

JUNIOR, PRACTISING, RETIRED...

How to find your status as an engineer!



Everyone knows that in order to be able to practise the engineering profession in Québec as well as use the title of “engineer”, one must be a member of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec (hereafter the “Ordre”). However, status can vary from one member to the next. What are the differences between those various statuses and the obligations that stem from them? What conditions must one fulfil to be a retired engineer? Here are the answers to these questions and many others.

PRACTISING ENGINEERS AND THEIR VARIOUS STATUSES

Practising members are considered fully autonomous professionals. They can independently carry out the numerous acts reserved for engineers. They can also immediately control and supervise junior engineers and collaborate with those who hold temporary permits for specific projects.

Members who hold temporary permits are foreign engineers or engineers from other Canadian provinces called upon to work in Québec on a particular project. Temporary permits are granted for one year but are renewable up to three times. Based on various eligibility criteria, members can be required to act in collaboration with a member of the Ordre.

As practising engineers, temporary members can act with complete autonomy; however, they are not yet subjected to requirements under the Charte de la langue française but have up to four years to comply with this legislation.

Limited engineers cannot practise in one or several fields of engineering. This type of limitation can be temporary or permanent.

JUNIOR ENGINEERS OR ENGINEERS-IN-TRAINING

During this crucial and mandatory period, junior engineers, formerly known as engineers-in-training, must carry out all engineering acts under the immediate control and supervision of a practising and seasoned engineer. They can then gain the experience required to achieve complete professional autonomy.

RETIRED ENGINEERS VERSUS ENGINEERS “ENJOYING RETIREMENT”

These days, there are so many ways to enjoy retirement. Engineers can choose to stop practising engineering on a regular basis, yet keep a few projects or mandates. They can give up engineering altogether and continue to work, at times in a completely different field of employment. Finally, they can leave the workforce entirely and enjoy retirement to its fullest ...

Retired members fall into the last category. In effect, the status of retired member is granted to an engineer who no longer collects any employment income, whether in engineering or otherwise. You are eligible to this status if you meet the following three conditions:

1. you are retired and no longer earn employment income;
2. you get a number equal to or greater than 80 when adding your age and the number of years you've been on the Ordre's roll;
3. you've been on the roll, in one category or another and without interruption, during the five years preceding the year during which you request retired status.

Being a retired member is a testament to the member's sense of attachment or belonging to his or her profession and professional order. What's more, annual fees are not as high.

It is important to note that retired members are considered engineers who no longer practise or carry out immediate control and supervision. Upon request, retired engineers can be exempt from complying with continuing education requirements. Should they wish to return to the practice of engineering, they can request to do so. As a result, they will have to pay full membership fees for practising members and comply with continuing education requirements.

Here are three cases of engineers who cannot obtain retired engineer status:

1. engineers who no longer practise but who still receive employment income (for example, vacation payments or income from employment from another field);
2. engineers who work part-time in engineering, earning an annual income of less than \$10,000;
3. all members who receive a record of employment.

In the first case, engineers can identify themselves as "retired engineers" at the line pertaining to area of activity when completing the form relating to annual subscription to the Ordre's roll, indicating that they no longer practise engineering. As a result, they can ask for an exemption with respect to continuing education if, given their age, they no longer carry out professional activities or if they've limited those activities to less than 30 hours per week on a regular basis. However, these engineers are still considered practising members and must pay their annual fees in full. They must also agree to notify the Ordre if they resume practising engineering.

Engineers who continue to practise occasionally and earn some income (as in the second case) remain subject to continuing education requirements given that occasional private practice is still considered professional practice. They must pay their annual fees in full. As long as their annual income remains less than \$10,000, these engineers are covered by engineers' basic group insurance.

There are many differences between these various statuses and members must be fully aware of them. When in doubt, feel free to contact the Ordre's Registration Department at 514 8456141, extension 2460.