



LICENSED PROFESSIONAL DESIGNER REQUIREMENTS

Plans Required to be Designed by an Architect or Engineer

Plans prepared for the following work shall be deemed as affecting the safety of a building or its occupants and shall be stamped and signed by a registered engineer or architect:

- New buildings and additions to existing buildings **(not complying with the CBC Conventional Frame Requirements in any respect).**
- Projects with interior or exterior structural alterations **(not complying with the CBC Conventional Frame Requirements in any respect).**
- Interior alteration of any commercial building.
- Storage racks over 8' in height or more than 400 pounds loaded.
- Remodeling projects with changes to fire rated corridors, fire rated occupancy separations and/or area separation walls.
- Alteration to any engineered element of construction.
- Any "Hazardous" occupancy.
- Any Assembly occupancies.
- Tanks and vessels.
- Machinery and equipment requiring anchoring or support per the CBC or ASCE-7.
- New roof mounted mechanical equipment exceeding 400 pounds or contiguous to a commercial occupancy.
- School and day care occupancies of any type.
- Hospital or Institutional occupancies of any type.
- Projects with S or F occupancies.
- Hotel, motel and apartment occupancies or any multifamily housing.
- Projects with mixed or multiple occupancies.
- Remodeling projects in a high-rise or mid-rise building.
- Lateral force resisting systems **(not complying with the CBC Conventional Frame Requirements in any respect).**
- Cripple walls exceeding 4' in height or adjacent to garage door openings **(not complying with the CBC Conventional Frame Requirements in any respect).**
- Any project deemed by the Chief Building Official to require professional design by an appropriately licensed California Registered Engineer or Architect.

Plans that Can be Prepared by an Unlicensed Person

Section 5537 and 5538 of the California Business & Professions Code (BPC) allows unlicensed person to prepare plans, drawings, and specifications for the following types of structures in accordance with the conventional framing requirements of Chapter 23 of the 2013 California Building Code.

- Single family dwelling no more than two stories in height.
- Multiple dwellings containing no more than four dwelling units and not more than two stories.
- Garages or other structures appurtenant to single family dwelling or multiple dwellings not more than two stories and basement in height.
- Agricultural and ranch buildings unless the Building Official deems that an undue risk to the public health, safety, or welfare is involved.
- Nonstructural store fronts, interior alterations or additions, fixtures, cabinet work, furniture, or other appliances or equipment.

Design Limitations for Professional

The following limitations for professionals are based on the California Health and Safety Code (HSC) and the Business and Professional Code (BPC).

- Unlicensed persons may not design any building or structure component that changes or affects the safety of any building, including but not limited to, structural or seismic components.

Architects

May design any building of any type except the structural portion of a hospital. (HSC section 15048 and BPC sections 5500.1 and 6737)

Civil Engineers

May design any building except hospitals and schools. (HSC section 39148, BPC sections 5537.5, 6731, 6735, and Education Code section 39148)

Structural Engineers

No limitations. May design any building of any type. (BPC sections 6637.1, 6731, and 6736)

Important Note:

A business license may be required if conducting business in the City, please contact the Planning Division at (650) 853-3189 for new licenses or the Finance Department 650-853-3100 for renewals (EPA Muni Code 5.04.030).