to the successful candidates. Since November 2000 (not including the October 12, 2002 exam), 105 candidates have taken the CCRE, of which 99 have passed and 6 have failed. It should be noted that the CCRE is a requirement instated by the CCIDC, and not by statute.

Even in light of the most recent validation of the CCRE, the high passage rate calls into question the validity of the exam. It may be that there are other ways of ensuring a candidate's knowledge of California codes and regulations besides an examination. For example, the Veterinary Medical Board allows applicants to either take an approved course or complete a take-home exam to meet a California testing requirement.

ISSUE #4: (CODIFY CCIDC APPROVED EXAMS?) **Should the statute specify which national examinations are recognized by CCIDC?**

Recommendation #4: *Codify the national exams recognized by CCIDC.*

Comments: Pursuant to Section 5801, in order for an individual to obtain a stamp from an interior design organization and to call himself/herself a CID, the individual must provide the interior design organization with evidence of passage of an interior design examination approved by that interior design organization and certain, specified education and/or experience. The three interior design examinations approved by CCIDC (an interior design organization) are: (1) the Council of Qualification for Residential Designers (CQRID); (2) the NCIDQ; and (3) both parts [Certified Bath Designer (CBD) and Certified Kitchen Designer (CKD)] of the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA). Pursuant to Business and Profession Code Section 5801.1, these examinations are recognized and required by the interior design organization and are subject to an occupational analyses and examination validation as required by Business and Profession Code Section 139 every five to seven years. In the statute, it is not specified which exams are acceptable.

The JLSRC is aware of concerns raised by members of the interior design profession relating to CCIDC's acceptance of the NKBA exam. CCIDC has stated their belief that these exams appropriately meet the examination validation requirements specified in Section 139. Additionally, the JLSRC has consistently supported the elimination of barriers to entry and has attempted to provide individuals a variety of ways to demonstrate their competency to practice. It appears that it would assist both CCIDC and the industry to specify in statute the types of eligible exams while also allowing CCIDC or any other interior design organization to recognize other future similarly situated exams.

ISSUE #5: (SPECIFY THE ACCEPTABLE ACCREDITING ORGANIZATIONS?) Should interior design organizations accept the accreditation of all appropriate design accrediting organizations?

Recommendation #5: *Specify the acceptable accrediting organizations for interior design educational programs.*

Comments: Section 5801 states that a certified interior designer may be a graduate from an “accredited interior design degree program,” but does not specify which accreditation organizations are accepted. The JLSRC has been made aware that, in the past, it has not always been clear on CCIDC websites and material which accrediting organizations are accepted. In order to allow for flexibility, yet ensure competency, it should be clear that an accredited interior design degree or certificate at least means a program accredited by Foundation Interior Design Education Research (FIDER), National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), and also means any other accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education or the Commission on Higher Education Accrediting.