



# How to Become a Certified Water Treatment, Distribution and/or Bottled Water System Operator

## Water Operator Certification Regulations:

- [401 KAR 11:001](#)—Definitions for 401 KAR Chapter 11
- [401 KAR 11:010](#)—Boards of Certification
- [401 KAR 11:020](#)—Standards of professional conduct for certified operators
- [401 KAR 11:040](#)—Water treatment and distribution system operators; classification and qualifications.
- [401 KAR 11:050](#)—Operator certification
- [401 KAR 8:050](#)—Drinking water program fees

Certification fees are non-refundable. Please make sure that you meet the minimum education and experience requirements prior to submitting an application to the certification program.

Additional information regarding the operator certification program may be obtained by visiting the program's Web site at [dca.ky.gov/certification](http://dca.ky.gov/certification).

You may also contact the Certification and Licensing Program at 502-564-0323 or 800-926-8111.



## Program Overview

The Water Treatment and Distribution System Operator Certification Program, administered by the Division of Compliance Assistance, is required by regulation. Certification is obtained by meeting minimum education and experience requirements, submitting the appropriate forms and fee, and by passing the certification examination.

There are multiple levels of water treatment, distribution system and bottled water system operator certifications. In order to qualify to take a Kentucky Water Operator Certification examination, an applicant must meet the experience and education requirements appropriate for that particular certification level.



## Regulations Pertaining to Operator Certification

Regulations pertaining to the certification of water treatment, distribution system and bottled water system operators are located in [401 KAR Chapter 11](#).



## Who Must Comply

KRS 223.210 requires that a person shall not be in direct responsible charge for the operation of a water treatment plant or water distribution system unless the operator has passed an examination prescribed by the cabinet. [401 KAR 8:030](#) requires that each public water system shall operate its water treatment plant, distribution system and bottled water system under the supervision of a certified operator who is in direct responsible charge of the system.



## Requirements

The requirements for each water treatment, distribution system and bottled water system certification level are located in [401 KAR 11:040](#). The tables listed on page two are intended to be a supplement to the regulation.



## Procedures for Applying for Certification

[401 KAR 11:050](#) establishes application and examination procedures for becoming certified. Applicants must submit an [Education and Experience Documentation Form](#) as well as a [Registration Form for Exams and Training](#). The examination fee of \$100 must be submitted with the forms. Applicants may choose to attend the certification preparatory training prior to the examination. The fee for the preparatory training must be submitted with the forms and examination fee. The fees are listed on the bottom of the Registration Form for Exams and Training. The schedule of training events and examination dates are located on the program's [Web site](#).

## How to Become a Certified Water Treatment, Distribution and/or Bottled Water System Operator—Continued

### Water Treatment Operator Certification Requirements

Certification Level	Education	Experience
Limited (only available for operators working for a school water treatment plant or for a semipublic water supply)	Minimal level of education is not required.	Minimal level of experience is not required.
Class IA-D	High school diploma or GED is required.	One (1) year of experience operating a Class IA-D or higher public water system.
Class IB-D	High school diploma or GED is required.	One (1) year of experience operating a Class IB-D or higher public water system.
Class IIA	High school diploma or GED is required.	Two (2) years of experience operating a public water treatment plant, with six (6) months of that experience in a Class IIA, IIIA or IVA treatment plant.
Class IIB-D	High school diploma or GED is required.	Two (2) years of experience operating a public water system, with (6) months of that experience in a Class IA-D, IIB-D, or higher treatment plant.
Class IIIA	High school diploma or GED is required.	Three (3) years of experience operating a public water treatment plant, with one (1) year of that experience in a Class IIA, IIIA, or IVA water treatment plant.
Class IIIB	High school diploma or GED is required.	Three (3) years of experience operating a public water treatment plant, with one (1) year of that experience in a Class IIA, IIB-D, IIIA, IIIB, IVA, or IVB water treatment plant.
Class IVA	Baccalaureate degree in engineering, science, or equivalent from an accredited college or university.	One (1) year of experience operating a Class IIIA or Class IVA water treatment plant.
Class IVB	Baccalaureate degree in engineering, science, or equivalent from an accredited college or university.	One (1) year of experience operating a Class IIIA, IIIB, IVA, or IVB water treatment plant.

### Water Distribution System Operator Certification Requirements

Certification Level	Education	Experience
Class ID	High school diploma or GED is required.	One (1) year of experience operating a distribution system.
Class IID	High school diploma or GED is required.	Two (2) years of experience operating a distribution system, with six (6) months of that experience in a Class IID, IIID, or IVD distribution system.
Class IIID	High school diploma or GED is required.	Three (3) years of experience operating a distribution system, with one (1) year of that experience in a Class IID, IIID or IVD distribution system.
Class IVD	Baccalaureate degree in engineering, science, or equivalent from an accredited college or university.	One (1) year of experience operating a Class IIID or IVD distribution system.

### Bottled Water System Operator Certification Requirements

Certification Level	Education	Experience
BW	High school diploma or GED is required.	One (1) year of experience operating a bottled water system.