

Article 2.

Plumbing and Heating Contractors.

§ 87-16. Board of Examiners; appointment; term of office.

There is created the State Board of Examiners of Plumbing, Heating, and Fire Sprinkler Contractors consisting of seven members appointed by the Governor: one member from a school of engineering of the Greater University of North Carolina, one member who is a plumbing or mechanical inspector from a city in North Carolina, one licensed air conditioning contractor, one licensed plumbing contractor, one licensed heating contractor, one licensed fire sprinkler contractor, and one person who has no tie with the construction industry to represent the interests of the public at large. Members serve for terms of seven years, with the term of one member expiring each year. The term of the member initially appointed to fill the position of licensed fire sprinkler contractor shall commence April 25, 1991. No member appointed after June 7, 1979, shall serve more than one complete consecutive term. Vacancies occurring during a term are filled by appointment of the Governor for the remainder of the unexpired term. (1931, c. 52, s. 1; 1939, c. 224, s. 1; 1971, c. 768, s. 1; 1973, c. 476, s. 128; 1979, c. 834, s. 1; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 842, s. 1; c. 978, s. 1.)

§ 87-17. Removal, qualifications and compensation of members; allowance for expenses.

The Governor may remove any member of the Board for misconduct, incompetency or neglect of duty. Each member of the Board shall be a resident of this State at the time of his appointment. Each member of the Board shall receive for attending sessions of the Board or of its committees the amount of per diem, and for the time spent in necessary traveling in carrying out the provisions of this Article, and in addition to the per diem compensation, each member shall be reimbursed by the Board from funds in its hands for necessary traveling expenses and for such expenses incurred in carrying out the provisions hereof as shall be approved by a majority of the members of the Board. Payment of compensation and reimbursement of expenses of Board members shall be governed by G.S. 93B-5. (1931, c. 52, s. 2; 1969, c. 445, s. 8; 1979, c. 834, ss. 2, 3.)

§ 87-18. Organization meeting; officers; seal; rules; employment of personnel; acquire property.

The Board shall, within 30 days after its appointment, meet in the City of Raleigh and organize, and elect a chairman, secretary, and treasurer, each to serve for one year. Thereafter the officers shall be elected annually. The secretary and treasurer shall give bond approved by the Board for the faithful performance of their duties in the sum as the Board may, from time to time, determine. The Board shall have a common seal, shall formulate rules to govern its actions, and is hereby authorized to employ personnel as it may deem necessary to carry out the provisions of this Article. The Board shall have the power to acquire, hold, rent, encumber, alienate, and otherwise deal with real property in the same manner as a private person or corporation, subject only to the approval of the Governor and the Council of State. Collateral pledged by the Board for an encumbrance is limited to the assets, income, and revenues of the Board. (1931, c. 52, s. 3; 1939, c. 224, s. 2; 1953, c. 254, s. 1; 2001-270, s. 1.)

§ 87-19. Regular and special meetings; quorum.

The Board after holding its first meeting as hereinbefore provided, shall thereafter hold at least two regular meetings each year. Special meetings may be held at such times and places as the bylaws and/or rules of the Board provide; or as may be required in carrying out the provisions

hereof. A quorum of the Board shall consist of not less than four members. (1931, c. 52, s. 4; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 842, s. 2.)

§ 87-20. Record of proceedings and register of applicants; reports.

The Board shall keep a record of its proceedings and a register of all applicants for examination, showing the date of each application, the name, age and other qualifications, place of business and residence of each applicant. The books and records of the Board shall be prima facie evidence of the correctness of the contents thereof. On or before the first day of March of each year the Board shall submit to the Governor a report of its activities for the preceding year, and file with the Secretary of State a copy of such report, together with a statement of receipts and expenditures of the Board attested by the chairman and secretary. (1931, c. 52, s. 5.)

§ 87-21. Definitions; contractors licensed by Board; examination; posting license, etc.

(a) Definitions. – For the purpose of this Article:

- (1) The word "plumbing" is hereby defined to be the system of pipes, fixtures, apparatus and appurtenances, installed upon the premises, or in a building, to supply water thereto and to convey sewage or other waste therefrom.
- (2) The phrase "heating, group number one" shall be deemed and held to be the heating system of a building, which requires the use of high or low pressure steam, vapor or hot water, including all piping, ducts, and mechanical equipment appurtenant thereto, within, adjacent to or connected with a building, for comfort heating.
- (3) The phrase "heating, group number two" means an integral system for heating or cooling a building consisting of an assemblage of interacting components producing conditioned air to raise or lower the temperature, and having a mechanical refrigeration capacity in excess of fifteen tons, and which circulates air. Systems installed in single-family residences are included under heating group number three, regardless of size. Holders of a heating group number three license who have heretofore installed systems classified as heating group number two systems may nevertheless service, replace, or make alterations to those installed systems until June 30, 2004.
- (4) The phrase "heating, group number three" shall be deemed and held to be a direct heating or cooling system of a building that raises or lowers the temperature of the space within the building for the purpose of comfort in which electric heating elements or products of combustion exchange heat either directly with the building supply air or indirectly through a heat exchanger using an air distribution system of ducts and having a mechanical refrigeration capacity of 15 tons or less. A heating system requiring air distribution ducts and supplied by ground water or utilizing a coil supplied by water from a domestic hot water heater not exceeding 150 degrees Fahrenheit requires either plumbing or heating group number one license to extend piping from valved connections in the domestic hot water system to the heating coil and requires either heating group number one or heating group number three license for installation of coil, duct work, controls, drains and related appurtenances.
- (5) Any person, firm or corporation, who for a valuable consideration, (i) verifies, inspects, evaluates, tests, installs, alters or restores, or offers to verify, inspect,

evaluate, test, install, alter or restore, either plumbing, heating group number one, or heating group number two, or heating group number three, or (ii) verifies, inspects, evaluates, tests, lays out, fabricates, installs, alters or restores, or offers to verify, inspect, evaluate, test, lay out, fabricate, install, alter or restore fire sprinklers, or any combination thereof, as defined in this Article, shall be deemed and held to be engaged in the business of plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contracting; provided, however, that nothing herein shall be deemed to restrict the practice of qualified registered professional engineers. Any person who installs a plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler system on property which at the time of installation was intended for sale or to be used primarily for rental is deemed to be engaged in the business of plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contracting without regard to receipt of consideration, unless exempted elsewhere in this Article.

- (6) The word "contractor" is hereby defined to be a person, firm or corporation engaged in the business of plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contracting.
 - (7) The word "heating" shall be deemed and held to mean heating group number one, heating group number two, heating group number three, or any combination thereof.
 - (8) Repealed by Session Laws 1997-298, s. 1.
 - (9) The word "Board" means the State Board of Examiners of Plumbing, Heating, and Fire Sprinkler Contractors.
 - (10) The word "experience" means actual and practical work directly related to the category of plumbing, heating group number one, heating group number two, heating group number three, or fire sprinkler contracting, and includes related work for which a license is not required.
 - (11) The phrase "fire sprinkler" means an automatic or manual sprinkler system designed to protect the interior or exterior of a building or structure from fire, and where the primary extinguishing agent is water. These systems include wet pipe and dry pipe systems, preaction systems, water spray systems, foam water sprinkler systems, foam water spray systems, nonfreeze systems, and circulating closed-loop systems. These systems also include the overhead piping, combination standpipes, inside hose connections, thermal systems used in connection with the sprinklers, tanks, and pumps connected to the sprinklers, and controlling valves and devices for actuating an alarm when the system is in operation. This subsection shall not apply to owners of property who are building or improving farm outbuildings. This subsection shall not include water and standpipe systems having no connection with a fire sprinkler system. Nothing herein shall prevent licensed plumbing contractors, utility contractors, or fire sprinkler contractors from installing underground water supplies for fire sprinkler systems.
- (b) Classes of Licenses; Eligibility and Examination of Applicant; Necessity for License. –
- (1) In order to protect the public health, comfort and safety, the Board shall establish two classes of licenses: Class I covering all plumbing, heating, and fire sprinkler systems for all structures, and Class II covering plumbing and heating systems in single-family detached residential dwellings.
 - (2) Restricted licenses or classifications. –

- a. The Board shall establish and issue a fuel piping license for use by persons who do not possess the required Class I or Class II plumbing or heating license, but desire to engage in the contracting or installing of fuel piping extending from an approved fuel source at or near the premises, which piping is used or may be used to supply fuel to any systems, equipment, or appliances located inside the premises.
- b. The Board shall establish and issue a limited plumbing contractor license for use by persons who do not possess the required Class I or Class II plumbing license but desire to engage in the contracting or installation, repair, or replacement of either of the following:
 - 1. Exterior potable water service lines or backflow preventers serving irrigation systems or domestic water service systems of two inch diameter or smaller.
 - 2. Exterior building sewer or water service piping of two inch diameter or smaller.
- c. The Board shall establish and issue:
 - 1. A State and local government plumbing, heating group number one, heating group number two, or heating group number three technician license for use by persons who do not possess the required plumbing, heating group number one, heating group number two, or heating group number three contractor license but desire to engage in the installation, repair, or replacement of plumbing, heating group number one, heating group number two, or heating group number three solely as an employee of a State or local government agency.
 - 2. A State and local government plumbing, heating group number one, heating group number two, or heating group number three technician license for use by persons who do possess the required plumbing, heating group number one, heating group number two, or heating group number three contractor license but also desire to engage in the installation, repair, or replacement of plumbing, heating group number one, heating group number two, or heating group number three as an employee of a State or local government agency without listing their contractor license in the name of the State or local government agency. Licensed contractors who obtain the State and local government technician license shall be allowed to contract and perform work under their contractor license only during hours such contractor is not actively employed with the State or local government as a technician, and is on-site carrying out the contracting activity personally. No work can be performed by the State or local government agency in reliance upon the technician license when the licensee is not present.
- d. The Board may also establish additional restricted classifications to provide for:

1. The licensing of any person, partnership, firm, or corporation desiring to engage in a specific phase of heating, plumbing, or fire sprinkling contracting.
 2. The licensing of any person, partnership, firm, or corporation desiring to engage in a specific phase of heating, plumbing, or fire sprinkling contracting that is an incidental part of their primary business, which is a lawful business other than heating, plumbing, or fire sprinkling contracting.
 3. The licensing of any person desiring to engage in contracting and installing fuel piping from an approved fuel source on the premises to a point inside the residence.
- e. The Board shall establish and issue a Residential Fire Sprinkler Design license for use by persons who hold the appropriate Residential Fire Sprinkler Contractor license to design and install the proper multipurpose fire sprinkler system required by the North Carolina Building Code.
- (3) The Board shall prescribe the standard of competence, experience and efficiency to be required of an applicant for license of each class, and shall give an examination designed to ascertain the technical and practical knowledge of the applicant concerning the analysis of plans and specifications, estimating costs, fundamentals of installation and design, codes, fire hazards, and related subjects as these subjects pertain to plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler systems. The examination for a fire sprinkler contractor's license shall include such materials as would test the competency of the applicant and which may include the minimum requirements of certification for Level III, subfield of Automatic Sprinkler System Layout, National Institute for Certification of Engineering Technologies (NICET). As a result of the examination, the Board shall issue a certificate of license of the appropriate class in plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contracting, and a license shall be obtained, in accordance with the provisions of this Article, before any person, firm or corporation shall engage in, or offer to engage in, the business of plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contracting, or any combination thereof. The obtaining of a license, as required by this Article, shall not of itself authorize the practice of another profession or trade for which a State qualification license is required. Prior to taking the examination, the applicant may be required by the Board to establish that the applicant is at least 18 years of age and is of good moral character. The Board may require experience as a condition of examination, provided that (i) the experience required may not exceed two years, (ii) that up to one-half the experience may be in the form of academic or technical courses of study, and (iii) that registration is not required at the commencement of the period of experience. Evidence that a plumbing or heating licensee has continuously maintained a license in good standing under this Article for a minimum of 10 years shall be accepted as experience for Class II plumbing and heating qualifications.
- (4) Conditions of examination set by the Board shall be uniformly applied to each applicant within each license classification. It is the purpose and intent of this

section that the Board shall provide an examination for plumbing, heating group number one, or heating group number two, or heating group number three, or each restricted classification, and may provide an examination for fire sprinkler contracting or may accept a current certification of the National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies for Fire Protection Engineering Technician, Level III, subfield of Automatic Sprinkler System Layout.

- (5) The Board is authorized to issue a certificate of license limited to either plumbing or heating group number one, or heating group number two, or heating group number three, or fire sprinkler contracting, or any combination thereof. The Board is also authorized to issue a certificate of license limited to one or more restricted classifications that are established pursuant to this section.
- (6) Examinations shall be given at least twice each year, and additional examinations may be given as the Board deems wise and necessary. The examination shall be conducted in two parts to include a business and law portion and a technical portion. Requests for examination applications and information shall be made available online without charge and supplied at no cost to the potential examinee. The Board may offer written examinations or administer examinations by computer within 30 days after approving an application. Applicants shall be permitted to obtain the test score from each part of computerized examinations immediately upon completion of the examination. Upon passing the examination and paying the annual license fee, the applicant shall be issued a license. A person who fails to pass any examination shall not be reexamined until after 90 days from the date the person was last examined. An applicant who fails to pass any examination may take the failed portion within six months of the date approved to take the examination without retaking the portion passed. The Board may require applicants who fail any part of the examination three times to receive additional education before the applicant is allowed to retake the examination or wait one year before retaking any portion of the examination.

(c) To Whom Article Applies. – The provisions of this Article shall apply to all persons, firms, or corporations who engage in, or attempt to engage in, the business of plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contracting, or any combination thereof as defined in this Article, which includes the installation or replacement of condensing units, air handlers, gas furnaces, package units, boilers, water heaters, heat exchangers, or whole-house water purification or treatment systems, as well as the connection, repair, or alteration to the plumbing drainage, waste, or venting system or the potable water system. The provisions of this Article shall not apply to those who clean plumbing drains or those who make minor repairs or minor replacements to an already installed system of plumbing, heating or air conditioning, but shall apply to those who make repairs, replacements, or modifications to an already installed fire sprinkler system. Minor repairs or minor replacements within the meaning of this subsection shall include the replacement of parts in an installed system which do not require any change in energy source, fuel type, or routing or sizing of venting or piping. Parts shall include a compressor, coil, contactor, motor, or capacitor.

(c1) Exemption. – The provisions of this Article shall not apply to a person who performs the on-site assembly of a factory designed drain line system for a manufactured home, as defined in G.S. 143-143.9(6), if the person (i) is a licensed manufactured home retailer, a licensed

manufactured home set-up contractor, or a full-time employee of either, (ii) obtains an inspection by the local inspections department and (iii) performs the assembly according to the State Plumbing Code.

(c2) Exemption. – The provisions of this Article shall not apply to electric generating facilities that are subject to G.S. 62-110.1 or that provide power sold at wholesale that is regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(d) Repealed by Session Laws 1979, c. 834, s. 7.

(d1) Expired December 31, 1991.

(e) Posting License; License Number on Contracts, etc. – The current license issued in accordance with the provisions of this Article shall be posted in the business location of the licensee, and its number shall appear on all proposals or contracts and requests for permits issued by municipalities. The initial qualified licensee on a license is the permanent possessor of the license number under which that license is issued, except that a licensee, or the licensee's legal agent, personal representative, heirs or assigns, may designate in writing to the Board a qualified licensee to whom the Board shall assign the license number upon the payment of a ten dollar (\$10.00) assignment fee. Upon such assignment, the qualified licensee becomes the permanent possessor of the assigned license number. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the license number may be assigned only to a qualified licensee who has been employed by the initial licensee's plumbing and heating company for at least 10 years or is a lineal relative, sibling, first cousin, nephew, niece, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law of the initial licensee. Each successive licensee to whom a license number is assigned under this subsection may assign the license number in the same manner as provided in this subsection.

(f) Repealed by Session Laws 1971, c. 768, s. 4.

(g) The Board may, in its discretion, grant to plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contractors licensed by other states license of the same or equivalent classification without written examination upon receipt of satisfactory proof that the qualifications of such applicants are substantially equivalent to the qualifications of holders of similar licenses in North Carolina and upon payment of the usual license fee.

(h) Expired December 31, 1993.

(i) The provisions of this Article shall not apply to a retailer, as defined in G.S. 105-164.3(229), who, in the ordinary course of business, enters into a transaction with a buyer in which the retailer of a water heater sold for installation in a one- or two-family residential dwelling contracts with a licensee under this Article to provide the installation services for the water heater if the retail sales and installation contract with the buyer is signed by the buyer and the retailer and identifies the licensee and provides the licensee's license number and telephone number. All installation services rendered by the licensee in connection with any such contract must be performed in compliance with all building code, permit, and inspection requirements.

(j) The provisions of this Article shall not apply to a person primarily engaged in the retail sale of goods and services who contracts for or arranges financing for the sale and installation of a single-family residential heating or cooling system for which a license to install such system is required under this Article, provided all of the following requirements are met:

- (1) No contract or proposal for sale or installation may be presented to or signed by the buyer unless either (i) the specifications for and design of the system have been first reviewed and approved by an employee of the retail seller who is licensed under this Article or (ii) the specifications for and design of the system have been first reviewed and approved by the person licensed under this Article

who will install the system, if the installer is not an employee of the retail seller. This subdivision does not prohibit the retailer from providing a written estimate to a potential buyer so long as no contract or proposal for contract is presented or signed prior to the review and approval required by this subsection.

- (2) The person installing the system is licensed under this Article.
- (3) The contract for sale and for installation is signed by the buyer, by an authorized representative of the retail seller, and by the licensed contractor and contains the contractor's name, license number, and telephone number and the license number of the person approving the system design specifications.
- (4) Installation services are performed in compliance with all applicable building codes, manufacturer's installation instructions, and permit and inspection requirements.
- (5) The retailer provides, in addition to any other warranties it may offer with respect to the system itself, a warranty for a period of at least one year for any defects in installation.

(k) The provisions of subsections (i) and (j) of this section shall not apply to a system meeting the definition of subdivision (a)(11) of this section.

(l) The provisions of this Article do not apply to any of the following persons to the extent the person does not claim to be a plumbing or heating contractor or is not acting in the capacity of a plumbing or heating contractor in the course of the person's duties:

- (1) A home inspector licensed under Article 9F of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.
- (2) A certified Code-enforcement official licensed under Article 9C of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.
- (3) A residential energy services network (RESNET) certified home energy rater. (1931, c. 52, s. 6; 1939, c. 224, s. 3; 1951, c. 953, ss. 1, 2; 1953, c. 254, s. 2; 1967, c. 770, ss. 1-6; 1971, c. 768, ss. 2-4; 1973, c. 1204; 1979, c. 834, ss. 4-7; 1981, c. 332, s. 1; 1983, c. 569, ss. 1, 2; 1989, c. 623, s. 1; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 842, s. 3; c. 978, s. 2; 1991, c. 355, s. 1; c. 507, s. 1; c. 761, s. 13; 1993, c. 78, s. 1; 1997-298, s. 1; 1997-382, ss. 1, 4; 2001-270, s. 2; 2002-159, s. 36(a); 2003-2, s. 1; 2003-31, ss. 1-3.1; 2004-203, s. 69; 2005-131, s. 1; 2005-289, s. 3; 2013-332, s. 1; 2016-105, s. 2; 2017-15, s. 1; 2019-169, s. 3.1(c); 2019-174, s. 8; 2022-75, s. 12; 2023-91, s. 3.)

§ 87-22. License fee; expiration and renewal; reinstatement.

All persons, firms, or corporations engaged in the business of either plumbing or heating contracting, or both, shall pay an annual license fee not to exceed one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00). The annual fee for a piping or restricted classification license shall not exceed that for a plumbing or heating license. All persons, firms, or corporations engaged in the business of fire sprinkler contracting shall pay an initial application fee not to exceed seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) and an annual license fee not to exceed three hundred dollars (\$300.00). In the event the Board refuses to license an applicant, the license fee deposited shall be returned by the Board to the applicant. All licenses shall expire on the last day of December in each year following their issuance or renewal. Persons who obtain a license by passing an examination on or after October 1 of any year may receive a license for the remainder of the year by paying one-half of the usual license fee for that classification of license. It shall be the duty of the secretary and treasurer to send

by United States mail or e-mail to every licensee registered with the Board, notice to the licensee's last known address reflected on the records of the Board of the amount of fee required for renewal of license, the notice to be mailed at least one month in advance of the expiration of the license. The Board may require payment of all unpaid annual fees before reissuing a license. In the event of failure on the part of any person, firm or corporation to renew the license certificate annually and pay the required fee during the month of January in each year, the Board shall increase the license fee by twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) to cover any additional expense associated with late renewal. The Board shall require reexamination upon failure of a licensee to renew license within three years after expiration. The Board may adopt regulations requiring attendance at programs of continuing education as a condition of license renewal. A licensee employed full time as a local government plumbing, heating, or mechanical inspector and holding qualifications from the Code Officials Qualifications Board may renew the license at a fee not to exceed twenty-five dollars (\$25.00). (1931, c. 52, s. 7; 1939, c. 224, s. 4; 1971, c. 768, s. 5; 1979, c. 834, s. 8; 1981, c. 332, s. 2; 1989, c. 623, s. 2; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 842, s. 4; 1997-382, s. 2; 2001-270, s. 3; 2005-131, s. 2.)

§ 87-22.1. Examination fees; funds disbursed upon warrant of chairman and secretary-treasurer.

The Board shall charge a nonrefundable application and examination fee not to exceed one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00) for each examination or any part of an examination, and the funds collected shall be disbursed upon warrant of the chairman and secretary-treasurer, to partially defray general expenses of the Board. The application and examination fee shall be retained by the Board whether or not the applicant is granted a license. Until changed by the Board pursuant to rules adopted by the Board, the fee for each examination or any part taken on a particular day shall be one hundred dollars (\$100.00). (1959, c. 865, s. 2; 1989, c. 623, s. 3; 2001-270, s. 4; 2005-131, s. 3.)

§ 87-22.2. Licensing of nonresidents.

(a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

- (1) Delinquent income tax debt. – The amount of income tax due as stated in a final notice of assessment issued to a taxpayer by the Secretary of Revenue when the taxpayer no longer has the right to contest the amount.
- (2) Foreign corporation. – Defined in G.S. 55-1-40.
- (3) Foreign entity. – A foreign corporation, a foreign limited liability company, or a foreign partnership.
- (4) Foreign limited liability company. – Has the same meaning as the term "foreign LLC" in G.S. 57D-1-03.
- (5) Foreign partnership. – Either of the following that does not have a permanent place of business in this State:
 - a. A foreign limited partnership as defined in G.S. 59-102.
 - b. A general partnership formed under the laws of a jurisdiction other than this State.

(b) Licensing. – The Board shall not issue a license for a foreign corporation unless the corporation has obtained a certificate of authority from the Secretary of State pursuant to Article 15 of Chapter 55 of the General Statutes. The Board shall not issue a license for a foreign limited

liability company unless the company has obtained a certificate of authority from the Secretary of State pursuant to Article 7 of Chapter 57D of the General Statutes.

(c) Information. – Upon request, the Board shall provide the Secretary of Revenue on an annual basis the name, address, and tax identification number of every nonresident individual and foreign entity licensed by the Board. The information shall be provided in the format required by the Secretary of Revenue.

(d) Delinquents. – If the Secretary of Revenue determines that any nonresident individual or foreign corporation licensed by the Board, a member of any foreign limited liability company licensed by the Board, or a partner in any foreign partnership licensed by the Board, owes a delinquent income tax debt, the Secretary of Revenue may notify the Board of these nonresident individuals and foreign entities and instruct the Board not to renew their licenses. The Board shall not renew the license of such a nonresident individual or foreign entity identified by the Secretary of Revenue unless the Board receives a written statement from the Secretary that the debt either has been paid or is being paid pursuant to an installment agreement. (1998-162, ss. 5, 11; 2013-157, s. 21.)

§ 87-23. Revocation or suspension of license for cause.

(a) The Board shall have power to revoke or suspend the license of or order the reprimand or probation of any plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contractor, or any combination thereof, who is guilty of any fraud or deceit in obtaining or renewing a license, or who fails to comply with any provision or requirement of this Article, or the rules adopted by the Board, or for gross negligence, incompetency, or misconduct, in the practice of or in carrying on the business of a plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contractor, or any combination thereof, as defined in this Article. Any person may prefer charges of such fraud, deceit, gross negligence, incompetency, misconduct, or failure to comply with any provision or requirement of this Article, or the rules of the Board, against any plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contractor, or any combination thereof, who is licensed under the provisions of this Article. All of the charges shall be in writing and investigated by the Board. Any proceedings on the charges shall be carried out by the Board in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.

(b) The Board shall adopt and publish guidelines, consistent with the provisions of this Chapter, governing the suspension and revocation of licenses.

(c) The Board shall establish and maintain a system whereby detailed records are kept regarding complaints against each licensee. (1931, c. 52, s. 8; 1939, c. 224, s. 5; 1953, c. 1041, s. 5; 1973, c. 1331, s. 3; 1979, c. 834, s. 9; 1987, c. 827, s. 1; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 842, s. 5; 1997-382, s. 3.)

§ 87-24. Reissuance of revoked licenses; replacing lost or destroyed license.

The Board may in its discretion reissue license to any person, firm or corporation whose license may have been revoked: Provided, four or more members of the Board vote in favor of such reissuance for reasons deemed sufficient by the Board. A new certificate of registration to replace any license which may be lost or destroyed may be issued subject to the rules and regulations of the Board. (1931, c. 52, s. 9; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 842, s. 6.)

§ 87-25. Violations made misdemeanor; employees of licensees excepted.

Any person, firm or corporation who shall engage in or offer to engage in, or carry on the business of plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contracting, or any combination thereof, as defined

in G.S. 87-21, without first having been licensed to engage in such business, or businesses, as required by the provisions of this Article; or any person, firm or corporation holding a limited plumbing or heating license under the provisions of this Article who shall practice or offer to practice or carry on any type of plumbing or heating contracting not authorized by said limited license; or any person, firm or corporation who shall give false or forged evidence of any kind to the Board, or any member thereof, in obtaining a license, or who shall falsely impersonate any other practitioner of like or different name, or who shall use an expired or revoked license, or who shall violate any of the provisions of this Article, shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. An employee in the course of his work as a bona fide employee of a licensee of the Board shall not be construed to have engaged in the business of plumbing, heating, or fire sprinkler contracting, as the case may be. (1931, c. 52, s. 10; 1939, c. 224, s. 6; 1989, c. 623, s. 4; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 842, s. 7; 1993, c. 539, s. 604; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)

§ 87-25.1. Board may seek injunctive relief.

(a) Whenever it appears to the Board that any person, firm or corporation is violating any of the provisions of this Article or of the rules and regulations of the Board promulgated under this Article, the Board may apply to the superior court for a restraining order and injunction to restrain the violation. The superior courts have jurisdiction to grant the requested relief, irrespective of whether or not criminal prosecution has been instituted or administrative sanctions imposed by reason of the violation.

(b) When the Board prevails in actions brought under this section, the court shall award the Board its reasonable attorney's fee not to exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000) plus the costs associated with obtaining the relief and the investigation and prosecution of the violation.

(c) Examination applicants who have failed to pay a court award pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall not be allowed to take any examination offered by the Board until the award has been satisfied. (1979, c. 834, s. 11; 2013-332, s. 2; 2024-49, s. 3.1(a).)

§ 87-26. Corporations; partnerships; persons doing business under trade name.

(a) A license may be issued in the name of a corporation, provided, one or more officers, or full time employee or employees, or both, empowered to act for the corporation, are licensed in accordance with the provisions of this Article; and provided such officers or employee or employees shall execute contracts to the extent of their license qualifications in the name of the said corporation and exercise general supervision over the work done thereunder.

(b) A license may be issued in the name of a partnership provided one or more general partners, or full time employee or employees empowered to act for the partnership, are licensed in accordance with the provisions of this Article, and provided such general partners or employee or employees shall execute contracts to the extent of their license qualifications in the name of the said partnership, and exercise general supervision over the work done thereunder.

(c) A license may be issued in an assumed or designated trade name, provided the owner of the business conducted thereunder, or full time employee or employees empowered to act for the owner, are licensed in accordance with the provisions of this Article; and such owner or employee or employees shall execute contracts to the extent of their license qualifications, in the said trade name, and exercise general supervision over the work done thereunder.

(d) A certificate of license may be issued in accordance with the provisions of this Article upon payment of the annual license fee by such corporation, partnership, or owner of the business conducted under an assumed or designated trade name, as the case may be, and the names and

qualifications of individual licensee or licensees connected therewith shall be indicated on the aforesaid license.

(e) It shall be necessary that persons licensed in accordance with the provisions of this section shall exercise general supervision over contracts to completion.

(f) Nothing in this section shall be deemed to limit the ability of a licensee under this Article who is regularly employed by a local board of education to maintain an individual license or to contract or perform work during the hours the licensee is off-duty from the regular employer. (1931, c. 52, s. 12; 1939, c. 224, s. 8; 1957, c. 815; 1967, c. 770, s. 7; 2016-105, s. 3.)

§ 87-27. License fees payable in advance; application of.

All license fees shall be paid in advance to the secretary and treasurer of the Board and by him held as a fund for the use of the Board. The compensation and expenses of the members of the Board as herein provided, the salaries of its employees, the costs of continuing educational programs for licensees and applicants, and all expenses incurred in the discharge of its duties under this Article shall be paid out of such fund, upon the warrant of the chairman and secretary and treasurer. (1931, c. 52, s. 13; 1933, c. 57; 1939, c. 224, s. 9; 1953, c. 254, s. 3; 1959, c. 865, s. 1; 1979, c. 834, s. 10.)

§ 87-27.1. Public awareness program.

The Board shall establish and implement a public awareness program to inform the general public of the purpose and function of the Board. (1979, c. 834, s. 11.)