

## 12) WHAT ARE THE PROPER FEE STANDARDS AND BILLING ARRANGEMENTS FOR A PROJECT?

There is no single set of industry fee standards for interior design, so during the interview process, you'll want to make sure you ask the designer questions (sample questions follow):

- Billing method: How will the designer charge for professional services? Is it a fixed fee, or one based on square footage? Is it an hourly rate? If hourly rates apply, then what is the hourly billing rate, and what is the estimated number of hours for your job? If applicable, also be sure to ask about billing rates for travel time, and any other reimbursable expenses. Ask for a signed contract.
- Be aware that some interior designers, certified or not, may purchase goods, and may include with their professional fees a mark-up on items (such as furnishings, window and wall treatments, floor coverings, hardware, etc.) purchased on your behalf. As work progresses, you are entitled to an itemized list of these goods, including the total price. Also, in this case, a Certified Interior Designer is required by the CCIDC Code of Ethics to disclose to the client the billing method used.
- Some interior designers provide professional design services only, and are not involved in the actual purchase of items for a project. In this case, the designer would charge only for design services and other reimbursable expenses, but should help you locate and coordinate suppliers or other resources for obtaining the necessary merchandise for your project.
- While determining which billing method the interior designer uses, establish a budget together. Ask to see a copy of the designer's project contract, and verify your payment responsibilities as listed in the contract. Before signing, make sure you understand it. If you have questions, ask!
- Terms: What will be the payment schedule for the project? If the proposed schedule doesn't meet your needs, negotiate a reasonable compromise.

## 13) WHAT SHOULD I DO IF PROBLEMS OCCUR WITH THE CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNER I HIRED?

Following these procedures will greatly reduce the chance for any misunderstanding. However, should any problems arise, you should openly and candidly discuss the problem with your designer. If you are still having difficulty solving the problem, contact us at CCIDC. We can often suggest solutions, or act as a resource until the problem has been solved satisfactorily. If necessary, we can determine whether the designer in question has violated the CCIDC Code of Ethics or our Rules and Regulations. The CCIDC has the duty and authority to investigate alleged violations by its Certified Interior Designers, and, in extreme cases, to even revoke their certification if warranted.

For your convenience, we have posted an interactive complaint form on our website which you can E-mail or print out, fill in, and fax or mail to our office. You can obtain a copy of the Code of Ethics on our website, or we can send it to you.

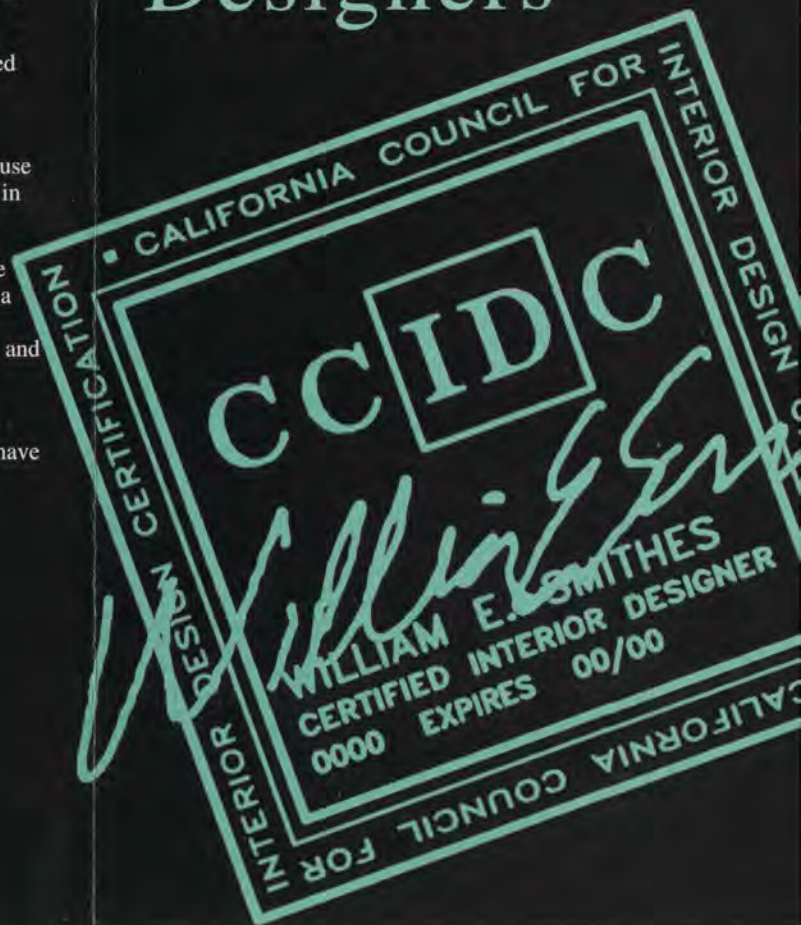
*After several years of legislative efforts by interior design groups and by the California Legislative Conference on Interior Design, a new law went into effect on January 1, 1991 outlining the parameters and responsibilities of work that an interior designer can perform. Along with these guidelines the listing of "Certified Interior Designer" was added to the California Business and Professions code, providing an official designation for interior designers who meet the education, experience, and examination requirements as outlined by the California Council for Interior Design Certification.*

- The California Council for Interior Design Certification (CCIDC), was established in January 1992 as the entity responsible for administration of the requirements of the Certified Interior Designers Law under Chapter 3.9, Section 5800 of the California Business and Professions Code.
- Under the Certified Interior Designers Law, Certified Interior Designers are qualified by the CCIDC upon evidence of a combination of interior design education and/or experience, and passage of a designated examination.
- Only the CCIDC can determine eligibility to be a Certified Interior Designer in the State of California.
- Designers who meet the education, experience, and examination criteria of the CCIDC Board are allowed to use the "Certified Interior Designer" title and are recognized in the State of California.
- Upon qualification, the Certified Interior Designer will be identified by an individual number which will appear on a certificate, a stamp with which to identify interior design non-structural and non-seismic drawings and documents, and an identification card.
- Certified Interior Designers, as mandated by the State of California, have met high standards of qualification and have agreed to uphold a strict code of ethics and conduct.

**CCIDC**®

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# Answers & Basics for Consumers regarding Certified Interior Designers





California Council for Interior Design Certification

### ARE YOU PLANNING TO HIRE AN INTERIOR DESIGNER? MAKE SURE THEY'RE CERTIFIED!

Hiring a Certified Interior Designer ensures that you'll be working with an experienced and competent design professional.

If you've never worked with an interior designer before, the process can be overwhelming. This brochure is designed to help you make informed decisions about hiring the best interior designer for your residential, retail, office or other commercial project.

Once you've decided to hire an interior designer, choosing one is of paramount importance. Many people call themselves interior designers, but if you are a consumer with a complex project, be sure you hire someone who is truly qualified to execute the task at hand. This should be someone who is trained to guide you through dozens, sometimes hundreds of decisions, challenges, and opportunities- all to a successful result.

CCIDC, the California Council for Interior Design Certification, (a public/private partnership) was established in 1992 to act as a protection resource to help you, the consumer, know when an interior designer is qualified. We are a council of qualified and experienced interior design professionals providing service and information to the public about ethical and professional standards for the industry.

### CONSUMERS' QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNERS

#### 1) WHAT IS A CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNER?

(B&P Code Section 5800,553B)

As opposed to a non-certified interior designer, a Certified Interior Designer is a competent design professional who is qualified to design, prepare, and submit any type of non-structural, non-seismic interior construction plans and specifications to local building departments. Certified Interior Designers have demonstrated through education, experience and examination their knowledge of the Uniform Building Code as it relates to space planning, life safety, flammability and disabled access code issues.

#### 2) WHAT ARE THE MEANINGS OF THE TERMS "NONSTRUCTURAL" AND "NON-SEISMIC"?

"Non-structural" means interior elements that are non-load bearing. It excludes the structural grid system supporting a building. "Non-seismic" means interior elements that do not assist in the seismic bracing of a building's structural system.

Common non-structural items include ceiling and partition systems. These components employ normal and typical

bracing conventions and do not assist in the structural integrity of a building.

#### 3) WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNER, AND WHO MAY REFER TO THEMSELVES AS A CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNER?

(B&P Code Section 5801-5801.1)

A Certified Interior Designer must have graduated from:

- a. A four or five year accredited interior design program and have a minimum of two years experience, or;
- b. A three year accredited interior design program and have a minimum of of three years experience, or;
- c. Have a combination of interior design education and experience for a minimum total of eight years.

They must pass the complete National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) examination or the Council for Qualification of Residential Interior Designers (CQRID) examination or both parts of the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) examination and the California Codes and Regulations Exam (CCRE), with enrollment in relevant continuing education classes for re-certification. In addition, the certified interior design professional has pledged to uphold strict standards, including the CCIDC *Code of Ethics*, further ensuring quality design services to you, the consumer.

Only persons who have met these education, experience, and examination requirements, and have been certified by the California Council for Interior Design Certification (CCIDC) may refer to themselves as a Certified Interior Designer.

#### 4) HOW DO I KNOW THAT THE INTERIOR DESIGNER I AM HIRING IS "CERTIFIED"?

You can call CCIDC to verify whether the interior designer you are hiring is indeed certified and in good standing.

#### 5) HOW WILL THE CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNER BE IDENTIFIED?

(B&P Code Section 5802)

Each Certified Interior Designer should affix a stamp and a wet signature to all drawings, specifications or documents prepared for submission. All documents shall be presented as interior design documents, not as architectural or engineering documents.

#### 6) THIS IS WHAT THE CCIDC STAMP LOOKS LIKE:



#### 7) ARE CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNERS "STATE CERTIFIED"?

(B&P Code Section 5800(b) and Section 553B)

No. The California Council for Interior Design Certification (CCIDC) is a private non-profit corporation and is responsible for certifying interior designers. The certification process in California is a "public/private partnership", as directed by the Business and Professions Code, Section 5800.

Anyone may use the term "interior designer". However, their qualifications for professional practice are unknown. If they are not a Certified Interior Designer, they may not have the knowledge and ability to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

#### 8) MAY A CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNER ACT AS A GENERAL CONTRACTOR AND HIRE SUBCONTRACTORS FOR PROJECTS?

(B&P Code Section 5803)

No. The Certified Interior Designer would have to hold a valid contractors license in order to hire subcontractors and/or perform contracting work. Certified Interior Designers prepare designs for work to be performed by licensed contractors.

#### 9) MAY CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNERS DESIGN HANDICAP ACCESS SYSTEMS?

Yes. Certified Interior Designers are required by law to pass a building and barrier free codes exam to demonstrate proficiency in handicap access and other code requirements.

They are recognized by Section 5800(a) to have "...demonstrated by means of education, experience, and examination the competency to protect and enhance the health, safety, and welfare of the public."

#### 10) MAY CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNER PLANS INCLUDE MECHANICAL OR ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING DRAWINGS?

Yes, if the mechanical and electrical elements have been prepared and stamped by a licensed mechanical or electrical engineer or architect.

#### 11) HOW CAN I FIND A CERTIFIED INTERIOR DESIGNER FOR MY PROJECT?

The Certified Interior Designer has the education, training, and experience to guide you through the entire design process- from helping define the initial project goals, to meeting cost and time budgets. A certified professional can actually save you considerable time and expense by knowing how to get the most out of your design budget, and by avoiding costly mistakes. Fees for certified interior designers are very competitive in the marketplace.

For a list of certified interior design professionals in your area, or for more detailed information on certification, contact us at the phone number on the back of this guide, or visit our website at [www.ccide.org](http://www.ccide.org)