



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT
BUILDING DIVISION

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How to apply for a Residential Building Permit

Prepare Site Plan

The site plan is a visual representation of the proposed project and is instrumental in the building permit application process. It is essential to have a complete site plan before beginning the application process. The Building Division makes a site plan checklist available in order to assist applicants with creating a complete site plan.

Begin Application & Pay Application Fees

To begin the building permit application process, the applicant will need to submit 4 copies of a site plan and pay application fees. The application fees vary depending on the scope and location of the project. Typically, we collect fees for the presite inspection and referrals which will be approximately \$150 - \$400. The presite inspection and referral fees are valid for one year. This means the applicant will need to complete the building permit process within one year or these fees expire.

Submit Construction Plans

The applicant may submit construction plans with the site plans or wait until the presite inspection is complete. The Building Division makes available a construction plan checklist in order to assist applicants with submitting a complete set of plans. At the time the construction plans are submitted, we will collect the plan check deposit. The plan check deposit is based on the size of the project and is applied to the cost of checking the construction plans for code compliance. The plan check deposit expires after one year. This means the applicant will need to complete the building permit process within one year or potentially pay the deposit again.

Schedule Presite Inspection

The presite inspection takes place when a Building Division inspector visits the project site to verify that the elements on the site plan are accurate. After application submittal, a presite inspection is scheduled for a date chosen by the applicant. We will provide the applicant with flags to post at the project site to indicate the project area. The applicant does not need to be present for the presite inspection.

Presite Inspection Results

After the presite inspection, the inspector will write up comments based on observations made during the site visit. The inspector will make a list of any additional information or reports we need in order to continue processing the building permit application. For example, the site plan may need to be revised to accurately reflect the project area. The building permit application process cannot proceed until an accurate site plan is received. Results of the presite inspection are provided to the applicant.

Residential Building Permit, continued

Agency Referrals

If the site plan is accurate, we will send referrals after the presite inspection. We send information about the project to various agencies so that they are aware of the applicant's plans to build. Depending on the scope of the project we send referrals to the Planning Division, Public Works, Division of Environmental Health, Community Service Districts, Fire Districts, Department of Fish & Game, and California Department of Transportation. Building permits cannot be issued until all referral agency approvals are received.

Plan Check Process

Plan check is the process of checking the plans for code compliance. When the applicant has submitted everything requested by the inspector, the project is put into plan check. This process takes 3 to 8 weeks depending on the volume of projects we are processing at the time. Once the plans are checked they will either be approved or need corrections. The applicant will be notified if corrections are needed.

Building Permit Issuance

Once the construction plans come out of plan check as approved, and the referrals have returned from the various agencies approved, the building permit will be ready to issue. We will notify the applicant that the building permit is ready to issue with the total permit fees due. The permit must be issued within one year of the date the plans were first submitted, or the plans expire. The property owner(s) or a licensed contractor may sign for the permit, unless other arrangements are made. The Building Division issues permits from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm and accepts cash, checks, or credit cards for payment (credit cards require an additional 2.35% convenience fee).

Inspections

Inspections are required at various stages of the construction process. It is the responsibility of the owner and/or contractor to schedule the required inspections. The Building Division has a 24-hour voice mailbox to receive requests for inspections and can be reached at (707) 445-7244. Inspections are scheduled roughly one week before the inspection is to be performed. Please note that the Building Division does not conduct inspections in all areas of Humboldt County every day of the week.

Permit Expiration

It is the responsibility of the property owner and/or the contractor to schedule inspections. The building permit becomes null and void if the work authorized by the permit does not begin within 180 days from the date of the permit. The permit also expires if the work is suspended or abandoned for a period of 180 days at any time before the final inspection is requested. An extension of the expiration date may be available upon written request. Only one extension is allowed for the duration of the permit.

Examples of New Residential Construction (Not A Complete Listing)

New residence/ garage/ shop - Changing the use of a structure (i.e. converting a garage to a bedroom)
– Installing a manufactured home - Addition to existing residence/ garage - Grading projects - Decks, sunrooms, and porches