

CRANE OPERATORS: A GUIDE TO CLASSIFICATION

January 2025

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1. Introduction to crane operating

Crane operators work in construction, shipbuilding, and industrial sites, at ports and railway yards, and at surface mines and other types of work sites. They operate special equipment that lifts, moves, and positions large, heavy pieces of machinery or other objects. For example, a crane operator may lift storage containers off a ship and put them on a train or truck. (font)

If you want to be a crane operator, you should

- like working with machinery
- have good depth perception
- be comfortable working in high places
- understand the importance of worksite safety

Certification and Licence

Before you can operate a crane Nova Scotia, you must first get certified that you are qualified to do so. Once you are certified, you will be given a licence. You must have both your certification and your licence to be allowed to operate a crane on a work site in Nova Scotia.

In this document, you will find all the information you need on

- the different type of cranes and the class of licence you need to have to operate each
- the training and tests you need to take to become a crane operator
- getting your Nova Scotia license if you completed training outside Nova Scotia or internationally or hold a certification and/or license from outside Nova Scotia or outside Canada.
- the application process and how to appeal if your application is denied

If you have any questions:

This information is brought to you by the Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI). LSI delivers a variety of inspection services and certification programs to help ensure public facilities and the equipment used there is safe. We inspect and certify crane operators as well as

- amusement devices (such as ferris wheels, roller coasters, and inflatables)
- boiler and pressure vessels
- fuel installations

- electrical installations
- elevators and lifts (such as escalators and ski lifts)
- refrigeration and compressor equipment operators
- high pressure welding
- power engineers

If you have any question about the information in this document, contact us at

Labour, Skills and Immigration

Technical Safety

PO Box 697

1505 Barrington St.

Halifax, NS

B3J 2T8

Phone: 902-424-5400 or toll free 1-800-952-2687 (NS only)

Email: safetybranch@novascotia.ca

[2. How to become a crane operator in Nova Scotia](#)

Different classes of cranes require different licences

Different types of cranes are used to lift and move different sizes of loads in different ways. The licence you will need depends on the class of crane you are going to operate. Some classes also require endorsements (see “endorsements” below for more information).

Use this chart to determine what class of licence you need. Remember, you need to get certified first, then you get your licence.

Classification Levels (certificate and licence)

Classification	Licence	Type	Regulated cranes and rated lifting capacity
Class 1	Crane Operator 1 Licence	Mobile crane	Boom truck or mobile crane that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• is a power-operated machine with a boom• includes a hoisting mechanism that is an integral part of the machine Lifting capacity: 91 tonnes (100 tons) or more Exclusions: Excludes tower cranes, self-erecting tower cranes and overhead travelling cranes
Class 2	Crane Operator 2 Licence	Mobile crane	Boom truck or mobile crane that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• is a power-operated machine with a boom

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes a hoisting mechanism that is an integral part of the machine <p>Lifting capacity: 18 tonnes (20 tons) or more, but less than 91 tonnes (100 tons)</p> <p>Exclusions: Excludes tower cranes, self-erecting tower cranes and overhead travelling cranes</p>
Class 3	Crane Operator 3 Licence	Mobile crane	<p>Boom truck or mobile crane that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is a power-operated machine with a boom includes a hoisting mechanism that is an integral part of the machine <p>Lifting capacity: More than 4.5 tonnes (5 tons), but less than 18 tonnes (20 tons)</p> <p>Exclusions: Excludes tower cranes, self-erecting tower cranes and overhead travelling cranes</p>
Class 4	Crane Operator 4 Licence	Mobile crane	<p>Boom truck that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has an articulating boom but no winch for lifting the load is a power-operated machine with a boom includes a hoisting mechanism that's an integral part of the machine

			Lifting capacity: More than 4.5 tonnes (5 tons), but less than 18 tonnes (20 tons) Exclusions: Excludes tower cranes, self-erecting tower cranes and overhead travelling cranes
Tower class	Tower Crane Operator Licence	Tower crane	Lifting capacity: Any tonnage
Self-erecting tower class	Tower Crane Operator Licence	Self-erecting tower crane	Lifting capacity: Less than 40-metre tonne (144.3 feet ton)
Overhead travelling class	Overhead Travelling Crane Operator Licence	Overhead travelling Crane	Overhead travelling Crane Lifting capacity: Any tonnage

How to get certified

Now that you know which class of licence you need, it's time to get certified. The path you will take to certification depends on whether you are one of the following:

- A. New with no experience (go to A below)
- B. Completed training outside Nova Scotia but within Canada (go to B below)
- C. Have international credentials (go to C below)

A. New with No Experience

As a new person to this trade with no experience you must complete all of the following to get your certification:

- Have your grade 10 math, or a prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR – see page 10, or take a an approved training program (see page 10)
- Pass your provincial operator exams (see page 12)
- Take a practical exam where you demonstrate your ability to safely operate a regulated crane. The practical exam may be included in your training program, or you may need to schedule it yourself. See page 9 to find out who offers practical exams in Nova Scotia.

Once you have your certification, you will need to put in a minimum number of hours of on-the-job training (see page 11).

When you are certified, and have completed the on-the-job training, you can apply for your licence. See page 11 to learn how to apply.

B. Completed training outside Nova Scotia but within Canada

If you have completed training and are certified in another part of Canada, you can apply to transfer your certification to Nova Scotia.

You must have

- training certificates related to your certification
- a current resume
- prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR, see page 10) (if applicable)
- a copy of red seal certification (if applicable)
- See appendix B (page 18)

C. Have international credentials

If you have credentials from a country outside of Canada, you can apply to transfer your certification to Nova Scotia.

You must have

- training certificates related to your certification (translated to English if applicable)
- a current resume
- prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR, see page 10) (if applicable)
- an international credential assessment report issued through the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency

Endorsements

You can add an endorsement to your class 1 or 2 licence. An endorsement means you are qualified to operate an additional type of crane, such as a lattice boom, overhead travelling crane, or self-erecting tower crane. You will need to meet additional requirements to get an endorsement added to your licence.

- Class 1:
 - Overhead, 50 hours or of practical experience operating Class 1 overhead crane (100 tons or more)

- Completion of an overhead travelling crane course listed in the approved training programs (page 10)
- Lattice boom: 300 hours of practical experience operating a Class 1 lattice boom crane and
- 80 hours of practical experience in mobilizing and demobilizing a class 1 lattice boom crane
- Class 2:
 - Overhead Travelling crane: 50 hours of practical experience operating a class 2 crane or
 - Completion of an overhead travelling crane course (page 10)
 - Lattice boom: 100 hours of practical experience operating class 2 crane and
 - 80 hours of practical experience mobilizing and demobilizing

[3. Where to find training programs](#)

You will find a list of all the programs approved by Labour, Skills and Immigration [here](#).

This list includes the length of time in hours for the course and how this time counts toward your practical experience.

[4. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\)](#)

Not all learning takes place in a classroom. Your learning may take place in many different settings, including on-the-job, at home, in the community, through recreational past times, and more.

PLAR believes

- what you can do is more important than where you learned to do it
- you should not have to spend time, energy, and money learning over again what you already know and can do.

PLAR for new and experienced crane operators may allow the Chief Inspector for Cranes to grant a CO licence under the Crane Operator regulations <https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/tscrane.htm> (section 47) if you have the following:

- practical experience and education qualifications that are sufficiently equivalent to the requirements of the crane licence you are applying for.

Your documents may include but not limited to:

- current resume
- Affidavits
- Training certifications relating to crane operation
- Rigging course
- Grade 10 math transcript or higher
- International credential check through a recognized agency.
 - Section 2 item (c) of guide

Submit all relevant documents and application for Certificate of Qualification to Technical Safety.

****All crane operators must challenge the provincial exams****

5. Exams

Provincial exams

You must write the provincial exams for all classification(s) of crane(s) you wish to obtain. You must submit the application for a certificate of qualification complete with all documents relevant to the classification of crane you are applying for, signatures and payment for examination papers. The exam schedule is available on the crane operator's website.

<https://novascotia.ca/lae/equipmentsafety/craneoperator.asp>

Full name and address along

Page 1, Section 1 Provincial Exam: circle the classification level and check which exam you are applying to challenge. Choose two exam dates in the event one sitting is full

Page 3, Section 2: Educational and Practical Experience: ensure all hours are summarized and the trainer has signed the hours being submitted. Include copies of your grade 10 math, or high school, or training certifications

Declaration: Ensure this section is signed by you and dated.

Failure to complete the application may result in a denied application or processing delays.

Red Seal Endorsement is offered through Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency for Class 1, Class 2 and Tower crane licences only. You must hold a current Nova Scotia licence in the above class to be eligible to challenge the red seal examination.

To apply for a red seal exam please visit www.nsapprenticeship.ca or call 902-424-5651.

The image shows several pages of an application form for crane operators. The top page is the 'PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION APPLICATION' and includes sections for 'PERSONAL INFORMATION', 'EDUCATIONAL AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE', and 'EXAM SCHEDULE'. The 'EDUCATIONAL AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE' section contains a table for 'Practical Experience for Crane Operators' with columns for Year of Experience, License No., Class, and Exam Dates. Below this is a table for 'Practical Experience for Tower Crane Operators' with columns for Year of Experience, License No., Class, and Exam Dates. The 'EXAM SCHEDULE' section includes a table for 'Exam Scheduling' with columns for Exam Date, Exam Time, and Exam Location. The bottom page is the 'PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION APPLICATION' and includes sections for 'PERSONAL INFORMATION', 'EDUCATIONAL AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE', and 'EXAM SCHEDULE'.

Practical exams

Practical exams are included with a training program, or you can book a practical exam by contacting one of the approved training programs from the approved programs listed on the job

6. On-the-job Training

If you are training within Nova Scotia, you will need to put in a minimum number of hours in on-the-job training as part of your program.

When you are ready to take your on-the-job training, your employer must register you as a trainee with Labour, Skills and Immigration/Technical Safety.

Your employer must also submit a letter to the Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration with the following information:

- Your full name and address
- The type of crane you are training on and the tonnage
- The full name and licence number of the operator who is supervising you
- Confirmation that the training program is approved by the crane operator chief inspector with Technical Safety

Training Program:

A training program is developed by the company and submitted to the Chief Inspector, Cranes prior to you start training on the crane. Any hours accumulated prior to a training program being approved will not count towards your certification.

The training program must include but not limited to:

1. Assembly and Disassembly
2. Rigging
3. Operation of the crane
4. Class 1 NS licence
5. Practice test
6. Logging of hours
7. Crane type and tonnage

8. Direct supervision

The current policy being followed for direct supervision of operator trainees requires that the supervisor must assess and determine the various levels of competencies of the person being trained. This means that the supervisor has control over the trainee's activities and instructs and directs the trainee as they perform their duties. As the training proceeds, the trainee may perform functions on their own provided that the supervisor has been satisfied that the trainee is competent in performing those particular tasks or task groups. The supervisor must have a valid crane operator license for the same class of crane, or higher, as the equipment on which the individual is being trained. A registered journeyman crane operator will also be accepted as the supervisor. As the training begins, the supervisor(s) is with the trainee nearly 100% of the time, and as the individual develops and becomes more competent, the supervisor may then begin to reduce the time spent with the trainee, but only according to the comfort level of the supervisor. Only the supervisor can make this assessment. Additionally, the supervisor and the employer **must** ensure that there is a method of direct contact (ie. cell phone, two-way radio etc.) for situations where the trainee requires assistance.

7. Application Process

If you have completed your training in Nova Scotia

You must complete sections 1 and 2 of the [application for Certificate of Qualification](#) and include the following documents:

- High school diploma or transcript with grade 10 math credit or
- Training certificate from an approved training program (see Section 3 of this guide)
- Practical test certificate (if applicable)
- Logbooks for on-the-job-training (if applicable)
- Cheque or money order made out to the Minister of Finance for your application fees. You will find the amount on the application.

Be sure to complete the declaration on page 4 of the application, then mail the application, cheque/money order and all of the above documentation to the address for Labour, Skills and Immigration below.

For those who have completed training outside Nova Scotia but within Canada

You must complete sections 1 and 2 of the [application for Certificate of Qualification](#) and include the following documents:

- Training certificates related to the certification
- Current resume
- Prior learning assessment and recognition (if applicable)
- Copy of red seal certification (if applicable)
- Any credentials issued by a government or other local authority that oversees crane operators, see Alternative Documents in Section 10 page 16
- Cheque or money order made out to the Minister of Finance for your application fees. You will find the amount on the application.

Be sure to complete the declaration on page 4 of the application, then mail the application, cheque/money order and all of the above documentation to the address for Labour, Skills and Immigration below.

For those who have international credentials

You must complete section 3 of the [application for Certificate of Qualification](#) and include the following documents:

- Training certificates related to the certification (translated to English if applicable)
- Current resume
- Prior learning assessment (if applicable)
- Any credentials issued by a government or other local authority that oversees crane operators, see Alternative documents in Section 10 page 16
- Foreign credentials issued by a government or other local authority that oversees crane operators. See Alternative Documents in Section 10 page 16
- Cheque or money order made out to the Minister of Finance for your application fees. You will find the amount on the application.

SECTION 3: APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER OF CERTIFICATION

Jurisdiction or Province of present registration	
Certificate(s) now held (Classification level)	
Certificate(s) Number (Enclose copy of certificate)	
Class of certification applied for	

As per Section 67 of the Power Engineers Regulations and Section 33 of the Crane Operators Regulations:

1. Candidates must provide evidence of experience and qualifications that are sufficiently equivalent to the requirements for the certificate set out in the Act and Regulations.
2. Provide evidence as to their identity; and
3. Pay the fee as set out in the Fee regulations.

As per Section 71 of the Power Engineers Regulations: a candidate from another jurisdiction who holds a valid inter-provincial certificate of qualification shall be issued an inter-provincial certificate of qualification under these regulations upon paying the fee set out in the fee regulations.

As per Section 47 of the Crane Operators Regulations: a candidate may be granted a CO licence and endorsement to an individual who applies under section 23.

FEES: FEE MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS APPLICATION.

Per the Technical Safety Regulations, fees are:

- \$39.80 per examination paper
- \$132.70 for a Power Engineer License issuance
- \$66.35 to transfer a Power Engineer License
- \$145.80 for Crane Licence issuance, plus extra an \$72.90 per endorsement
- \$72.90 to transfer a Crane Licence

→ **PAYMENT:** By **Cheque** or **Money Order** *only* and made payable to the “**Minister of Finance**”.

Be sure to complete the declaration on page 4 of the application, then mail the application, cheque/money order and all of the above documentation to the address for Labour, Skills and Immigration below.

DECLARATION: (Must be completed by all applicants)

I, _____ of _____
in the county of _____ the within named applicant, hereby declare that the several parts and particulars in my said application are and each of them is true and correct and that my signature on the said application is in my own handwriting.

Applicant signature: _____ Date: _____

FEES: FEE MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS APPLICATION.

Per the Technical Safety Regulations, fees are:

- \$39.80 per examination paper
- \$132.70 for a Power Engineer License issuance
- \$66.35 to transfer a Power Engineer License
- \$145.80 for Crane Licence issuance, plus extra an \$72.90 per endorsement
- \$72.90 to transfer a Crane Licence

→ **PAYMENT:** By **Cheque** or **Money Order** *only* and made payable to the "Minister of Finance".

Upon arrival in NS

What happens with your application

Labour, Skills and Immigration will register your application as soon as we receive it and give it a unique identifying number.

We will then forward your application to the Nova Scotia Chief Inspector for Cranes who will assess all of the information to ensure you meet the requirements.

It typically takes 10 days to review an application. If you are an international applicant or are transferring credentials from another jurisdiction, it can take up to 30 days.

Incomplete applications or applications not filled in correctly will take longer.

If your application is approved: you will receive your Certificate of Competency and Crane Operator Licence by mail. International and transfer applicants receive a Crane Operator Licence by mail.

If your application is not approved: you will receive a letter via mail or email explaining why.

How to appeal a decision

If you disagree with the decision made regarding their application for classification, first contact the Administrator of the Licensing Program. The administrator may be able to resolve the matter of concern.

If the matter cannot be resolved by contacting the administrator, you may choose to pursue the matter through an internal review process. For more information on this process, see **Appendix A**.

Contact Information

Labour, Skills and Immigration

Technical Safety

PO Box 697

1505 Barrington St., 3rd

Floor

Halifax, NS

B3J 2T8

1-800-952-2687 or 902-424-5400

Email: safetybranch@novascotia.ca

What if my licence is expired?

You can submit payment for an expired licence up to 4 years from your current expiry. After 4 years, you must apply a rewrite application to Labour, Skills and Immigration/Technical Safety to challenge a reinstatement exam. The exam schedule can be found on this link.

<https://novascotia.ca/lae/equipmentsafety/craneoperator.asp>

[8.0 Changing your information/Requesting an upgrade](#)

How to change personal information

To change your name, NSID number, address, or phone number, send an email to craneoperator@novascotia.ca. You must submit legal documents if you are changing your name.

How to request a classification upgrade

You may apply to upgrade to a higher classification if you meet these requirements:

- Six months between the date your previous license was issued and the date you send in an application to upgrade.
- You are registered as trainee for the crane classification you wish to upgrade to (see section 6 for on-the-job training)
- You have completed the required 1,000 hours on the type of crane you want to upgrade to.
- You have successfully written the exams for the new classification (see Section 5 Exams).
- You have passed the practical test for the crane classification you wish to upgrade to (see Section 5 Exams).

If you meet all of the above requirements, fill out the sections 1 and 2 of the [application for Certificate of Qualification](#) and send it in to Labour, Skills and Immigration along with

- all of the requested documentation
- a cheque or money order made out to the Minister of Finance for your application fees. You will find the amount on the application.

Note: You may not skip a classification between upgrades without having the full required regulated practical time.

How to maintain your certification

You will receive a Certificate of Competency once. Your certificate does not expire.

You will need to renew your Crane Operator Licence each year. You will get a renewal notice by mail before the renewal date. It is your responsibility to renew on time.

9.0 Rigging

You may use 10 per cent of hours from your previous crane licence obtained in Nova Scotia towards any crane classification. You must submit all hours for assessment by completing the application for Certificate of Qualification.

10.0 Alternative documents:

Education credentials

- certified copies of original academic documentation.
- photocopies of academic documentation together with an affidavit attesting to the authenticity of the document;
- an affidavit from the applicant describing the applicant's academic qualifications, the institution attended, and detailed descriptions of the courses taken and course curriculums, with supporting evidence if available;
- affidavits from former professors and classmates verifying the applicant's course descriptions and attesting to the applicant's academic performance;
- information obtained by the ORGANIZATION from third parties, with the applicant's advance consent, verifying the applicant's educational credentials;
- any other information offered by the applicant evidencing their academic qualifications.

Acceptable Alternate Information – Professional Qualifications

- reference letters from prior employers and colleagues;
- an affidavit from the applicant describing the applicant's professional qualifications and detailed descriptions of prior work performed, with supporting evidence if available;
- copies of reports that support the applicant's involvement in a project;
- statements of professional standing from other regulatory bodies;
- certified copies of professional licenses or certificates;

any other information offered by the applicant evidencing their professional qualifications

Section 10 – Alternative Documents should satisfy s. 3.3. of the FRPA Report

Add Sections:

- Accessing Your Registration Records (as required by s. 3.7 of FRPA Report)

Appendices

Appendix A – Internal Review Process (as required by s. 3.8 and 3.9 of the FRPA Report)

An applicant who does not agree with a formal decision of the Chief Inspector or Registrar may request an internal review of the decision by the Technical Safety Administrator (provide Executive Director contact information in Guide.)

The request for a review must be submitted in writing or by email to the Technical Safety Division within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the written notice of the decision by the Chief Inspector or Registrar.

When conducting a review the Administrator will, within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the review request:

- review the information provided by the applicant.
- may make other inquiries related to the application, and
- may use any information, including information that is gathered or has previously been provided by another person, that the Administrator considers advisable to assist in determining the review.
- The applicant will be provided the opportunity to submit new information and to make other submissions with respect to the internal review.

The Administrator is not required to hold a hearing when conducting a review

Once the review is complete, the Administrator will, in writing:

- confirm, vary or revoke a decision.
- provide reasons for the review decision
- allow additional time for the person to meet application requirements.
- make any decision that the inspector or inspection agency could have made;
or
- refuse to decide a matter and refer the matter to the Appeal Board.

The Administrator will notify the applicant who applied for the review of their decision in writing and notify the Chief Inspector, Registrar, inspector, and any other person(s) who made the initial decision regarding the application.

The submission of a written request to the Administrator for a review of a decision acts as a stay of the decision until the review has been determined.

Who conducts the review of a decision?

Only the Chief Inspector for Cranes has the authority to issue a certification or license to an applicant. If a request for a review is received from an applicant, the internal review is conducted by the Technical Safety Administrator.

Appendix B – Nova Scotia equivalency from other jurisdictions (pending more information)

Province or Territory	Classification	Equivalency
British Columbia		
Alberta		
Saskatchewan		
Manitoba		
Quebec		
New Brunswick		
Prince Edward Island		
Newfoundland		
Northwest Territories		
Yukon Territories		
Nunavut		