
Registered Members Change of Status Policy

August 2011

Policy

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Introduction

The *Foresters Act* requires any person in BC who wants to practise professional forestry, as defined in the Act, in British Columbia to be a member of the association. This includes forest technologists and professional foresters. This type of legislation, commonly known as 'right to practise' legislation, is similar to the legislation that sets the rules for doctors, lawyers or accountants. The *Foresters Act* gives council the power to pass resolutions that govern ABCFP members including:

- a) the establishment and administration of standards, policies and procedures for enrolment and registration and the qualifications of candidates for admission, including the subjects of study, the examinations to be passed and the experience in forestry required of applicants for membership and for registration;
- b) the resignation, reinstatement and temporary withdrawal from practice of members;
- c) the fees, other than the annual membership fees, payable by members;
- d) the levy, assessment, payment, remission and collection of fees, assessments and all other such charges;
- e) the removal of members from the register for the non-payment of fees or other charges;
- f) the removal of enrolled members from the register for not completing registration requirements within a specified period;

Power and Authority Vested in the Board of Examiners and the Registrar

The *Foresters Act* grants council the power to delegate council authority and decision-making powers to individuals, board and committees. The board of examiners and the registrar have been granted authority to administer the membership requirements outlined in this policy.

This policy applies to registered members of the association.

This policy, passed by council resolution dated September 24, 2009 replaces the Registration and Membership policy portion of the *Enrolment, Registration and Membership Policy* approved by council on December 1, 1999. It should be read in conjunction with the *Foresters Act*, and the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABCFP) Bylaws.

Change in Membership Status

During the course of their careers, registered members may go through a series of changes in their membership status which may vary according to individual needs. These changes could be in the form of resignation, leave of absence, retirement, life membership or reinstatement to active membership. This policy will guide current or former registered members on the actions they need to take when a change in their membership status is necessary.

For the association to process a request for a change of status there are specific documents that must be completed and submitted to the registration department. Complete requests may be forwarded to the board of examiners for consideration and recommendation and then finally to council for approval. The processing of all requests takes place once every month. In order for a specific request to be processed within the same month, a request must be received by the registration department no later than the first week of the month. A request received after such date will be placed on hold for processing in the following month.

Upon approval of your request for change of status, the membership roll will be updated accordingly and you will be notified of this fact by e-mail or mail. The association will also update its membership directory, place an announcement on its website to inform the membership and the general public of your new status and, more importantly, whether you are able to engage in the practice of professional forestry.

If your request is placed on hold or turned down, the registration department will inform you of the necessary actions that must be addressed to the satisfaction of the board of examiners before your request can move forward. Once the matter has been addressed, your request will be resubmitted to the board for further consideration.

The following are specific policy guidelines relating to change of status.

1.0 Resignation Policy

1.1 Introduction

A Registered Forest Technologist (RFT) or a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) who is no longer practising professional forestry in British Columbia may resign from the association.

1.2 Who Can Apply for Resignation

You may resign from the association so long as you:

1. Are not practising professional forestry as defined in the *Foresters Act*;

2. Refrain from engaging in any and all professional forestry practice while not a member;
3. Do not represent yourself as a Registered Professional Forester; Professional Forester; or Registered Forest Technologist; and
4. Do not return to practice without first reinstating your membership status.

To inform the ABCFP of your resignation, please complete and submit the applicable forms available on our website at <http://www.abcfp.ca/>.

1.3 Use of Title and Practice Prohibited

Once you resign you are no longer entitled to:

1. Use any of the titles Registered Professional Forester, RPF, Professional Forester, RFT, Registered Forest Technologist or any other title which could lead a member of the public to believe you are an active registered member of the association; or
2. Engage in the practice of professional forestry, without first reinstating yourself to full active membership status. Please refer to the *Foresters Act* regarding unauthorized practice and improper use of title.

Pursuant to the Bylaws, certificates of registration, annual membership cards, and seals or stamps issued or obtained under authority of the *Foresters Act* and the Bylaws, remain the property of the association, constitute evidence of registration under the *Foresters Act* as at the date of issue, and must be returned to the association upon demand.

2.0 Retirement Policy

2.1 Introduction

The association recognizes that most members will eventually retire from work and stop practising professional forestry. While no longer practising, these members often wish, and are encouraged, to remain actively involved with the profession and in the affairs of the association. Two membership categories exist to accomplish this objective: Retired Membership and Life Membership.

2.2 Retired Membership

2.2.1 Retired Membership Criteria

Bylaw 5.13 outlines the criteria which must be met in order to be eligible for admittance into the Retired member category.

5.13 Council may admit a registered member to the retired membership category who:

5.13.1 Submits to the association the application forms and supporting documentation required by council;

5.13.2 Satisfies council that they are not engaged in the practice of professional forestry as defined in the Foresters Act and they do not intend to return to practice in the future;

5.13.3 Signs a non-practice declaration;

5.13.4 Is fifty-five (55) years of age or older, or if not fifty-five (55) years of age or older, can demonstrate extenuating circumstances to the satisfaction of council;

5.13.5 Has been a registered member in good standing for a minimum of fifteen (15) continuous years unless the member can demonstrate extenuating circumstances to the satisfaction of council; and

5.13.6 Agrees to pay the required membership fees set out in the fee schedule published to the members.

2.2.2 How to Apply for Retired Member Status

To apply for retired status, you must complete and submit the applicable forms available on our website at <http://www.abcfp.ca/>. In your application you must outline how and why you meet the criteria set out in Bylaw 5.13. Please note that when calculating the minimum of 15 years continuous membership, for the purposes of Bylaw 5.13, time spent on leave of absence may be included. Also please be aware that we recognize certain newer members, particularly RFTs, may not have had opportunity to accumulate 15 years of continuous membership prior to retirement. We will accept and consider applications from members who joined the ABCFP later in their careers and as a result are unable to meet the 15 year continuous membership requirement. Members must submit a letter of application for retired status that outlines when the member joined and when they retired in order to clarify why they were unable to meet the 15 year requirement.

Applications for retired membership are brought before the board of examiners for consideration and must be approved by council. If council accepts your application, you will be notified of this fact by e-mail and your name will be removed from the active member roll and placed on the retired members roll. The association will inform the membership and the public that you have retired from active professional forestry practice.

2.2.3 Use of Title and Practice Prohibited

Bylaw 6.6 outlines the rights and responsibilities of Retired and Life members.

6.6 Retired and Life members shall:

6.6.1 Not enjoy practice rights;

6.6.2 Not sign, seal, or stamp professional documents;

6.6.3 Only use the titles "Retired Professional Forester", or "Retired Forest Technologist" (as the case may be), or the designations "RPF (Ret)", "R.P.F. (Ret.)", "RFT (Ret)", or "R.F.T. (Ret)" (as the case may be);

6.6.4 Not use any such other designation or title which could lead a member of the public to believe that he/she is qualified to practice;

6.6.5 Unless otherwise limited in these bylaws, enjoy voting and participation rights in the affairs of the association;

6.6.6 Not be subject to the quality assurance programs and continuing competency requirements that may be adopted by council from time-to-time;

6.6.7 Be subject to the complaint resolution processes described in these bylaws; and

6.6.8 Not be eligible to apply for leaves of absence.

2.3 Life Membership

2.3.1 Life Membership Criteria

Bylaw 5.14 outlines the criteria which must be met in order to be eligible for admittance into the Life member category.

5.14 Council may admit a registered member to the life membership category who:

5.14.1 Has:

5.14.1.1 Been nominated by not less than ten (10) registered members or retired registered members;

5.14.1.2 Applies, in writing, to be granted life membership; or

5.14.1.3 Is recommended by the Board of Examiners for life membership.

5.14.2 Satisfies council that they are not engaged in the practice of professional forestry as defined in the Foresters Act and they do not intend to return to practice in the future;

5.14.3 Signs a non-practice declaration;

5.14.4 Is fifty-five (55) years of age or older, or if not fifty five (55) years of age or older, can demonstrate extenuating circumstances to the satisfaction of council;

5.14.5 Has been a registered member in good standing for a minimum of twenty-five

(25) continuous years unless the member can demonstrate extenuating circumstances to the satisfaction of council; and

5.14.6 In the opinion of council, has made an exemplary contribution to the profession of forestry or the practice of forest technology, as the case may be.

Council has empowered the board of examiners to receive and evaluate applications for Life Membership. The board of examiners recommends to council whether Life Membership status should be conferred. The criteria on which you will be assessed relative to Bylaw 5.14 have been jointly developed by the board of examiners and council and may be modified from time to time. These criteria are available on our website at <http://www.abcfp.ca/>.

A member who has taken a leave of absence is still considered to be a registered member in good standing during the leave for the purposes of Bylaw 5.14.5.

2.3.2 How to Apply for Life Member Status

Council may grant Life Membership to persons who meet the requirements set out in Bylaw 5.14 and associated policies and procedures. The grant of Life Membership status is an honour rather than a right. If you wish to be considered for Life Membership, you must submit a letter of application to the registration department. In that letter, you should outline how and why you meet the criteria in Bylaw 5.14 and how you meet the requirements of the guideline on the ABCFP website regarding what constitutes exemplary contribution to the profession. You should also include any other materials you think will assist in deciding whether you should be granted Life Membership. To that end, a work history or curriculum vitae must also be included with your application.

Your application will be forwarded to the board of examiners for consideration and recommendation to council. If council accepts your application, you will be notified of this fact by e-mail and your name will be placed on the life member roll. The association may also place an announcement informing the membership and the public that you have been granted the honour of Life Membership. You will also be invited to attend the association's annual general meeting at which you will be formally recognized and presented with a gold seal to be placed on your membership certificate.

2.3.3 Use of Title and Practice Prohibited

Bylaw 6.6 outlines the rights and responsibilities of Retired and Life members as per section 2.2.3 above.

3.0 Leave of Absence Policy

3.1 Introduction

From time to time, registered members may find themselves in a situation where they are not actively practising forestry in British Columbia. Members faced with these situations may wish to consider whether taking a leave of absence is appropriate.

The reasons for considering a leave of absence are many and varied. They include: unemployment; health issues; returning to school; living and working outside the province; or being away from work on maternity or paternity leave, to name but a few of the more common reasons.

3.2 Who Can Apply for a Leave of Absence?

Active RFTs and active RPFs, who are in good standing and not practising professional forestry in British Columbia, may take a leave of absence. Life members, retired members and members with conditional status (conditional RFTs and transferring forest professionals) who have not passed the registration exam cannot apply for a leave of absence.

To apply for a leave of absence, you must complete and submit the applicable forms and fees available on our website at <http://www.abcfp.ca/>.

3.3 How Long Is the Leave Effective?

A leave of absence may be granted after submission of the application form noted above. If accepted, the leave of absence will be effective until the end of the association's fiscal year (November 30). Members wishing to take a leave of absence for longer than one year must re-apply by November 30 annually for another leave of absence.

3.4 How Many Leaves of Absence are Allowed?

Registered members are allowed an unlimited number of leaves of absence; however, members taking more than three consecutive years on leave of absence must meet the reinstatement requirements detailed in the Reinstatement from Leave of Absence section.

3.5 Use of Title and Practice Prohibited

While on leave of absence, you are not entitled to:

- Use any of the titles Registered Professional Forester, RPF, Professional Forester, RFT, Registered Forest Technologist or any other title which could lead a member of the public to believe you are an active registered member of the association; or
- Engage in the practice of professional forestry, without first reinstating yourself to full active membership status. Please refer to the *Foresters Act* regarding unauthorized practice and improper use of title.
- Participate in the affairs of the association, including: voting, sitting on council or any boards, committees or subcommittees.

All members on leave of absence are still subject to the *Foresters Act* and Bylaws of the association, including the Code of Ethics. Any registered member on a leave of absence who engages in the practice of professional forestry in British Columbia is reminded that they do so in contravention of the *Foresters Act* and as such are subject to disciplinary action.

4.0 Reinstatement Policy

4.1 Introduction

Occasionally, individuals who have resigned, taken a leave of absence, been granted Retired or Life status, or have been removed or struck from the rolls, wish to return to their former membership status. The requirements necessary to reinstate your membership status will vary depending on the following factors:

- The length of time which has passed since you were last an active member;
- The reason you left active status (voluntary resignation or retirement versus disciplinary action or removal); and
- The activities in which you have been engaged since leaving active status as a registered member.

4.2 How to Apply for Reinstatement

To reinstate, you must submit to the registration department the applicable forms and fees available on our website at <http://www.abccfp.ca/>. The application should also include:

- The reasons for leaving active member status; and
- Detailed information about your activities since leaving active status. This will, at a minimum, require you to provide a resume or curriculum vitae.

Applications are reviewed by the board of examiners on a case-by-case basis. The board of examiners recommends to council whether your application for reinstatement should be accepted and whether any terms and conditions for reinstatement should be imposed. Council has the power to reject, accept, or vary these recommendations, and may impose any such additional terms and conditions for reinstatement as it sees fit. Policies have been developed to assist the board of examiners in determining reinstatement requirements. They are listed in section 4.3. below.

4.3 Reinstatement to Active Registered Status

4.3.1 Introduction

Registered members who have voluntarily resigned, retired, been granted Life membership, been removed from the membership roll for non-payment of fees, or been struck from the roll for disciplinary action, may be able to reinstate their membership to active status. Each type of reinstatement carries different requirements and is outlined below.

4.3.2 Reinstating After a Voluntary Resignation

If you are a registered member who has voluntarily resigned in good standing with the ABCFP and have remained off the membership roll for a period not longer than 36 months, you may reinstate your active membership status by submitting an application to the registration department and paying the reinstatement fee and the appropriate annual membership fee. For a list of the current fees please refer to our website. Your application will be forwarded to the board of examiners to prepare a recommendation to council.

If you are a registered member who has voluntarily resigned in good standing with the ABCFP and have remained off the membership roll for between 36 and 72 months, the board of examiners may require you to write and pass the registration exam in addition to the requirements set out in the preceding paragraph.

If you are a registered member who has voluntarily resigned in good standing with the ABCFP and have remained off the membership roll for more than 72 months, you

will have to complete any requirements deemed necessary (which may include, but is not limited to, re-qualifying educational credits) in addition to the requirements set out in the preceding two paragraphs.

4.4 Reinstating from Retired or Life Membership Status

Retired or Life members who wish to return to practice may do so by reinstating their full active membership status. The effect of this action is to put their Retired or Life Membership status in abeyance until such time as they decide to retire from practice once again. Retired and Life members may apply for reinstatement on the same terms and conditions as active members described in the preceding section.

4.5 Reinstating from Leave of Absence

A member on leave may be reinstated to active status through voluntary reinstatement as described below.

4.5.1 Voluntary Reinstatement

4.5.1.1 Absences for Less Than 36 months

Voluntary reinstatement occurs when you send the reinstatement application form to the registration department. You may apply to be reinstated at any time in the association's fiscal year. With the exception of members reinstating to active status after more than three consecutive leaves of absence, the requirements for reinstating are submitting the applicable forms and fees available on our website at <http://www.abcfp.ca/>.

Members on leave of absence for maternity/parental leave or for health reasons and who provide the necessary documentation (e.g. copy of your child's birth certificate, medical note, etc.) will only have to pay their pro-rated annual membership fee and will not have to pay the reinstatement fee.

4.5.1.2 Absences for More Than 36 months

If you have been on a leave of absence for three consecutive years or more, you may be required to write and pass the registration exam before you can reinstate your membership status.

If you have been on a leave of absence for more than 72 months you will have to complete any requirements deemed necessary which may include further studies and writing and passing the registration exam.

4.5.2 Involuntary Reinstatement

Involuntary reinstatement occurs when an individual on leave of absence fails to apply for a further leave prior to November 30. Effective December 1st of each year, individuals on leave who have not applied for further leave will be reinstated to active status as RFT or RPF.

4.6 Reinstating from Removal Due to Failure to Renew your Membership

If you are a registered member and have failed to renew your membership according to the ABCFP *Membership Renewal Policy* (e.g. not paid your annual membership fees by the prescribed deadline and submitted your self-assessment declaration if required) your name will be removed from the membership roll. Your ability to reinstate your active membership status will depend on how soon you apply to do so.

4.6.1.1 Applications within 36 months of being struck from the membership roll

You may reinstate your active membership status within 36 months of being struck from the membership roll by submitting to the registration department all applicable forms and fees including any penalties for late payment outstanding on your account. For a complete list of fees and penalties, please refer to our website.

4.6.1.2 Applications after 36 months of beings struck from the membership roll

If you have been struck from the membership roll for 36 months or longer and wish to reinstate your membership to full active registered member status you must submit to the registration department all the documents and fees mentioned in Section 4.6.1.1. Additional requirements for reinstatement may include any requirements deemed necessary which may include further studies and writing and passing the registration exam.

4.7 Struck from the Roll by Disciplinary Action

Where terms of reinstatement have not been specifically outlined as part of the penalty imposed for discipline of a member, council may refuse reinstatement and/or future enrolment. Council may reject an application from any applicant known to have been convicted, in British Columbia or elsewhere, of an indictable or other such serious criminal offence.

5.0 Glossary of Commonly Used Terms

Academic Appeals Committee or AAC means a special committee of the board of examiners and/or council members that is established to hear academic appeals. Academic appeals may include requests to re-write the registration examination if you have failed it more than once and other appeals as determined by council.

Act means the *Foresters Act*.

Association, we, us, our, the ABCFP or the association means the Association of BC Forest Professionals. In British Columbia, the association regulates the practice of professional forestry, the practice of forest technology and the practice of associate members of the ABCFP.

Board of Examiners or Board means a committee appointed by council to advise us, among other things, on matters related to enrolment, registration, and continued membership with the ABCFP.

Bylaws mean the association bylaws. Bylaws are rules passed by council and approved by a vote of the members. These rules apply to all members. While all bylaws are important, you should pay very close attention to two of the bylaws; the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Professional Practice.

Council means those persons who are duly elected or appointed (as per the specifications of the **Foresters Act** and ABCFP bylaws) to run the affairs of the association and to develop and enforce policy, including policy relating to enrolment and membership with the association. All applications for enrolment must be approved by council.

Registrar means the association's registrar. The registrar is in charge of running the registration department and applying ABCFP policy or policy variances to your application.

Registration Exam refers to the exam that must be written by members to become registered.

Transferring Forest Professional means a forest professional who is accepted by the ABCFP under the provisions of the ABCFP Bylaws or under the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) or the Trade Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA) who has yet to pass the registration examination.

You or your means you.



330-321 Water Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 1B8
Tel: 604.687.8027 Fax: 604.687.3264
E-mail: info@abcfp.ca
Website: www.abcfp.ca

Ensuring BC's Forests Are In Good Hands.
