



INFORMATION BULLETIN

IB-025

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Maintenance and Duplication of Plans

This Information Bulletin (IB) summarizes when plans are maintained, the procedures and criteria for plan maintenance, and information to request the duplication of plans. The California Health and Safety Code (HSC) §19850 and the Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC) §18.05.070 specify when plans are required to be maintained by the Building and Safety Bureau (Bureau). Pursuant to both State and City laws, copies of the plans requested by the public shall only be used for the maintenance, operation, and use of the building.

PART I. REQUIREMENT FOR MAINTAINED PLANS

1. **General.** The Bureau had previously maintained plans for only a few City buildings in the form of the original blueprints and other major commercial or apartment buildings on microfilm. Since 2012, the Bureau began to maintain official copies of most plans that the Bureau issues construction permits pursuant to the LBMC §18.05.070.B. Maintained plans may be stored on microfilm or other type of photographic copy. Plans for the following type of projects, in some cases, may not have been maintained, except where required by the Building Official:
 - a. Single or multiple dwellings in areas which are not part of a common interest development (as defined in the California Civil Code §1351) and not more than two stories and basement in height;
 - b. Garages and other structures appurtenant to buildings described under Subsection 1 above;
 - c. Farm and ranch buildings;
 - d. Any one-story building where the span between bearing walls does not exceed 25 feet. This exception does not, however, apply to a steel frame or concrete building; or
 - e. Alterations to commercial buildings, apartments, and hotels, which do not require the signature of a registered design professional.
2. **Plan Maintenance Fee.** Pursuant to the LBMC §18.05.070.C and as authorized in the HSC §19852, a plan maintenance fee shall be collected at the time the permit is issued for all plans that are required to be maintained. See [Master Fee Schedule](#) for fees.
3. **Plan Standards.** To assure that copies of the maintained plans are readable, the final copy of plans for permit issuance shall comply with the following minimum standards.

- a. All plans shall be legible. Faint pencil drawings, faint carbon copies and faint blueprints are not acceptable.
- b. The background shall be as light as possible and of uniform density.
- c. The drawings shall be rolled. Folded plans are not acceptable.
- d. The size of each sheet of the plans is limited to a minimum of 18" x 24" and a maximum of 36" x 48".
- e. The minimum lettering size is 1/8".

PART II. DUPLICATION OF MAINTAINED PLANS

1. **Required Authorization.** Pursuant to the HSC §19851 and the LBMC §18.05.070.C, plans maintained by the Bureau may not be duplicated in whole or in part except:
 - a. With the written permission of the certified, licensed or registered professional or his or her successor, if any, who signed the original documents and the written permission of the original or current owner of the building, or, if the building is part of a common interest development, with the written permission of the board of directors or governing body of the association established to manage the common interest development; or
 - b. By order of a proper court; or
 - c. Upon request of any State agency.
2. **Unreasonable Refusal.** Pursuant to the HSC §19851(f), the certified, licensed, or registered professional's refusal to permit the duplication of the plans is unreasonable if, upon request from the Bureau, the professional does either of the following:
 - a. Fails to respond to the Bureau within 30 days of receipt by the professional of the request. However, if the Bureau determines that professional is unavailable to respond within 30 days of receipt of the request due to serious illness, travel, or other extenuating circumstances, the time period shall be extended by the Bureau to allow the professional adequate time to respond, as determined to be appropriate to the individual circumstance, but not to exceed 60 days.
 - b. Refuses to give his or her permission for the duplication of the plans after receiving the signed affidavit and registered or certified letter specified in the HSC §19851 subdivisions (c) and (d) and this IB.
3. **Required Form.** The person requesting to duplicate the official copy of the maintained plans shall submit a completed and signed [FORM-024 Plan Duplication Request](#) as provided by the Bureau acknowledging all of the following:
 - a. The copy of the plans shall only be used for the maintenance, operation and use of the building.

- b. The drawings are instruments of professional service and are incomplete without the interpretation of the certified, licensed or registered professional of record.
 - c. The California Business and Professions Code §5536.25(a) and §6735(b) states that a licensed architect/engineer who signs plans, specifications, reports, or documents shall not be responsible for damage caused by subsequent changes to, or use of, those plans, specifications, reports, or documents where the subsequent changes or uses, including changes or uses made by state or local governmental agencies, are not authorized or approved by the licensed architect/engineer who originally signed the plans, specifications, reports, or documents, provided that the architectural/engineering service rendered by the architect/engineer who signed the plans, specifications, reports, or documents was not also a proximate cause of the damage.
4. **Fees to Duplicate Plans.** Pursuant to the LBMC §18.05.070.C, a person requesting duplication of maintained plans will be required to pay a fee as follows:
- a. Plans that have not been microfilmed and are authorized for reproduction to be duplicated by other than city services will be released only to a bureau-authorized duplicating service. The cost of duplicating the plans shall be paid directly to the duplicating service by the person requesting duplication.
 - b. Plans that have been microfilmed and are authorized for reproduction shall be duplicated by city services or vendors. The department shall collect an initial service fee for each request for reproduction of construction documents plus the actual cost of duplicating the plans. See [Master Fee Schedule](#) for fees.

PART III. INSPECTION OF MAINTAINED PLANS

Pursuant to the LBMC §18.05.070.B, plans maintained by the Bureau may be viewed (but not copied) on the premises of the Bureau without the required authorization from the owner and the certified, licensed, or registered professional as stated in Part II.

EXCEPTION: Plans or portions of plans for buildings containing banks, other financial institutions, or public utilities may not be inspected without the written permission from the owner of the building.

To request this information in an alternative format or to request a reasonable accommodation, please contact the Community Development Department at longbeach.gov/lbcd and 562.570.3807. A minimum of three business days is requested to ensure availability; attempts will be made to accommodate requests with shorter notice.