

Certificate of Fitness FAQ

- **What is a certificate of fitness?**

A certificate of fitness is a professional license to perform electrical or plumbing work in the state of Alaska. It shows that the holder is qualified to perform the work in accordance with Alaska's minimum codes. There are other statutes that use the term "certificate of fitness", but House Bill 255 only applies to plumbing and electrical licenses.

- **Is holding a certificate of fitness the same thing as being a journeyman?**

A certificate of fitness is a license, while the term "journeyman" is a descriptor that can refer to experience level or to a job title. A journeyman certificate of fitness can be described as a license to perform journeyman-level work in the state.

- **What are the requirements to get a certificate of fitness?**

To obtain a certificate of fitness, a person must demonstrate that they have the knowledge and experience to perform the work to Alaska's minimum standards. Applicants must show they have legally worked the number of hours required for the desired certificate of fitness. After that, the applicant must take a state test to prove their knowledge of the state's minimum codes.

There are also trainee certificates of fitness for those not yet qualified to perform work unsupervised. This certificate ensures that the employee is working with appropriate, qualified supervision. For electricians, linemen, and plumber journeymen, the trainee certificate also ensures that they are enrolled in an apprenticeship program approved by the U.S. Department of Labor.

- **What kind of work requires a certificate of fitness?**

AS 18.62.070 says that a person engaged in work subject to the state's minimum plumbing or electrical standards must have an appropriate certificate of fitness. Anytime a contractor or employee is performing work where the methods and materials of the work are specified in the code, the work is considered "code work". Generally, this work requires an appropriate certificate of fitness.

Alaska state minimum electrical standards specifically cover "only new installations and alterations to existing installations." (AS 18.60.640(a)). Electrical maintenance work, including repairing or cleaning electrical installations, or replacing individual electrical components, does not require a certificate of fitness.

An organized municipality or unorganized village with a population of 2,500 or less is exempt from Alaska's minimum plumbing standards. Work in these exempt locations does not require a plumbing certificate of fitness.

- **I'm a homeowner and I do my own plumbing and electrical work. Do I need a certificate of fitness?**

No. When someone is performing work on their own residence, they aren't considered to be engaged in the plumbing or electrical trades. Keep in mind that even though no certificate of fitness is required, your local and state plumbing and electrical codes still apply.