



Twenty-six states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico and all 8 Canadian provinces have either practice or title laws to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their residents and many more have legislation pending. More and more states are recognizing that anyone who designs spaces for the public, including interior designers, should be fully educated and regulated.

Serving the Public

Every decision that an Interior Designer makes impacts the **health, safety, and welfare** of the public. Legal recognition ensures that only professionals qualified by **education, experience, and examination** design interior spaces or represent themselves as having the qualifications to do so.

In **emergency situations**, the decisions made by interior designers are critical in protecting life safety. Interior Designers are specially trained in interior materials, including **flammability and toxicity**, and are qualified to select interior finishes that comply with applicable fire codes. Proper paths for **egress, alarm systems, and exit lighting** are all addressed by interior designers.

When designing for work environments, interior designers are trained to provide for **ergonomic work spaces** and a built environment that can lead to **increased productivity**. Interior designers are also responsible for designing interior spaces that **conform to ADA requirements**, providing barrier-free designs for the handicapped and other persons with special needs.

For example, when designing a space in **hospitals** a qualified designer understands the relevant **safety codes** and practices necessary to design a safe, effective space. A qualified interior designer will know which type of products and finishes are flame retardant, **antibacterial and anti-microbial**; which products will withstand harsh cleansers and **strict sanitary protocols**; and which colors and types of lighting will **aid recovery and enhance healing**, or help a surgeon focus while operating.

Promoting Sustainability/Green Design

Environmentally conscious design is an integral and growing part of an interior designer's work. Interior Designers are able to specify products that are **environmentally safe**, use **recycled materials**, and result from **clean manufacturing** processes. Interior designers also contribute to **energy efficiency** by maximizing the use of daylight, selecting high-efficacy and efficient lighting, and selecting ceiling, wall, and floor surfaces to reduce the number of fixtures required to illuminate a space.

Providing Consumer Protection

Legislation assists all consumers seeking to hire a professional Interior Designer. Licensure establishes **standards of minimum competency**, including education, experience, and examination. Legislation helps consumers by differentiating the responsibilities and services of each of the design professions. It will safeguard the public by **creating accountability** – offering consumers legal recourse against negligent or unethical designers who violate the law. Consumers will know they're working with **qualified, responsible professionals** utilizing the latest information regarding health, safety, and welfare.