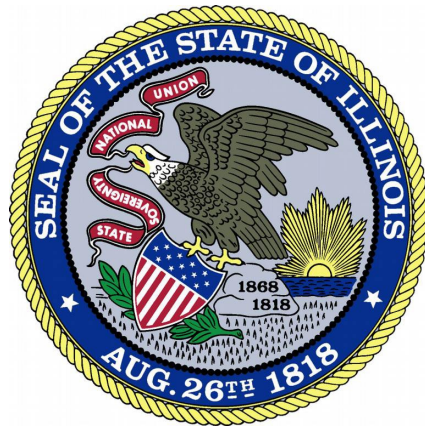


Governor's Office of Management and Budget

Alexis Sturm

Director



Regulatory Sunset Act Report on

The Professional Geologist Licensing Act

April 18, 2025

**To the Honorable JB Pritzker
Governor of Illinois**

Governor Pritzker:

As required by Section 5 of the Regulatory Sunset Act (5 ILCS 80/1 et seq.), GOMB facilitated a study with the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR), the agency responsible for oversight of the Professional Geologist Licensing Act (225 ILCS 745/1 et seq.) (the Act), which is scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2026. The report provides justification for the recommendation to modify this Act.

GOMB's examination of this Act was conducted considering the factors set out in Sections 6 and 7 of the Regulatory Sunset Act. The following report outlines the work of GOMB's study and details the criteria and data utilized to arrive at the above recommendation.

Respectfully,

Alexis Sturm
Director
Governor's Office of Management and Budget

GOMB Regulatory Sunset Act Report: Professional Geologist Licensing Act

The State of Illinois, acting through the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR or the Department), licenses the profession of geologists pursuant to the Act. As defined in the Act, a "Licensed Professional Geologist" means an individual who is licensed to engage in the practice of professional geology in Illinois. The Act defines the practice of professional geology to include "consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning, mapping, and other services requiring extensive knowledge of geologic laws, formulas, principles, and methods of data interpretation. The purpose of this Act is to ensure the competent and ethical practice of geology to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. This includes the study and application of geologic sciences in evaluating the earth's crust and interior, natural agents, forces, and processes, and utilizing this knowledge for the benefit of humankind." 225 ILCS 745.

Geology affects the everyday life of the public. Geology plays a role in the safety of our drinking water supply, locating and fortifying sources of energy, and the structural integrity of building sites. The Act ensures that geologists working in Illinois are properly qualified to work on issues that affect public and environmental health and safety.

1. License Count and Fee Structure

As of March 29, 2024, IDFPR states that there are 645 currently active licenses for geologists in Illinois. See the following table for the number of geologist licenses issued by IDFPR in the fiscal years indicated:

License Type	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Geologists	8	19	12	5	12

Geologists have the following licensure fee structure:

License Type	Fee Amount	Online Payment
Application fee	\$250	No
License renewal fee	\$150	Yes
Duplicate license fee	\$20	Yes
Examination fee	Established by the testing vendor	Established by the testing vendor

IDFPR states that, "Licensees may print their license online through their portal at any time at no charge."

2. Obtaining Certification as a Geologist in Illinois

The licensing process for professional geologists includes licensure by examination and licensure by endorsement of license. Endorsement of license is the method utilized when an applicant who is licensed or registered under the laws of another jurisdiction wishes to be licensed in Illinois as a professional geologist. Applicants are required to submit applications on forms provided by the Department. Applications and any supporting documentation are reviewed for completeness. Notice is provided to the applicant for any items deficient in the application. The Professional Geology Board may be charged with reviewing applications containing deficiencies that cannot otherwise be resolved and

with making recommendations to the Director.

An applicant who is licensed or registered under the laws of another jurisdiction and who wishes to be licensed in Illinois as a professional geologist may apply by the endorsement method. The application must include supporting documentation:

- 1) Proof of Education and Experience
 - a. Official transcripts verifying conferral of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university approved by the Department.
 - b. Certification of a minimum of 4 years of professional experience or its equivalent as approved by the Department.
- 2) Certification of successful completion of the examination authorized by the Department.
- 3) A complete work history since receipt of a bachelor's degree or the most recent 15 years of geology experience since receipt of the bachelor's degree, whichever is less.
- 4) Certification from the jurisdiction in which the applicant was originally licensed and the state in which the applicant predominantly practices and is currently registered or licensed, if applicable.
- 5) A copy of the current Act and administrative rules from the jurisdiction where the applicant holds active licensure or registration may be requested by the Department or the Board to determine substantial equivalency.

3. Equity Concerns

IDFPR states that financial challenges such as the cost to obtain qualifications and licensure may impact individuals entering this regulated field. An applicant for licensure must possess a baccalaureate degree in geology or a graduate degree in the field of geology. The applicant must obtain a minimum of four years of professional experience in the practice of geology or directly related work after completion of the education requirements.

4. Agency recommendations to change the statute

IDFPR recommends technical clean-up where necessary to reflect modernizations made to the different professional acts in Illinois, such as providing notice through email.

5. Agency efforts to comply with enabling laws

At the time of this study, GOMB is not aware of any compliance issues by IDFPR related to the provisions of the Act.

6. Recent bills introduced by the General Assembly

According to IDFPR, there have been no statutory changes in the last five years.

7. Stakeholder Feedback and Protocols for Geologist Licensure

The Professional Geologist Licensing Board offers opportunities for the public to provide input. The public may also utilize the “Contact Us” link, <https://idfpr.illinois.gov/profs/email/prfgrp03.html>. The public may also comment during the rule making process as outlined by JCAR. Administrative rules for this Act can be found on the IDFPR website ([IDFPR Rules](#)).

8. Public Outreach

IDFPR provides multiple avenues for members of the public to contact the Department with comments or concerns about the programs it regulates or the Department’s rules governing its programs. Although IDFPR conducts public outreach efforts through social media and other external-facing means, IDFPR is unaware of any ongoing or recent full-scale media or advertising campaigns solely dedicated to this profession.

The public may use the links provided below to “Contact us” or file a complaint with the Division.

<https://idfpr.illinois.gov/profs/email/prfgrp03.html>

<https://idfpr.illinois.gov/admin/dpr/dprcomplaint.html>

9. Industry Standards

IDFPR states that the personal qualifications required for this profession are in line with industry standards. Under the Administrative Code, an educational program must be legally recognized and authorized by the jurisdiction in which it is located to confer the appropriate degree.

According to the Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG), “typically individuals who have a college degree in geology and four years of geological work experience can initially qualify for registration as a licensed Geologist. In addition, however, States that have fully implemented registration laws require successful completion of two or more examinations to demonstrate minimum competence in both the fundamentals and the practice of geology.”

10. Public Complaint Resolution

The investigations team of the IDFPR Complaint Intake Unit is responsible for resolving complaints regarding the regulation of this Act. DRPR has no record of complaints received under this Act. As such, the Department has not estimate for how long it takes the Agency to resolve a complaint.

11. Disciplinary Action

No disciplinary action has been taken by IDFPR in relation to the regulation of this profession.

12. Conclusion

The Act governs the licensure of geologists in the State of Illinois. The absence of licensing criteria for geologists would pose a significant and direct harm to the safety and welfare of the public and specifically the State’s environmental health and safety. The lack of regulation would eliminate the professional standards to which individuals who are significant to Illinois’ public health are held.

Current evidence does not suggest that the imposition of the state's regulatory standards is such a burden as to outweigh the benefits to the health, safety, and welfare of the people of Illinois in continuing the licensure and regulation of this profession. Consequently, the Act is necessary and appropriate to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the people of Illinois.

The Act should be continued with modification to promote and enhance the safety and welfare of the public, without burdening licensees or commerce.