



Development Services Department

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www.cityofsacramento.org/dsd



Who May Prepare Plans

The Building Official of the City of Sacramento reserves the right to require plans, computations, and specifications to be prepared and designed by an engineer or architect licensed by the State of California to practice as such.

In accordance with the provisions of the California Business & Professions Code, the plans, specifications, and calculations for all buildings and structures shall be prepared under the direction of and signed by a person certified by the State of California as a registered civil engineer or licensed architect. Structural and soils engineers are civil engineers with the authority to use their respective titles. Any person who practices electrical or mechanical engineering shall be registered accordingly in the State of California.

The following exemptions to the above requirements may be permitted, unless the buildings and structures are determined by the Building Official to be of an unusual nature where the structural stability or the safety of such buildings or structures is not evident to the Building Official. Engineering calculations and the signature of a registered engineer or licensed architect may be required in such cases.

Exemptions for Unlicensed Persons

(Reference Business & Professions Code, Sections 5537, 5538, 6737.1, and 6745).

1. Any person, if conforming substantially to conventional framing requirements of CBC Chapter 23 and approved framing charts, may prepare the following types of residential work:
 - a. Single family dwellings not more than two stories plus basement in height.
 - b. Multi-family dwellings not more than two stories plus basement in height, having not more than four attached dwellings, and not more than four dwellings per lot, including not more than four attached row house dwelling units on separate lots.
 - c. Wood frame garages and other structures appurtenant to a. and b. above.
 - d. Wood frame agricultural and ranch buildings unless the Building Official deems that an undue risk to the public health, safety, or welfare is involved.

Design documents (plans and calculations) for non-conventional elements that do not conform substantially to CBC Chapter 23 and approved framing charts must be prepared by a licensed architect or registered civil engineer certified by the State of California. The documents for that portion shall bear the stamp and wet signature and information required of the licensee who is responsible for their preparation.

2. Any unlicensed person may prepare and submit plans for the following types of commercial interior additions, alterations, or tenant improvements that do not change or affect structural systems (i.e nonstructural or nonseismic) or safety of the building in accordance with the provisions of the California Business & Professions Code:
- a. Tenant spaces that require only one exit per table 1015.1 of the California Building Code.
 - b. Tenant spaces that are classified only as B and M occupancies.
 - c. Spaces where fire walls as defined by CBC Section 705, fire barriers as defined by CBC Section 706, and horizontal exits are not required.
 - d. Spaces in the building that are not being converted from residential use and are not subject to change in occupancy to higher life safety hazard.
 - e. Tenant spaces that are not within historical buildings.
 - f. Tenant spaces that do not require T-24 energy, mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems designed by appropriately licensed or registered professionals, or appropriately licensed contractors as allowed by the Professional Engineers Act.

Use of Exemption 2 is subject to approval of the Building Official. The Building Official *may require plans, computations, and specifications to be prepared and designed by an engineer or architect licensed by the State to practice as such even if not required by State law.*

3. Exemption for licensed contractors. (Reference B & P Code, Section 6737.3.) Contractors licensed in the State of California are not prohibited from designed mechanical and electrical systems of facilities for work to be performed by such contractor within the classification for which his/her license is issued. Nothing in this Section is intended to imply that a licensed contractor may design work that is to be installed by others.

Incomplete Plans:

The City of Sacramento's Building Department requires that plans and specifications must be of sufficient clarity to indicate the nature and extent of the work proposed and show in detail that it will conform to the provisions of the Code and all relevant laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations. Plans that are so lacking in clarity or detail as to be unacceptable will be referred back to the applicant for completion and/or clarification