



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation

Glenn A. Youngkin  
Governor

G. Bryan Slater  
Secretary of Labor

James B. "Jeb" Wilkinson, Jr.  
Director

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Public Participation Guideline Members

**FROM:** Kate Nosbisch, Executive Director  
Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals, and Geologists (PSSWPG)

**DATE:** July 1, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Transition from Certification to Licensure for Geologists – Effective July 1, 2025

Effective July 1, 2025, the Commonwealth of Virginia has transitioned from a voluntary certification program to a mandatory licensure requirement for professional geologists. This change was enacted by the Virginia General Assembly through [House Bill 1835](#) (Chapter 722, Acts of Assembly 2025 Reconvened Session).

#### Summary of Legislative Changes:

House Bill 1835 requires all individuals practicing or offering to practice geology in Virginia to hold a license issued by the Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals, and Geologists. Under the previous law, geologists were certified under a voluntary program. The legislation further:

- Requires the Board to issue a license automatically to any individual who holds an unexpired geology certification issued prior to July 1, 2025
- Makes it a Class 1 misdemeanor to practice or offer to practice geology without a valid license
- Directs the Board to adopt regulations to implement the licensure program within 280 days

#### Key Changes and What They Mean for You:

- **From "Certified" to "Licensed":**  
The previous "Virginia certified professional geologist" designation is being replaced with "Virginia licensed professional geologist".
- **Mandatory Licensure:**  
Representation as a "licensed professional geologist" is now restricted to those licensed by the Board.
- **Enforcement:**  
Practicing or offering to practice geology or using the title "licensed professional geologist" without holding a valid license from the Board is a Class 1 misdemeanor.

- **Exemptions:**

Certain individuals and activities are exempt from the licensure requirement, including those already licensed under other Virginia laws, certain archeologists, chemists, geographers, or oceanographers, individuals working under the direct supervision of a licensed geologist, and those already certified as professional geologists before July 1, 2025.

## **Who is Affected?**

- **Existing Certified Geologists:**

If you held an unexpired certification as of July 1, 2025, your certification will automatically convert to a license. Your certification number will become your license number. No additional action is required at this time.

- **New Applicants:**

All individuals wishing to practice as a professional geologist in Virginia will need to meet the new licensure requirements. The licensure requirements remain aligned with the previous certification program.

## **Purpose of Licensure:**

The new licensure requirements aim to:

- Uphold high educational, experiential, and ethical standards in geology.
- Ensure objectivity, truthfulness, and reliability in the practice of geology.
- Prevent association with illegal or dishonest activities in the practice of geology.
- Limits the practice of geology to licensed individuals

Further information regarding House Bill 1835 can be found at the following link: [HB1835 - 2025 Regular Session | LIS](#). The enacted text (Chapter 722) is available at: [CHAP0722 - 2025 Regular Session | LIS](#) and will also be included as an attachment to this correspondence.

If you would like to receive Public Participation Guidelines via email, please provide an email address to: [bpssandwp@dpor.virginia.gov](mailto:bpssandwp@dpor.virginia.gov) (Soil Scientists and Wetland Professionals) or [geology@dpor.virginia.gov](mailto:geology@dpor.virginia.gov) (Geologists).

To be removed from this mailing list, please email your request to the appropriate Board address listed above.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Board office at (804) 367-8506 or by email using the addresses provided.