

## **Principles and Practice of Professional Surveying (PS) & Texas Specific Surveying Exam (TSSE)**

### **Information Regarding the NCEES PS and new TSSE exams**

As of May 2023, the exam requirements to become a Registered Professional Land Surveyor (RPLS) in Texas have changed. The previously used 8 hour RPLS exam has been replaced with a combination of the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) Principles and Practice of Professional Surveying (PS) exam and a new Texas Specific Surveying Exam (TSSE).

Individuals seeking licensure as a Texas Registered Professional Land Surveyor (RPLS) must successfully pass two exams:

- 1) the Principles and Practice of Surveying exam (PS) administered by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES), and
- 2) the Texas Specific Surveying Exam (TSSE) administered by the TBPELS.

Approval to sit for these exams must come from the TBPELS Licensing and Registration Department and meet the conditions and requirements found in the statute and Board Rules Chapter 134: Licensing, Registration, and Certification for Surveyors. Here are the basic paths for taking the exams:

- Applicant is a currently registered Texas Surveyor-in-Training (SIT)
  - An SIT may register to take the NCEES PS exam at any time once they are an SIT.
  - No additional experience is required to take the NCEES PS exam for a current SIT.
  - Any approved current SIT is allowed unlimited attempts to pass the NCEES PS exam.
  - An SIT must complete an RPLS application to be eligible to take the TSSE exam.
  - Any newly approved RPLS Application is allowed 3 attempts for the TSSE exam as well as many attempts as necessary to pass the NCEES PS exam if not completed already. This approval is good for 4 years from the time the application is approved.
- Applicant is a current Texas RPLS and wants to take the NCEES PS exam for record purposes.
  - Any current Texas RPLS may take the NCEES PS exam for record purposes at any time. There is no limit on exam attempts.
  - Failure to pass the exam will have no impact on a current license.
- RPLS applicants currently in the examination process (as of May 2023)
  - All current applications that were previously approved for RPLS or RCP exams are allowed as many attempts as necessary to pass the NCEES PS exam. The number of TSSE exam attempts will be equal to the number of exam attempts they have left for the 4 hour TSSE and 8 hour RPLS exams.

- Out-of-state reciprocal (RCP) applicants for Texas registration must have previously passed the NCEES PS exam and must pass the TSSE. These applicants must be approved to sit for the TSSE through the application process and will receive 3 attempts for the TSSE.

Once you have passed the NCEES PS exam or the TSSE exam, you do not have to take that exam again. Your scores will remain on record with TBPELS.

Before registering to take the exams, an individual must make sure they meet the criteria in the statute and Board Rules. RPLS applications can be found on the PELS website. [[RPLS \(texas.gov\)](#)].

To take the NCEES PS exam, you must register on their website at [www.NCEES.org](http://www.NCEES.org). Similar to the Fundamentals of Surveying Exam, the exam is computer-based and can be taken at any Pearson View center. If you have already taken and passed the PS exam in any jurisdiction, you will not need to retake it. The Board will recognize your credential of passing the exam.

You can register for the TSSE exam through our payment submission form. This form will be emailed to you by your Program Specialist after your application has been approved. Please note that the TSSE exam is not computer-based and must be taken in person at a location designated by the Board. The TSSE exam schedule and registration deadlines are posted on our website at <https://pels.texas.gov/lsexams.htm>.

If you do not pass the TSSE after three attempts, you will need to re-apply for an additional three attempts following the rules in Section 134.67. Please note: before you re-apply, you must obtain at least 1 year of qualifying boundary survey or boundary determination experience, or pass at least 6 semester hours of formal college level courses relevant to surveying.

For more information and answers to specific questions, visit our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page at <https://pels.texas.gov/ls/rpls/ps-tsse-faq.html>.

We wish you the best of luck on your upcoming exams.