



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

J.R. "JOEY" HOPKINS
SECRETARY

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TO: NCDOT Construction Unit, NC Chapter of the Association of General Contractors (AGC), Carolinas Asphalt Paving Association (CAPA), Carolinas' Chapter of the American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA)

FROM: Ken Thornewell, P.E., State Work Zone Engineer ^{DS} *ket*

SUBJECT: Pathways to certification for Qualified Work Zone Installers and Qualified Work Zone Supervisors

Individuals seeking certification as a Qualified Work Zone Installer or Qualified Work Zone Supervisor will be able to complete the certification process using one of three pathways.

The first pathway is through public formal classroom training, an existing method that will remain unchanged. Individuals can enroll in a course provided by an NCDOT-approved public training provider and pass the associated exam. This tried-and-true approach continues to offer a structured and reliable path to certification. A list of currently approved training providers is available at the following link: [Approved Supervisor and Installer Training Providers](#).

The second pathway is by taking formal classroom training and passing the associated exam provided by a pre-approved contractor to self-certify its employees, another existing method that will remain unchanged. Contractors with self-certification approval are only permitted to train and certify employees that are on their payroll.

The third pathway is a pilot program, which will be an exam-only option offered by the Institute of Transportation Research and Education (ITRE). The ITRE exam-only pilot option is specifically designed for experienced professionals with similar certifications in other states or individuals renewing existing NCDOT certifications. Candidates are ineligible for this pathway if they do not hold a similar certification from out of state, an identical certification from NCDOT, or if the certification they hold is more than 90 days expired. In these cases, candidates must follow one of the first two pathways to obtain certification.

For individuals pursuing the third pathway, NCDOT will provide online access to essential reference materials covering key certification topics, which candidates are expected to be familiar with and bring with them to the exam. These reference materials will be available

online and can be accessed on the NCDOT Work Zone Safety Training website: [Work Zone Safety Training](#). Information on exam locations and schedules can be found on the ITRE website: [ITRE Exam Schedule](#).

Initially, the ITRE exam-only pilot will be available at a cost of \$50 per attempt. The exam is open book, but only hard copies of reference materials are allowed. Digital devices and electronic materials are prohibited. Those who fail the exam on their first attempt may retake it one time, if their existing certification does not exceed 90 days expired. Those who fail twice must complete formal classroom training through an NCDOT-approved public provider or an approved self-certification contractor that the candidate is employed by. This policy ensures competency and promotes safety standards in work zone management.

For the exam-only pathway pilot, ITRE will initially offer two testing sessions per month, which will accommodate at least 30 candidates per session. One session will be held consistently in Raleigh, while the second session will alternate between Eastern and Western regions, enhancing geographic accessibility. Exam locations and frequency will be adjusted during the pilot to meet measured demands. This flexible approach ensures all candidates have ample opportunities to maintain certification without disruptions to project staffing.

After passing the exam, the ITRE proctor will upload certification details to the WZ-EVA database and issue a certification card on-site. If technical issues arise, the certification card will be mailed promptly to avoid delays.

Adjustments to the exam-only pilot program will be made in the future to address any issues that arise.

We appreciate the partnership and support of our industry colleagues in maintaining safety and professionalism on North Carolina's roadways.

For questions or additional information, please contact me at (919) 814-5037 or WZSafetyTraining@ncdot.gov.

Cc:

Brian Mayhew, P.E., State Traffic Engineer

Boyd Tharrington, P.E., Deputy Chief Engineer

Wiley Jones III, P.E., Director of Field Support

Joe Hummer, P.E., Traffic Management Unit

Kate Davison, NCLTAP Director, Institute for Transportation Research and Education