

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN INTERIOR DESIGNER

### PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

There are currently no restrictions in Colorado for who may offer interior design services. In public spaces, this can put the health, safety and welfare of the public in jeopardy if an unqualified interior designer makes incorrect decisions that put the public at risk. Title legislation will clarify which interior designers have met the higher standard of care that is required to work in the public realm.

### RIGHT TO PRACTICE / LOSS OF WORK

In Colorado, interior design is legally recognized as a profession within the architectural practice act. With no title protection you may be precluded from practicing to your fullest capabilities or from bidding on certain state projects even though you have formal interior design education, experience and have passed the NCIDQ exam. In addition, without title protection, interior designers run the risk of losing their ability to provide certain services through the restrictions of other design professions' legislation. This means loss of work for interior designers, and a loss of revenue to the state.

### INTERIOR DESIGN STUDENTS / EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

The future of the profession lies with the interior design students. Twenty-seven other states in the nation have interior design legislation that recognizes the profession. In the future, students may choose to leave Colorado to practice in a state where their profession is recognized, and legally supported.

### ABILITY TO PRACTICE ACROSS STATE LINES

Given the mobility and global nature of businesses today, interior designers are unlikely to practice in the same city or state throughout their careers. The ability of interior designers to work on a project across state lines or to move their business from state to state depends on establishing a standard scope of practice and professional qualifications for interior designers. You can ease your ability to practice across state lines by ensuring that standards in Colorado are in line with those in other states.

### REQUIREMENTS

Each state's requirements are different but the passage of the NCIDQ exam is the most common requirement to be registered (as proposed in Colorado). In other states, regulation may include certification and licensure. All states also require a combination of education and experience, usually totaling six years. Some states require an additional code exam specific to their state, and half of the states also require CEU's for renewal. When a state implements a new law, it sometimes provides a "window of opportunity" or "grandfather" period to allow interior designers currently practicing in the state who do not meet the proposed level of requirement to become registered. Legislators do this because they do not want to disenfranchise their citizens, nor impact thriving businesses. Often these "grandfathered" designers must pass the Building and Barrier-Free Code portion of the NCIDQ in addition to having a specified amount of experience.

### OTHER PROFESSIONS

CIDC believes interior design is a distinct profession worthy of title protection for those who choose to meet a higher standard. Interior design is similar to other professions, such as accounting and the law, where there are various levels of expertise recognized and supported within the profession. As a practicing interior design professional, regulation brings a higher tier of achievement that may be sought out by those who wish to – but does not limit those who do not. The accomplishment of title protection will serve to achieve parity in years to come, in accordance with other states.