



Skilled Trades Licences

in the City of Hamilton

Introduction

If you own or operate a plumbing; heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC); drain laying; or building repair company or work in any of these fields as a tradesperson, you must have a Contractor's and/or Master's Licence with the City of Hamilton. The City's Licensing By-law (07-170) controls the trade licensing process for businesses in Hamilton that deal with these services. Although the Province (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities) oversees the apprenticeship process, training, and certification for many skilled trades such as plumbing and HVAC; you still need a separate licence from the City to operate in Hamilton.

There are two (2) licence types;

- Master's Licence: the individual tradesperson needs to apply and obtain this licence.
- Contractor's Licence: the business owner(s) need to apply and obtain this licence.

Both licences are required when the business owner is also the tradesperson.

Are there exceptions?

Not all businesses that provide these services require a licence. If a Professional Engineer designs, oversees, reviews, and submits the reports to the City of Hamilton's Building Services Division for the work being done, then a licence is not required. If requested, you will need to show proof of the Professional Engineer's credentials. Please contact Municipal Law Enforcement if you are unsure of the requirements.

What are the requirements for a Master's Licences?

Building Repairperson

- Must have two (2) years experience in building repair;
- Must pass City of Hamilton Building Repair Master examination; and
- A Building Repair Master cannot be a master for more than one company.

Drain Layer (Installer)

- Must have two (2) years experience in drain laying;
- Must pass City of Hamilton Drain Layer Master examination; and
- A Drain Layer (Installer) cannot be a master for more than one company.

HVAC

- Must hold a Certificate of Qualification (CofQ) under the Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act as Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic, a Steam Fitter or Sheet Metal Worker, or qualified as an Oil Burner Mechanic or Gas Fitter under the Energy Act for two (2) years.

Plumber

- Must hold a Certificate of Qualification (CofQ) in the plumbing trade under the Apprenticeship and Tradesperson's Qualification Act for two (2) years.
- Skilled in the planning, superintending, installing, maintenance and repair of plumbing equipment and services, and familiar with laws, rules and regulations governing this trade.

Can you provide some more details about the exams for the Building Repair Master's Licence and the Drain Laying Master's Licence?

Building Repair Master's Licence Exam

- Is a two hour, open book examination based on Part 9 and 12 of the Ontario Building Code and the Building Code Act (It is your responsibility to bring a current copy of Ontario Building Code with you to the exam).
- Includes multiple choice, true or false, written questions, and diagrams.
- Topics covered: roofing, siding, insulation, framing, masonry, doors and windows, Ontario legislation, and Building Permit regulations.

Drain Laying Master's Licence Exam

- Is a two hour, open book examination based on Ontario Building Code sections: 3, 7, 8, and 9; City of Hamilton Licensing By-law; and Occupational Health and Safety Act (It is your responsibility to bring a current copy of Ontario Building Code with you to the exam).
- Topics covered: building drains and storm drains, foundation drains, water services, septic systems, related legislation (e.g. Ontario Acts), diagrams, and trade practices.

A 70% grade is required to pass both of these exams. If you are not successful, a three month waiting period is required before you can rewrite. Exams are held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at 330 Wentworth Street, North (applications must be submitted prior to this time).

How do I know if my business requires a Contractor's Licence?

The requirement of having a Contractor's Licence depends on the services the business provides. Below is a list of services, for each of the four trades that require a Contractor's Licence.

Building Repair Businesses must have a licence if they deal with:

Repairs and renovations including: building, installing, extending, or replacing a part of a building, such as additions, prefabricated structures, roofing, siding, decks, chimneys and fireplaces (masonry work), porches, replacement windows, insulation, and framing.

Note: please ensure all appropriate Building Permits are in place prior to construction or demolition by contacting the Building Services Division (contact information is noted under Additional Resources in this brochure).



Drain Laying Businesses must have a licence if they deal with:

Any work of drain laying, weeping tile installing, septic tank installing, drain reconstruction, or repair or removing tree roots or other obstructions from drains, or private drain connections.

Septic systems, which requires certification from the Province. The certification and licensing of installers is now part of the Building Code. You must check with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for requirements, (contact information is noted under Additional Resources in this brochure).

HVAC Businesses must have a licence if they deal with:

- Heating, air-conditioning and ventilation means the layout, assembly, installation or repairs of any cooling, or heating\cooling combination system for residential, commercial, institutional, or industrial purposes.
- HVAC businesses must also be registered with Technical Standards and Safety Authority (www.tssa.org).

Plumbing Businesses must have a licence if they deal with:

Plumbing installations including any procedure, method, matter or thing referred to or described in the Plumbing Code, which includes the installation, maintenance, alterations, extension, or repair of plumbing.

How do I apply for a trade licence?

You need to visit the City of Hamilton's Licensing Counter at Hamilton City Centre, 77 James Street North, Suite 250, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. You can download a form at www.hamilton.ca/tradelicence.

Additional requirements:

For Plumbing and HVAC Trade Licences: An application form must be completed. Your photo will be taken and you will be provided with a mandatory

photo identification card and licensing fees will be collected at the time of your application.

For Drain Laying and Building Repair Licences:

The tradesperson must register for the City of Hamilton Building Repair Master or Drain Layer Master Examination. Upon notification from our office by letter that you have passed the required City examination, you are required to come into our office and complete an application form. Your photo will be taken and you will be provided with a mandatory photo identification card and licensing fees will be collected at the time of your application.

Master's Licence must be applied for by the individual tradesperson and the tradesperson must bring all documentation (e.g. Certificate of Qualification, confirmation of passing City exam etc.) proving their status along with a current Criminal Reference Check from Police Services (contact information is noted under Additional Resources in this brochure).

The Contractor's Licence must be applied for by the owner and officers of the company and all contractors/businesses must bring corporate papers, proof of insurance and a current Criminal Record Check(s) from Police Services (contact information is noted under Additional Resources in this brochure).

Do I have to renew my licence every year?

All trades licences expire every year (one year from the date of issuance) and must be renewed. Renewal notices are sent out by mail approximately one month prior to their expiry date, but it is the licence holder's responsibility to ensure their licence is valid and up-to-date. Proof of insurance and photo identification must be submitted and validated upon renewal. You will also be required to sign a declaration stating that you have not been convicted of any criminal offence since you were first issued your licence.

Why do I need a licence?

The By-law's primary purpose is to protect Hamilton residents who may hire these kinds of services. It is recommended that all tradespeople carry their licences with them because homeowners are encouraged to ask for verification of certification and licensing. In addition, City staff will conduct random checks of trades and may request proof of licence as part of proactive enforcement of this By-law.

Additional Resources

Canadian Standards Association

- Develops standards that address real needs, such as enhancing public safety and health.
- Provides guides and seminars to assist organizations and individuals in further understanding standards and their applications.

Phone: 1.800.463.6727

Website: www.csa.ca

City of Hamilton's Building Services Division

- Carries out inspections in conjunction with Building Permits, and also responds to customer requests to determine if a permit is required.
- Staff assist both homeowner and contractor to complete their projects in accordance with Building Code Regulations and applicable zoning requirements.

Phone: 905.546.2782

Email: mle@hamilton.ca

Website: www.hamilton.ca/bylawcomplaintform

Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada (HRAI)

The country's largest industry trade association, representing approximately 1,000 professional contractors, and hundreds of industry manufacturers and distributors.

Phone: 1.800.267.2231

Email: hraimail@hrai.ca

Website: www.hrai.ca

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Promotes a housing market that serves the full range of housing needs, protects tenants, and encourages private sector building.

Phone: 1.866.220.2290 (toll free)

Email: mininfo.mah@ontario.ca

Website: www.mah.gov.on.ca

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Regulates trades in Ontario and where to go to write your C of Q exam.

Phone: 905.521.7764

Website: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/

Hamilton Police Services

Records Business Center will conduct Criminal Record Checks.

Phone: 905.546.4979

Website: www.hamiltonpolice.on.ca

Note: This brochure is to be used as a guide only. For complete information, please review the Licensing By-law 07-170.

For more information contact:

Municipal Law Enforcement Section Parking and By-law Services Division

Planning and Economic Development Department
Hamilton City Centre - 77 James Street North
Main Floor, Suite 250

Monday - Friday

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Phone: 905.546.2782 (select option '3' for licensing)

Email: mle@hamilton.ca

Website: www.hamilton.ca/tradelicence

