

CERTIFICATES

When the Board certifies an employer, it issues a formal certificate. This certificate identifies the names of the employer and the trade union. It also defines the bargaining unit for which the union is certified. The certificate indicates a bargaining relationship exists between the named parties. The Board does not issue certificates for bargaining relationships established through voluntary recognition. See: [[Voluntary Recognition, Chapter 31\(m\)](#)].

A certificate looks like:

<p style="text-align: center;">Union Name</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>is certified as the bargaining agent for a unit of employees of</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Employer Name</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>described as</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bargaining unit description.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Vice Chair/Chair</i> Alberta Labour Relations Board</p> <p>File Number: BR-12345 Certificate Number: 12-2000 February 28, 2000</p>
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The seven elements of a certificate are:

1. the trade union's legal name;
2. the employer's legal name;
3. the bargaining unit, often called the unit description;
4. the Board's signature (the Chair or a Vice-Chair);
5. the process file number and the bargaining relationship file number;
6. the certificate number; and
7. the date the certificate becomes effective.

The Board has policies about how to use employer and union names. Whenever possible, the Board also standardizes the wording of bargaining unit descriptions. This is because:

- Giving clear directions to the parties, Board officers and Board panels reduces unnecessary objections, hearings, and work.
- Standard wording increases consistency and reduces arguments over scope issues.
- It reduces the number of different bargaining units on the database. This increases the storage capacity of the system and reduces the time required for information searches.

The remaining sections of this chapter address:

- appropriate bargaining units [[Chapter 22\(b\)](#)];
- standard bargaining unit policies [[Chapter 22\(c\)](#)];
- unit description considerations for specific industries [[Chapter 22\(d\)](#)];
- employer's names [[Chapter 22\(e\)](#)];
- union's names [[Chapter 22\(f\)](#)]; and
- writing unit descriptions [[Chapter 22\(g\)](#)].