



April 23, 2020

Pennsylvania Gives Licensed Crane Operators More Time to Recertify Due to COVID-19 Emergency

Summary:

The Pennsylvania State Board of Crane Operators requires that all licensed crane operators have a current valid certification, issued by an approved certifying organization, at all times during a licensing biennial period. The board accepts the following certifications: National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO); National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER); Operating Engineers Certification Program (OECF); and Electrical Industry Certifications Association (EICA). A crane operator is subject to disciplinary action for failure to maintain a current valid certification. In addition, operating a crane without a valid certification is a violation of OSHA requirements.

Often, a crane operator's certification does not coincide with the biennial licensing period (some certifications are valid for two, three or even five years), and the certification may expire during the biennial renewal period. To assure that crane operators maintain valid certification, the board requires them to submit evidence of recertification before their current certification expires, rather than waiting until biennial licensure renewal. Unfortunately, crane operators have been unable to recertify during the Covid-19 pandemic.

On April 16, 2020, OSHA published an enforcement memo entitled "Discretion in Enforcement when Considering an Employer's Good Faith Efforts During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic." In the enforcement memo, OSHA stated:

An operator certified in accordance with 29 CFR 1926 Subpart CC (Cranes and Derricks) is unable to undergo a re-certification or re-licensing examination due to travel restrictions or social distancing protocols. OSHA will not cite the operator's employer for allowing the operator to work with an expired certification as long as the employer considered alternative options for compliance, implemented interim alternative protective measures, where possible, and can show good faith in its effort to reschedule and complete the operator's recertification as soon as possible through a certification or licensing body that meets the requirements of OSHA's standard.

In order to avoid confusion and provide guidance to crane operators licensed in the commonwealth, the Pennsylvania Department of State requested, and Governor Wolf granted, a waiver of the requirement that crane operators whose certification has expired, or will expire, during the COVID-19 emergency, submit to the board proof of recertification. The waiver is applicable for the duration of the Emergency Declaration, and for 30 days after it is lifted. This waiver gives licensed crane operators time to be recertified and submit proof of their recertification to the board.

For more information, please contact the [Board of Crane Operators](#).