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Building Permit Requirements

- **When Permits are Required:** Refer to Chapter 18, Section 18-3.1 (a), Revised Ordinances of Honolulu

- **Work Exempted from Permits:** Refer to Chapter 18, Section 18-3.1 (b), Revised Ordinances of Honolulu

- **Separate Building Permits Required:** A separate building permit shall be required for each building or structure, except that a single permit may be obtained for a dwelling and its accessories, such as a fence, pool and carport or garage.

- **Plans, Specifications and Other Data:** CLICK HERE FOR ADDITIONAL ePlans REQUIREMENTS.
  - A minimum of four (4) sets of plans shall be submitted except building permit applications for fences and retaining walls will require only two (2) sets.
  - Building plans shall be drawn to scale and shall be of sufficient clarity to indicate the nature and extent of work proposed and show in detail that it will conform to the provisions of all relevant laws and ordinances. Typically, the information to be provided on the plans shall include the following:
    - On the plot plan, show lot dimensions, location of driveway, location of proposed work, distance from property lines and other buildings, easements and other pertinent information.
    - On the floor plan, indicate the use of room, room dimensions, location and sizes windows and exits.
    - On the framing plans and typical section views, show sizes and spacing of beams, floor joists, rafters, and ceiling heights.
    - On the outside or exterior elevation views, show height of building.
    - On the stairway section view, show dimensions for risers, treads, handrails including handgrip, headroom clearance, minimum width, and size of structural members.

- **Engineer and Architect Requirement:**
  - Plans must be properly stamped and signed by an architect or structural engineer when (1) work on one-storied buildings exceed $40,000, (2) work on two-storied buildings exceed $35,000, or (3) the principle structural members are of reinforced concrete or structural steel. Plans for retaining walls five (5) feet or more in height must be properly stamped and signed by an architect, structural or civil engineer licensed in the State of Hawaii.
  - Electrical plans and specifications shall bear the approval of a licensed electrical engineer except that if the demand load of the proposed installation is less than 30 kilovolt-amperes, the approval of an engineer shall be required only if the building official so directs.
Permit Forms

Building Permit Application Worksheet (41KB)
Contractors Statement - Form DPP-29 (49KB)
Specialty Contractors Statement - Form BPD 200.19a (39KB)
Called Inspection - Form BSD-10 (43KB)
Foundation Only Permit Application (69KB)
Supplemental Information Sheet (64KB)
Swimming Pool Fence Letter Form (48KB)
Ohana Pre-Check Form (7 14KB)

Flood Hazard Forms
Exempted Projects (65KB)
Exempted Projects and Improvements (53 9KB)
Exempted Projects in Coastal High Hazard Districts (48KB)
New Projects, Developments and Substantial Improvements (5 62KB)

Addressing Information

- **House Numbering Requirement:** Every building must be properly numbered by the building owner as follows:
  - Numbers shall be at least two inches in height;
  - All numbers shall be placed in such a manner as to be readily seen from the street, roadway or lane.
  - Numbers shall be of a different color from the background on which they are placed.
  - Numbers shall be placed in a permanent manner, chalk or other effaceable material not being permitted.
  - Under the Land Use Ordinance, address signs less than one (1) square feet in area are exempt from the requirements of the sign ordinance.

- **Numbering of Street Curbs:** An owner of a building may supplement the building numbers with numbers on the street curb fronting the building. Curb numbers shall be painted on the curb fronting the respective building in accordance with the following standard:
  - Address is to be painted within a 6-inch by 12-inch area on the top or face of the curb.
  - Address shall be painted adjacent to the driveway flare.
  - Arabic numerals shall be black in color over a white background.
Plan Review Information

Codes in Effect:

- **International Building Code (IBC),** 2006 Edition with local amendments:
- **International Residential Code (IRC),** 2006 Edition with local amendments (**P.81**):
- **International Existing Building Code (IEBC),** 2006 Edition with local amendments (**P.132**):
- **Intl Energy Conservation Code (IECC),** 2006 Edition with local amendments:
- **Housing Code** of the City and County of Honolulu, Printed 1997
- **Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC),** 2006 Edition with local amendments:
- **National Electric Code (NEC),** 2008 Edition with local amendments:
- **NFPA 1, 2006 Edition with local amendments:**

NOTE: The codes without hyperlinks are not offered online for free.

**Time Limits for initial review for each agency/branch for projects that qualify for the Automatic Approval process are as follows:**

- **Category 1 Permits Two (2) full working days:** Single-family dwelling and two-family dwelling; Structures accessory to residential dwellings; Retaining walls
- **Category 2 Permits 14 calendar days:** Projects with valuation below $50,000
- **Category 3 Permits 28 calendar days:** Projects with valuation between $50,000 and $999,999
- **Category 4 Permits 42 calendar days:** Projects with valuation between $1,000,000 and $9,999,999
- **Category 5 Permits 70 calendar days:** Projects with valuation above $10,000,000

  - **Determination of Project Valuation:** The valuation to be used by the building official in computing the permit fees shall be the total value of all construction work for which the permit is issued, as well as all finish work, painting, roofing, electrical, plumbing, heating, air conditioning, elevators, fire extinguishing systems and any other permanent work or permanent equipment.
Permit Issuance

Issuance and Posting:

All approved plans and specifications shall not be changed, modified, or altered without authorization from the building official, and all work regulated by the codes shall be done in accordance with the approved plans.

Post the building permit in a conspicuous place on the site during the progress of work.

The approved job site building plans shall be kept on the site of the building or work at all times during which the authorized work is in progress.

Permit Validity:

The issuance of any permit or approval of plans, specifications, and other data shall not be construed to be a permit for, or an approval of any violation of any code or ordinance.

The issuance of a permit shall not prevent the building official from requiring the correction of errors in the plans and specifications or halting building operations when in violation of any pertinent code or ordinance.

- Every permit shall be valid for a period of three (3) years from the date of its issuance. Any building or structure that is not completed within the period of validity shall fall within the purview of unfinished buildings or structures.

Deadlines for Construction:

- Applicant has 180 days from the building permit issuance date to begin work.
- Once work has started, such work shall not be suspended or abandoned for a period of 120 days.
- At the end of two (2) years after the building permit is issued, all foundation work for the new building shall be completed. In any case, all work shall be completed within three (3) years from the building permit issuance date with the exception of work on single family dwellings. The period for completion of work on single family dwellings is five (5) years from the date of permit issuance.
- The building official may issue a notice to revoke a building permit if the authorized work is not commenced or completed within the appropriate deadlines for construction.
- An extension of time may be granted by the building official when there is a strike or other causes beyond the control of the contractor or owner. The extension of time shall be requested prior to the specified deadlines for construction.
**Fee Information**

**Plan Review Fees:** A plan review fee shall be paid at the time of submitting plans and specifications for review. Such plan review fee shall be 20 percent of a tentative building permit fee based upon a preliminary estimated valuation of work. The plan review fee is in addition to the building permit fee and covers building, electrical and plumbing building permits. Permits applications for fences, retaining walls, driveways, and swimming pools are exempt.

Applications for which plan review fees have been paid and for which no permit is issued within 365 days following the date of application shall expire, unless extended by the building official. In order to renew action on an application after its expiration, the applicant shall submit plans and pay a new plan review fee.

**Fees for Building Permits:** Refer to Chapter 18 page 11, Table 18-A, Revised Ordinances of Honolulu.

**Fees for Sign Permits:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Value of Work</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0.01 to $500</td>
<td>$18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500.01 to $1000</td>
<td>$35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1000.01 and above</td>
<td>$70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Penalty Fee for Work without Permit:** Where work for which a permit is required is started prior to obtaining a permit, the fees specified shall be doubled, but the payment of such double fee shall not relieve any persons from fully complying with the requirements of all pertinent codes and ordinances.

The penalty fee for sign work commenced without a permit is $100 plus the fee specified for the value of the sign work.

**Refund of Fees:** Where a permittee is unable to commence work authorized by the building permit due to a material change in circumstances or financial difficulties, the building official can refund an amount equal to 50 percent of the permit fee paid. The written application for a refund on forms furnished by the building official shall be filed no later than 15 days after the revocation date of such permit and the amount of refund cannot be less than ten (10) dollars.

**Inspection Information**

- **Electrical and Plumbing Information:** Any electrical and plumbing work authorized by the building permit shall be inspected. The electrical and plumbing contractors shall notify the building official that the work is ready for inspection. The building official may require that every request for inspection be filed at least one (1) working day before the day for which inspection is requested.

- **Special Inspection Policy:** In addition to the building official inspection of work for which a permit is required, the owner shall employ one or more special inspectors independent of the contractors performing the work. The special inspectors shall provide inspections during construction on the types of work listed under Chapter 17, Section 1704 and 1707, of the International Building Code. The construction drawings shall have all special inspections listed as a condition for permit issuance. Special inspectors shall keep records of inspections. The special inspector shall furnish inspection reports to the owner, licensed engineer or architect of record, and other owner designated persons. Reports shall indicate that work inspected was done in conformance to approved construction documents. Discrepancies shall be brought to the immediate attention of the contractor for correction, then, if uncorrected, to the licensed engineer or architect of record and to the building official. The special inspector shall submit a final signed report to the owner and licensed engineer or architect of record, stating whether the work requiring special inspection was, to the best of the inspector's knowledge, in conformance to the approved plans and specifications and the applicable workmanship provisions of this code. Prior to the final inspection required under Section 109.3.10 the licensed engineer or architect of record,
record shall submit a written statement verifying receipt of the final inspection reports and documenting that there are no known unresolved code requirements that create significant public safety deficiencies.

- **Special Inspection Certification Application:** The following individuals shall be considered to be qualified to perform special inspection:
  
  - Structural engineers licensed by the State of Hawaii may perform special inspection on concrete, bolts installed in concrete, special moment-resisting concrete frame, reinforcing steel and prestressing steel tendons, high-strength bolting, structural masonry, shotcrete, sheathed shear walls and diaphragms, and complete load path.
  
  - Civil engineers licensed by the State of Hawaii may perform special inspection of piling, drilled piers, caissons, special grading, excavation and filling.
  
  - Design professionals of record, licensed by the State of Hawaii, responsible for performing observation of construction under HRS Chapter 464 for a particular project, may perform special inspection of complete load path and uplift ties and termite treatment for that project.
  
  - Qualified employees of engineering and architectural firms with the responsibility for performing the design and observation of construction under Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 464 and special inspection under Uniform Building Code Section 306 for a particular project, provided that one of the principals is a structural engineer licensed by the State of Hawaii.
  
  - Qualified employees of civil engineering firms with the responsibility for preparing the soils investigation report and performing both observation of construction under Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 464 and special inspection under Uniform Building Code Section 306 for a particular project may perform special inspection of piling, drilled piers, caissons, special grading, excavation and filling, provided that one of the principals is a civil engineer licensed by the State of Hawaii.
  
  - Inspectors certified by the American Concrete Institute, the International Conference of Building Officials or the American Welding Society shall be considered to be qualified in the areas of their specialty.
  
  - Individuals who pass a written test prepared by the Building Division, Department of Planning and Permitting, with a minimum passing score of 70 percent. Applicants must have at least three years of applicable experience to be eligible for the written test. An engineering or architectural degree from an accredited college or university may be substituted for two years of experience. A concrete technician certificate issued by the Concrete Technicians Association of Hawaii may be substituted for one year of experience in the fields of concrete, reinforcing steel and prestressing steel. Concrete and reinforcing steel special inspector certifications shall be a prerequisite for obtaining prestressed concrete certification. Examinations shall not be retaken in the same classification within any six-month period.
  
  - **Called Inspection Policy:** Inspections will be required for all lathing and gypsum board, interior and exterior, in construction required to be fire resistive except for work in Groups R-3 and U Occupancies. Inspections will be made after all lathing and gypsum board is in place, but before any plastering is applied or before gypsum joints and fasteners are taped and finished. Request for inspections shall be at least 24 hours in advance.
  
  - **Certificate of Occupancy Procedure:** No building or structure shall be used or occupied until the building official has issued a certificate of occupancy. Single family dwellings and its accessories are the exception.
  
  - The certificate of occupancy is issued after the building official inspects the building or structure and finds no violations of the code. The certificate of occupancy shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises and shall not be removed.
  
  - The certificate of occupancy can be suspended or revoked when issued in error, or on the basis of incorrect information supplied, or when it is determined that the building or structure is in violation of an ordinance or code provision.
- **Room Capacity Sign**: Any room used for assembly purpose where fixed seats are not installed shall have a room capacity sign posted in a conspicuous place near the main exit. Sign shall indicate the total number of occupants allowed for the room.