



City of Long Beach
Department of Development Services
Building and Safety Bureau

Maintenance and Reproduction of Building Plans

Information
Bulletin
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Section 19850 of the State of California's Health and Safety Code (HSC) and §18.05.070 of the Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC) specify which building 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. This Information Bulletin summarizes which plans are maintained, the procedures and criteria for plan maintenance and information relating to obtaining copies of maintained building plans.

I. GENERAL

The Bureau had previously maintained building plans for only a few City buildings in the form of the original blueprints and other major commercial or apartment buildings on microfilm. Effective 2012, the Bureau maintains an official copy, which may be on microfilm or other type of photographic copy, of all building plans for which the Bureau issues a building permit pursuant to §18.05.070.B of the LBMC. Plans for the following need not be maintained, except where required by the Building Official:

1. Single or multiple dwellings in areas which are not part of a common interest development (as defined in §1351 of the Civil Code of California) and not more than two stories and basement in height;
2. Garages and other structures appurtenant to buildings described under subsection 1 above;
3. Farm and ranch buildings;
4. 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;
5. Alterations to commercial buildings, apartments, and hotels, which do not require the signature of a registered design professional.

II. FEES

Pursuant to §18.05.070.C of the LBMC and as authorized in §19852 of the HSC, 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.

III. PLAN STANDARDS

To assure that copies of the maintained building plans are readable, the final copy of plans for permit issuance shall comply with the following minimum standards.

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

IV. REPRODUCTION OF MAINTAINED BUILDING PLANS

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Pursuant to §19851 of the HSC and §18.05.070.C of the LBMC, plans maintained by the Bureau may not be duplicated in whole or in part except:

1. 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
2. By order of a proper court; or
3. Upon request of any State agency.

Pursuant to Subdivision (f) of §19851 of the HSC, 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 Subdivisions (c) and (d) of Section 19851 of the HSC and this Information Bulletin.

REQUIRED AFFIDAVIT:

The person requesting to duplicate the official copy of the maintained building plans shall submit a completed and signed affidavit to the Bureau stating all of the following:

1. The copy of the plans shall only be used for the maintenance, operation and use of the building.

2. The drawings are instruments of professional service and are incomplete without the interpretation of the certified, licensed or registered professional of record.
3. That Subdivision (a) of Section 5536.25 and Subdivision (b) of Section 6735 of the Business and Professions Code 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.

FEES TO OBTAIN COPIES OF PLANS:

Pursuant to §18.05.070.C of the LBMC, a person requesting duplication of maintained building plans will be required to pay fees:

1. Building 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.
2. Building 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.

V. INSPECTION OF PLANS

Pursuant to §18.05.070.B of the LBMC, the copy of building 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 Section IV.

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.