



ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION



# APPLICANT GUIDE

Environmental Professional (EP)

Environmental Professional in-training (EPt)

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**A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO THE EP CERTIFICATION PROCESS**



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# WELCOME TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Thank you for your interest in Environmental Professional (EP) certification with ECO Canada.

ECO Canada's certifications are overseen by the Canadian Environmental Certification and Approvals Board (CECAB). CECAB is a national organization dedicated to recognizing competent environmental professionals in Canada. The Board oversees the final ratification of all candidates, contributes to the maintenance of the certification process, and ensures that the Environmental Professional (EP) Code of Ethics is upheld.

## ABOUT THE EP AND EPt TITLES

### Environmental Professional (EP)

This title is intended for professionals who possess significant experience in the Canadian environmental sector, and provides them with formal recognition of their unique environmental competencies;

The initial application fee for EP is \$250.00 plus GST/HST. The membership fee for EP is \$200.00 plus GST/HST, and is payable upon initial certification and every year thereafter.

### Environmental Professional in-training (EPt)

This option is intended for emerging professionals, and is available to recent graduates, newcomers to Canada, and those with fewer than five years of environmental work experience.

The initial application fee for EPt is \$200.00 plus GST/HST. The membership fee for EPt is \$100.00 plus GST/HST, and is payable upon initial certification and every year thereafter.

*Please note that application fees are non-refundable, even in the event of an unsuccessful application for certification.*

### ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

Certifications are awarded based on the evaluation of an individual's competency level, in his or her area of specialization, as compared to the [National Occupational Standards \(NOS\)](#). The NOS for Environmental Employment were developed through extensive consultation and validation with industry experts within Canada. These standards were developed as a definitive guide of the skills and knowledge required for practitioners to do their jobs within their selected field of specialization.

### *Identifying Your Specialization*

In order to recognize a variety of environmental expertise, a number of specializations in which candidates can choose to become certified are offered. Associated with each specialization is a unique set of standards for proficiency, which serve as the foundation for the certification. This system has been designed to allow professionals to obtain recognition that is specific to their skill set, and at the same time, reflects the entire scope of their expertise.

EP applicants can choose up to five specializations in which to become certified, and EPt applicants can choose up to two. The diagram below lists all available specializations to EP and EPt applicants. For a description of each and to view their NOS profiles, please visit the ECO Canada website at [www.eco.ca/certification/whats-my-specialty/](http://www.eco.ca/certification/whats-my-specialty/)



## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for the EP title or the EPt option, a candidate must satisfy basic requirements in the areas of employment and education.

### EMPLOYMENT

#### EP

Applicants must possess a minimum of 5 years of relevant Canadian environmental work experience.

While consecutive experience is preferable, applicants must have accumulated the required 5 years of experience over a maximum of 10 years. Equivalencies are also given for international employment – an applicant may submit 6 years of relevant environmental employment, of which at least one year must be Canadian employment.

Internships are acceptable for use towards satisfying the work experience requirements as they are defined as work placements that are independent of post-secondary studies.

Work terms that are undertaken as part of a PhD Graduate degree are acceptable to use towards satisfying the work experience requirements provided they meet specific criteria. Please contact [EP@eco.ca](mailto:EP@eco.ca) for further information.

A co-op work term, or any work term whose completion is required for graduation from an undergraduate degree, is not acceptable to use towards satisfying the work experience requirements because it is viewed as part of the education requirement.

Volunteer experience is not considered acceptable employment for the EP title.

#### EPt

There is no minimum employment requirement for EPt applicants. The focus for the EPt option is to allow the applicant to develop and hone their environmental skills, with the eventual aim of upgrading to EP certification.

### EDUCATION

Applicants for both EP and EPt are required to have completed either a 2-3 year college diploma or a 3-4 year university degree, from a recognized Canadian institution.

**NOTE:** If an applicant's education was attained outside of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom or the United States, a credential equivalence assessment will be performed. The applicant will be charged an additional fee of \$50.00 + GST/HST to cover the costs of the assessment. A credential report will not be provided to the applicant. If (in rare cases) the applicant's educational institution is not covered by the scope of the credential equivalence assessment, the applicant will not be charged, but must have their educational background assessed for equivalency through a third party assessment center.

## STEPS TO CERTIFICATION

The following section details all of the steps involved in certification, from the initial application right through to the certification decision.

### APPLICATION

Applications for certification are accepted via the [www.eco.ca/certification](http://www.eco.ca/certification) pages of our website only.

You must have a current resume available in order to upload it for Certification staff to review. When you are using the online application system, please note that you can logout and then resume your application at a later time using your e-mail address and password that will be sent to you.

#### **Getting Started**

To begin your application you must first process payment for the application at [www.eco.ca/certification/how-to-apply](http://www.eco.ca/certification/how-to-apply). Once your purchase has been made select 'Continue with my application' to proceed with your registration.

#### **Registration**

Upon receipt of payment you would have been e-mailed both a receipt and login information. Sign in with this information and access the 'My Certifications' tab of your ECO Canada account. You will then proceed to the EP Application page, at which point you will complete several more fields of information, in addition to your general contact information.

#### **Selecting Your Specialization**

Select the specialization for which you wish to apply:

If you choose the Environmental Professional title, you may select up to 5 specializations. If you choose the Environmental Professional in-training option, you may select up to 2 specializations.

#### **Current Employment**

On the EP application page, you will enter information about your current employment, including your occupation, and the address of your current employer, start date of your current employment, a brief job description and the contact information of your supervisor.

#### **Upload Resume**

Please upload your current resume, which should include information on all of your past relevant employment as well as your educational history. If you do not have your resume on hand, please upload a blank document indicating the document is to come. E-mail it to [EP@eco.ca](mailto:EP@eco.ca).

#### **Education**

Please select an option from the drop down list that best describes your post-secondary education.

To verify your educational background, ECO Canada uses the third-party verification service BackCheck. After successfully completing your self-assessment, you will be contacted via e-mail within 3 business days requesting that you complete a consent form. This is a requirement for your certification application. Please note that while BackCheck is able to confirm education with the majority of post-secondary institutions, it is not a guarantee – some institutions are easier to reach than others.

### References

#### Peer Reference Selection and Requirements - EP Applicants

In completing the information on the EP Application page, please submit a minimum of three references that can validate your technical competencies. Peer References will be contacted after confirmation that your Self-Assessment has been successful.

*Please note that each specialization requires three peers for validation, but that the same peer may validate any number of your chosen specializations.*

Peer References should be individuals that have worked with you, and/or observed your environmental skills, and thus have sufficient knowledge of your environmental competencies. Co-workers, supervisors, and clients are suitable peers for EP applicants. As an applicant, you cannot choose anyone who you directly supervise to act as a reference, as this would cause a conflict of interest. You are also not able to submit a relative to complete a peer reference validation on your behalf.

#### Peer Reference Selection and Requirements - EPt Applicants

In completing the information on the EPt Application page, please submit a minimum of three references that can comment on your experience. Peer references are contacted on a randomly-chosen percentage of EPt applicants, thus your peers may or may not be contacted. If your application is randomly selected, your peers will be contacted after confirmation that your Self-Assessment has been submitted.

*Please note that EPt applicants require three peers total.*

In order for an individual to act as a reference on your behalf, a peer must have sufficient knowledge of your environmental background. Co-workers, supervisors, former college/university professors or classmates, and clients are suitable peers for EPt applicants.

### Applicant Declaration and EP Code of Ethics

At the bottom of the EP Application page is the Applicant Declaration. Please read it thoroughly, and if you agree to abide by the [EP Code of Ethics](#), check the “I agree” box. Please do read the Code of Ethics; it is an important part of the Environmental Professional title, ensuring that all members are held to high standards of accountability. Moving forward in your certification application depends on agreement to the EP Code of Ethics.

### Confirmation

Upon successful submission of your application, you will be forwarded to the Confirmation page. The confirmation page states that you will be contacted shortly regarding the next steps of the process. This will occur after the Background Validation step (outlined below) has been undertaken by Certification staff.

## BACKGROUND VALIDATION

Applicants for all titles undergo a validation of the employment and resume information that they have submitted. In this stage, Certification staff ensures that all necessary information to evaluate and validate all of your employment and education submissions has been received.

During the Background Validation, Certification staff may contact the verification contacts you listed in your employment history to ensure the information is accurate.

Once you have submitted your application, Background Validation will typically be completed within 5 business days. You will be contacted by email with the results of background validation – you may be asked to proceed to the Self-Assessment (below), submit further information, or re-evaluate which title you wish to pursue.

After successful Background Validation, Certification staff will verify your educational information via BackCheck, as outlined in the Application section above.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT

Based on the NOS technical competency statements in the specialization (or specializations) that you have chosen, you will be required to conduct a self-assessment of your technical competencies comparing your skills and knowledge to the national standard.

If you are applying as an EP the results of your self-assessment must meet or exceed the minimum levels established through the NOS validation process. If you are applying as an EPt, you are not required to meet the minimum levels.

Each EP/EPt specialization is comprised of a series of competency statements. For each statement, you will be asked to disclose how recently you last demonstrated the competency and to rate your level of proficiency for each competency statement.

Once you have submitted your self-assessment, the results will be evaluated by the Registrar. If the evaluation has been successful, you will receive an email confirmation and will be able to move on to the peer validation stage. If your assessment is unsuccessful, the Registrar will conduct a review of your application, and will provide you with a list of available options.

Only EP's are required to achieve a minimum score – EPt's are not expected to have a high level of experience and the self-assessment is only used as a tool to evaluate your competency level and identify areas of strength and potential areas for improvement.

### PEER VALIDATION

#### **EP**

Your peers will be contacted after confirmation that your Self-Assessment has been successful. Peers of EP Applicants will be presented with the same set of statements that the applicant evaluated themselves on in the self-assessment, and asked to rate the applicant on the same scale.

#### **EPt**

If your application is randomly selected, your peers will be contacted after confirmation that your Self-Assessment has been successful. Peers of EPt Applicants will be presented with a generalized list of environmental competencies, and asked to select those that apply to the applicant.

#### **All Applicants**

It is essential that you confirm participation of your peers prior to submitting their information to ECO Canada.

Once submitted, peers will be notified to begin the validation and periodic reminders will be sent out until it is complete. To ensure that the two-week time limit for applications is not exceeded, it is important to keep in contact with peers and enable completion of the validation in a timely manner.

Note: Applicants may not discuss the details of their self-assessment or peers' validation with peer validators as the process is strictly confidential.

If your peers successfully validate your level of competence, your application will be forwarded to the Registrar for final review. If your peers do not validate your level of competence, the Registrar will contact you with options regarding how to proceed.



### REGISTRAR REVIEW

Once the results of your Background Validation, Self-Assessment and Peer Validation have been received by the Registrar, a final review will be conducted to ensure that all steps were successful, and all submissions and documentation are in place before your application goes to the Board for ratification.

### BOARD RATIFICATION

The Approvals Board (CECAB) will review elements of your application and provide final ratification. Generally, the CECAB meets during the second week of each month.

If your application is approved for certification by the CECAB, you will be notified via email.

### SUCCESSFUL CERTIFICATION

If you are successfully certified as an Environmental Professional with ECO Canada, you will be mailed a certification package including a wall certificate, and your name will be added to the publicly available roster located at:

[www.cecab.org/public/roster.aspx](http://www.cecab.org/public/roster.aspx)

At this time, the first year membership fee will be due.

Note that EPt members do not receive a wall certificate, as they are still in-training, but their name will be displayed on the roster as an EPt.

### APPEAL OF CERTIFICATION DECISION

If you are unsuccessful in your application for certification, and you feel that the certification process was handled inappropriately, you are entitled to appeal the certification decision.

If you would like further information on the appeal fee or process, please contact the Registrar at [EP@eco.ca](mailto:EP@eco.ca).

### COMPLAINTS REGARDING THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

If you are unhappy with aspects of the certification process, you are entitled to file your written complaint with the Registrar ([EP@eco.ca](mailto:EP@eco.ca)). ECO Canada endeavors to investigate complaints in a constructive, impartial and timely manner. The complaint is assigned to a suitable investigator, and a correction, cause and corrective or preventive actions are determined and carried out. The complainant will be updated when significant progress has been made and/or when the investigation has concluded.

## STEPS TO CERTIFICATION

### ANNUAL AND TERM RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

All certified members are required submit their Professional Development activities to ECO Canada on an annual basis. For more information on the credit requirements, please review the Member Guide available in your certification account or contact us at [EP@eco.ca](mailto:EP@eco.ca).

### CODE OF ETHICS AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Maintenance of certification also hinges on members maintaining adherence to the Environmental Professional (EP) Code of Ethics. Certification may be revoked if a certified member breaches the [Environmental Professional \(EP\) Code of Ethics](#). Revocation proceedings could be initiated by a complaint, registered in writing, to the Registrar by an employer, client, or member of the general public. In such proceedings, ECO Canada ensures that all parties are treated fairly and equitably. The following actions are examples of what could initiate a complaint and ultimately result in revocation of a certificate:

- Falsification of credentials
- Evidence of professional incompetence
- Breach of the Code of Ethics
- Knowingly falsifying environmental documentation
- Professional misconduct

ECO Canada maintains a policy and procedure for complaints against certified members, as well as withdrawal and cancellation of certification. Please contact the Registrar at [EP@eco.ca](mailto:EP@eco.ca) for details. Please note that the Environmental Professional Code of Ethics can be found at:

[www.eco.ca/wp-content/uploads/EP\\_Code\\_of\\_Ethics\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.eco.ca/wp-content/uploads/EP_Code_of_Ethics_ENG.pdf)



ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION



## HOW TO CONTACT ECO CANADA STAFF

Should you require any assistance while in the application process, or have questions after becoming certified, please feel free to contact Certifications staff at any time:

**EMAIL:** [EP@eco.ca](mailto:EP@eco.ca)

**PHONE:** (403) 233-7484

**FAX:** (403) 269-9544

**[ECO.CA/CERTIFICATION](http://ECO.CA/CERTIFICATION)**