



PE<sup>TX</sup>LS

Texas Board of Professional  
Engineers and Land Surveyors

SIT and RPLS Application 101 - Process Overview

April 2025

# Presenters

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# Presenter

- **Rick Strong, P.E.**
- **Director of Licensing & Registration**
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# Agenda

- Overview of Surveying Act and Rules
- Benefits of Registration
- Overview of Registration Process
  - Education
  - Exams
  - Experience
- Application Process



# RPLS / SIT Application Info

<http://pels.texas.gov>

- Email all questions to: [licensing @pels.texas.gov](mailto:licensing@pels.texas.gov)
- Information Pages
- Exam Information
- Application Links
- Document Downloads



# RPLS / SIT Application Info

The image is a screenshot of the Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors (PE+LS) website. At the top, the logo "PE+LS" is displayed in blue and green, with a red outline of the state of Texas between the letters. To the right of the logo, the text "Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors" is written in white. Below the logo and text is a photograph of the board's building, a modern structure with large windows and greenery in front. A white sign in the foreground of the photo reads "TEXAS BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND LAND SURVEYORS".

Below the photograph is a dark navigation bar with several menu items: "AGENCY", "BOARD", "ENFORCEMENT", "EIT / SIT", "EXAMS", "NEWS", "OUTREACH", "PE", "PE LICENSING", "ROSTERS", and "RPLS / LSLs". A red arrow points from the "RPLS / LSLs" menu item to a dropdown menu that is open. The dropdown menu contains the following items: "CONTACT / NAME CHANGE", "CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK", "CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM", "DOWNLOADABLE FORMS", "LSLS", "RECIPROCITY", "RPLS", and "STATUS CHANGE". The items "DOWNLOADABLE FORMS" and "RPLS" are circled in red.

Below the navigation bar is a "News" section. The title "News" is in blue. Underneath, there is a sub-section titled "Proposed Policy Advisories" in bold black text. A red arrow points from this title to the "DOWNLOADABLE FORMS" item in the dropdown menu. Below the title, there are two paragraphs of text. The first paragraph reads: "Two advisories were posted to the Texas Register: Policy Advisory 55 - Regarding the Extent of the Utilities Exemption in the Practice Act." A red arrow points from this paragraph to the "RPLS" item in the dropdown menu. The second paragraph reads: "Policy Advisory 56 - Who is Eligible to Complete a Predominant Use Study or Use of Natural Gas or Electricity by a Business Entity?"

# Texas Professional Land Surveying Practices Act

- Regulates practice of land surveying in Texas
- Law made by legislature
- State Agency created by Practice Acts
  - Licensing
  - Enforcement
- Registered Professional Land Surveyor (RPLS)
- Surveyor In Training (SIT)
- Similar Boards in other states

# Texas Professional Land Surveying Practices Act

- Sets out the requirements for SIT, RPLS and LSLS registration
- Chapter 1071 of Texas Occupations Code
- Rules expand and explain the process from the law
- Chapter 134 of the rules
- Law and Rules documents on website:  
<https://pels.texas.gov>





# TBPELS HISTORY

- Land Surveying Board was established in 1919.
- Public Surveying Board was established in 1955.
- Both surveying boards merged in 1979.
- Merged with Engineering Board in 2019 - TBPELS.
- Over 6,800 Texas RPLS registrations granted since 1955.
- Currently over 2,700 Registered Surveyors.

# TEXAS BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND LAND SURVEYORS

Nine Members - Appointed by Governor

- 5 Licensed Professional Engineers
- 1 Registered Professional Land Surveyor
- 3 Public Members
- 1 Ex-Officio Representative – LSLS from GLO
- Standard term is 6 years

# TBPELS BOARD

<b>Dr. Sina Nejad, PE, PEng</b>	<b>Beaumont – Chairman</b>
Ademola Adejokun, PE	Arlington
Albert Cheng (public)	Houston
Kiran Shah (public)	Richmond – Treasurer
Roberto Moreno, PE	El Paso
Coleen Johnson, RPLS	Leander – Vice Chair
Karen Friese, PE	Austin - Secretary
Catherine Norwood, PE	Midland
Dr. Marguerite “Margo” McClinton Stoglin (Public)	Grand Prairie
Mark Neugebauer, RPLS, LSLS	Austin

# REGISTRATION

- Protection of the Public
- Competent
  - Initial Qualifications
  - Staying Current
- Ethical
- Professionalism

# Benefits of Registration

- Serves as a protection of public health, safety, and welfare.
- It shows you have accomplished a recognized standard.
- Makes you equal with other professionals. Many other professions require that you are licensed or registered to practice.

# Benefits of Registration

- Sets you apart from others in your profession. (Marketability)
- “Portable” credential you can keep throughout your career.
- Law - Only RPLS can offer or perform boundary / land surveying services
- Required for Some Positions



# Benefits of Registration

- Much More than Just Passing an Exam!
- Increased Responsibility and Authority.
- You Will be in Responsible Charge of Your Land Surveying Projects and Work.
- You Will be Held Accountable for Your Actions as an RPLS.

## RECENT BOARD ACTIVITIES

- Rule package to update licensing rules on criminal history effective March 2023.
- Rule changes to address surveying exams effective September 2023
- Legislative Session 2025.
- Engineer and surveyor renewal fees now are \$50/year.

## RECENT BOARD ACTIVITIES

- Rule Packages that have been adopted:
  - Clearer Definition of 32 Hours of Education for Land Surveyors
  - Effective Jan 1, 2026
- Clean-up Rules - November
  - Most are minor
  - Removal of tape requirement for references
  - Double counting of engineering and surveying experience
  - Removal of 3x fail for PE (and PS) exam – take until pass

## 32 HOUR EDUCATION

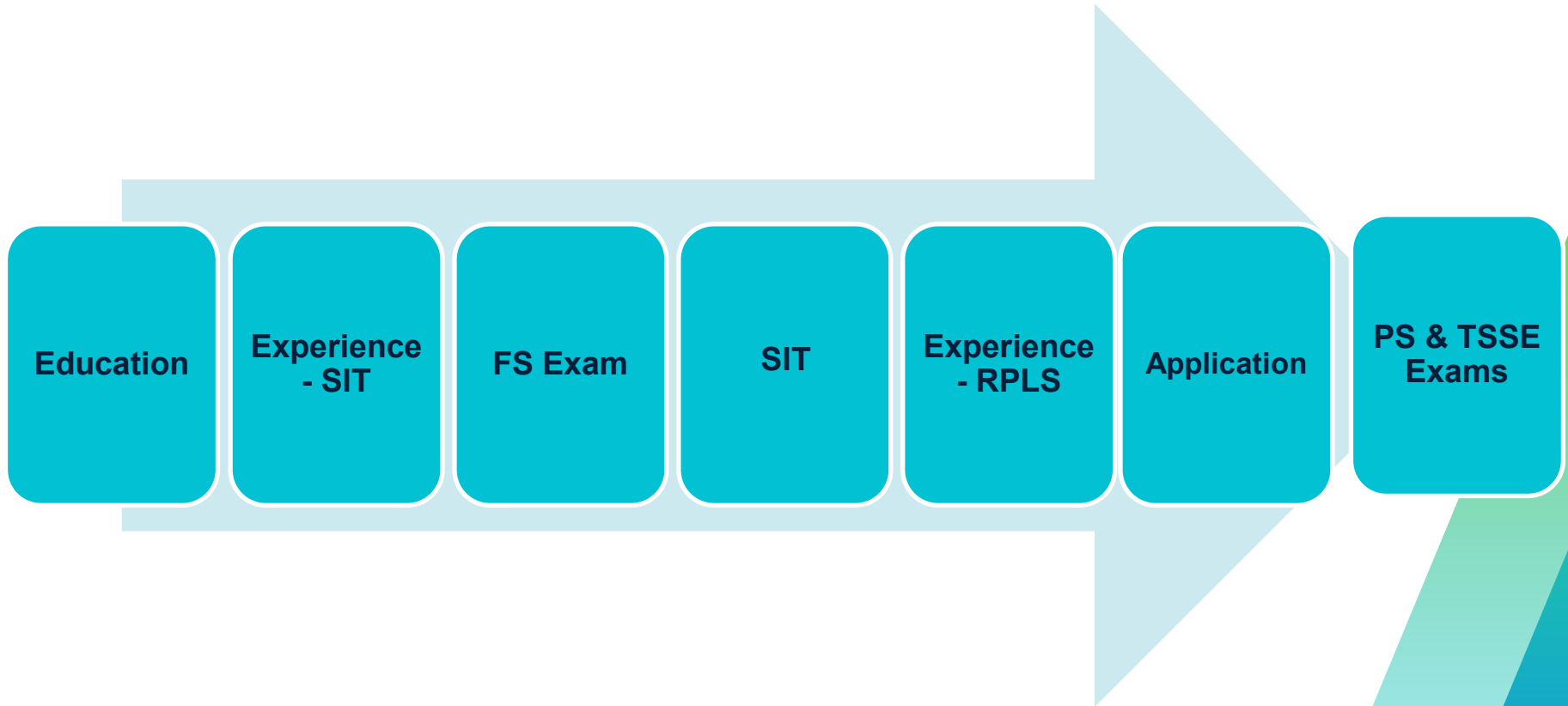
- Clearer Definition of 32 Hours of Education for Land Surveyors
- Original 32 hours defined in 1990's
- Educators, Surveyors, and SAC all weighed in on new definitions
- Based on Statute
- Effective Jan 1, 2026
- Must meet all qualifications before you turn in your application

## 32 HOUR EDUCATION

Approved Topic Areas	Min. Required Hours
Land Surveying	9
Land Law	3
Photogrammetry	
Mathematics *	6
Civil Engineering	
Forestry	
Physical Sciences	

\* Mathematics : minimum of college level algebra and course(s) involving trigonometric and statistical principles

# OVERALL REGISTRATION FLOW





# Presenter

- Ed Brannan, P.E.
- **Technical Review Professional Engineer**
- [Ed.Brannan@pels.texas.gov](mailto:Ed.Brannan@pels.texas.gov)



# REGISTRATION PROCESS FLOW

## Surveyor-In-Training Registration

Education

Surveying Experience

Apply for SIT Registration and Exam

Examination – National FS

Surveyor In Training

## RPLS Registration

Surveying Experience as SIT

Apply for RPLS Registration and Exam

Examinations – National PS

Examinations – Texas Specific Exam

Registered Professional Land Surveyor

# Education - SIT

- Multiple Paths to Registration
- Based on Education
  - 4 Year Degrees
  - 2 Year Degrees
  - No Degree (HS Required)
- Set in Statute (Law) – Chapter 1071
- Slight Differences between SIT and RPLS
- Experience requirement is related to education.

# Education - SIT

- Occupations Code 1071.253
- For SIT:
  - Bachelor of Science in Surveying
  - Bachelor's Degree with at least 32 hours in:
    - Civil Engineering
    - Land Surveying
    - Mathematics
    - Photogrammetry
    - Forestry
    - Land Law
    - The Physical Sciences



# Education - SIT

- Occupations Code 1071.253
- For SIT:
  - Associates Degree in Surveying
  - Course of Instruction with 32 hours in land surveying or related to land surveying
  - High School completion



# Experience - SIT

- Varies by degree earned (1071.253):
  - Bachelor Degree in Surveying = 0 years
  - Bachelor Degree w/32 Hours = 1 year
  - Associates Degree = 2 years
  - High School = 4 years



# Experience - SIT

- Requirements for Experience:
  - Experience must be obtained under the direction and guidance of one or more RPLS.
  - Experience obtained in the area of boundary surveying and boundary determination.
  - Experience is documented in the SIT application
  - RPLS references providers will verify experience.

# Experience - SIT

- You Will Need to Document Your Experience.
- Maintain Records – Weekly, Monthly, Yearly:
  - Surveyor Projects You Work on.
  - Surveyor Tasks You Personally Perform.
  - Who You Work for, With and Time.

# Application - SIT

- SIT Application (Paper Form)
- Application Fee \$75 (Not refundable)
- Education – Transcripts directly from institution
- Course Checklist
- 3 RPLS References

# FS Exam - SIT

- Once application is approved the SIT candidate may register for the FS exam.
- Fundamentals of Surveying NCEES Exam.
- FS Exam – may take as many times as necessary.
- FS Exam is a Computer Based Exam.

# Computer Based Testing

- Price \$225
- Includes test center seat, examination, and results release
- Year-round registration and testing
- Pearson VUE testing centers
- NCEES will release results directly to examinees within 4–10 days.

# Computer Based Testing

- Continuous Registration (24/7)
- Register online through NCEES.org
- Pay all exam-related fees directly to NCEES via credit card
- On exam day, attest to abide by rules and policies found in the NCEES Examinee Guide



# Computer Based Testing

- Exam and references on computer
- Split screen
- 24-inch monitor
- FS references
  - Searchable
  - Available on NCEES website
- Specific Approved Calculators
- Security – No Other Books or References, phones, iPads, etc.

# CBT FS Exam - Format

6-hour test center appointment

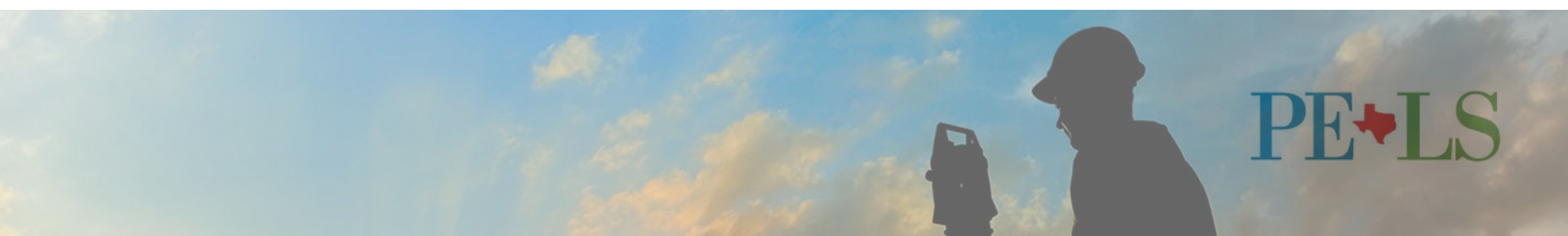
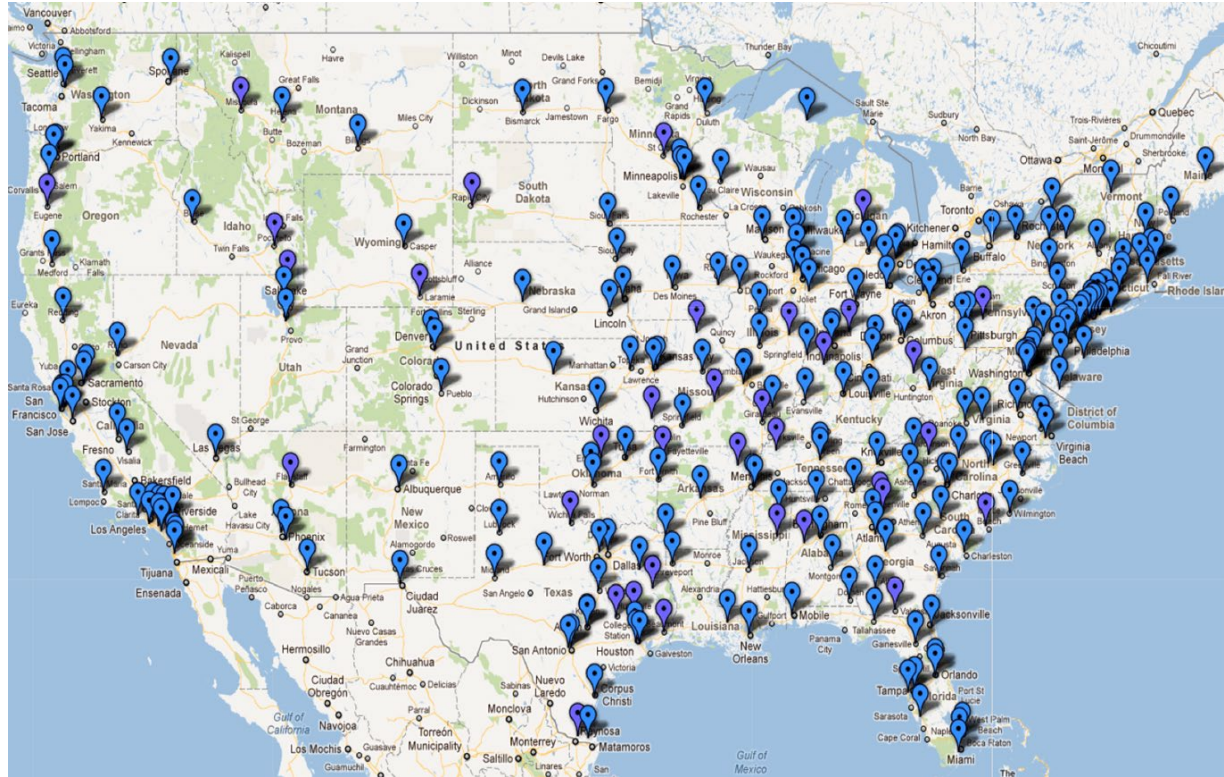
– Tutorial–8 minutes

Maximum Exam time–5 hours, 20 minutes

– Scheduled break–25 minutes



# Pearson VUE



# Test Locations in Texas

- Dallas area
- Waco
- Tyler
- Texas A&M Univ.
- Abilene
- Austin
- Houston area
- San Antonio
- Lamar University
- Lubbock
- Midland
- Amarillo
- Corpus Christi
- El Paso
- Approx. 30 total



# Surveyor in Training (SIT)

- Notify TBPELS after you pass the FS Exam.
- Certificate will be issued and mailed.
- Starts clock for RPLS experience.
- Certificate is good for 8 years.
- Can be renewed every 8 years
  - Renewal form
  - Pay fee
  - Document 32 hours of continuing education

# Surveyor in Training (SIT)

- SIT is path to be an RPLS
- SIT cannot sign and seal





# Registered Professional Land Surveyor



PE+LS

# Registered Professional Land Surveyor (RPLS) Basic Requirements

Must hold a current Texas SIT or be Out-of-State RPLS

## Education:

- Approved Bachelor's degree in Surveying, or TAC/ABET, ASAC, SACS accredited degree, or
- Bachelor degree and 32 hours of Board approved course work, or
- Associates degree and 32 hours of Board approved coursework .

## Experience:

At least 2 years of SIT Boundary experience working directly for a RPLS.

## References:

3 RPLS Reference Providers

## Application:

Apply for approval of a Texas RPLS registration and exams.

## Examinations:

National NCEES PS exam plus the Texas Surveying Specific Exam (TSSE)

## Ethics:

Criminal History Record Check – Required for all RPLS as of September 1, 2020.





## RPLS – APPLICATION

- RPLS Application (Paper Form)
- Application Fee \$75 (Not refundable)
- Education – Transcripts directly from institution if not already on record
- Education Course Checklist (if applicable)
- Supplementary Experience Record (SER)
- 3 RPLS References (minimum)
- Criminal History Record Check (CHRC)
- Criminal History forms for prior incidents.
- Documentation of English Proficiency (if required)

# RPLS / SIT Application Info

<http://pels.texas.gov>

- Email all questions to: [licensing @pels.texas.gov](mailto:licensing@pels.texas.gov)
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# Application Review and Approval

- Once your application is received you will be assigned a TBPLES licensing specialist to perform the initial review.
- Complete applications will then move to a technical review.
- We will process your application, and notify you along the way if information is missing or lacking.
- Once your application is approved you will be able to sit for the RPLS exams (TSSE and PS).

# RPLS Exams

## Texas Specific Surveying Exam

### National PS Exam

- Currently all Texas TSSE and LSLS Exams are administered by the TBPELS
- The National PS Exam is administered by NCEES
- You must have an approved application to register for the exams.
- Exam approval allows for applicant to sit for the TSSE exam 3 times before obtaining 1 additional year of experience and reapplying.



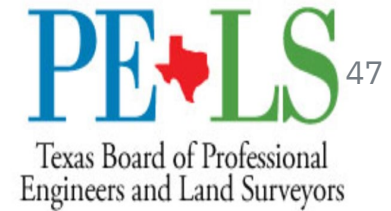
# TSSE Exam

- Exam registration forms and information found on PELS website
- \$75 exam fee for each exam.
- Pencil and Paper Exams:
  - Given 3 times per year in 2024 and 2025
  - 4 hour exam covering Texas specific surveying topics.
- Be aware of application and registration deadlines.

# TSSE Exam

- Exam Authorizations will be emailed ahead of the exam.
- Only approved calculators allowed.
- You must follow all exam day procedures.
- Exam grading, psychometrician evaluation, and calibration takes **6** weeks.
- Examinees will be emailed the exam results as Pass / Fail.
- Detail breakdown of individual exam performance is not available or provided.

# SURVEYING EXAM STATISTICS



## **Future TSSE Exams:**

**March 7, 2025 – Austin – Norris Center - Complete**

**June 13, 2025 – Austin – Norris Center**

**October 31, 2025 -Austin – Norris Center**

# Registration as RPLS

- Examinees that pass both exams will be issued a RPLS number and a certificate.
- Certificates and seal instructions will be mailed to the registrant.
- RPLS must obtain a seal.
- Annual renewal and Continuing Education is required for the RPLS.



# Questions And Answers

[licensing @pels.texas.gov](mailto:licensing@pels.texas.gov)



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# Thank you!



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