



**City of Carmel-by-the-Sea
Building Safety Division
Standard Operating Guidance**

19-12 Designer Requirements for Permit Applications

Background

The City of Carmel, consistent with State law, requires that, with some exemptions, the plans specifications, calculations, and reports prepared by a State registered design professional bear the stamp and signature of that design on the plans, calculations, specifications and/or reports as described in this Standard Operating Guidance.

Citations

Carmel Municipal Code Sec. 5.08.010
2019 California Building Code Sec. 107
2019 California Residential Code Sec. R106
CA Business and Professions Code (BPC As noted)

Guidance

In accordance with the provisions of the California Business and Professions Code (5536.2), with some exceptions **all** plans submitted for permits for buildings and structures are required to be prepared by a person licensed by the State of California to perform such design work. When the work is performed by a licensed, registered design professional the registered design professional in responsible charge shall stamp and sign all design documents in accordance with this Guidance.

Except as specifically noted in this SOG, the following are examples of projects requiring plans and related construction documents to be prepared, stamped and signed by a California Professional Engineer or California Registered Architect:

- New buildings and additions to existing buildings;
- Projects with interior or exterior structural alterations;
- Interior alteration with a change in the occupancy group or division;
- All Group A (assembly) occupancies;
- All Group E (school or daycare) occupancies;
- All Group F (factory and industrial) occupancies;
- All Group H (hazardous) occupancies;
- All Group I (institutional) occupancies;
- All Group R, Division 1, 2, 3.1 and 4 occupancies;
- Projects with mixed occupancies;
- Interior alteration with walls and partitions over 5 feet 9 inches in height or ceiling work which covers a floor area greater than 3,000 square feet in Groups B, S-1, S-2, and M occupancies;
- Storage racks over 8 feet in height;
- Remodeling projects that create or alter fire-rated corridors, occupancy separations, or area separation walls;
- Alterations that change the means of egress (exit) requirements or the path of egress travel;
- Tanks and vessels;

- Machinery and equipment support and anchorage (with some exceptions)
- Any other project deemed by the building official as requiring design by a California Registered Engineer or Architect.

Exemptions to stamp/seal requirements. (BPC § 6731, 6737.1, 6745)

The following exemptions to the above requirements may be permitted, unless the building or structure is determined by the building official to be of an unusual nature, or where the structural stability of the building or structure is not evident to the building official. In such cases, engineering plans, calculations, specifications and reports, and the stamp and signature of a licensed engineer or architect may nevertheless be required.

An unlicensed person may prepare plans, drawings, or specifications for:

- Single family dwellings of wood frame construction not more than two stories and a basement in height;
- Multiple dwellings with not more than four dwelling units of wood frame construction not more than two stories and a basement in height;
- Garages and other structures appurtenant to buildings described above, of wood frame construction and not more than two stories and a basement in height.
- Agricultural and ranch buildings of wood frame construction, unless the building official deems an undue risk to the public health, safety, or welfare is involved;

If any portion of 1 through 4 deviates from conventional framing requirements for wood frame construction found in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations or other state or local building codes, such portions shall be designed by, or under the responsible charge of, a licensed architect or licensed engineer.

An unlicensed person may prepare the plans, drawings, and specifications for the:

- Installation of non-structural store fronts;
- Interior alterations not affecting the means of egress and not requiring compliance with CA Building Code Chapter 11 accessibility;
- Installation of fixtures, cabinet work, furniture not affecting the means of egress or fire protection system design;
- Installation or anchorage of appliances or equipment as long as the work is non-structural in nature.

What requires a wet stamp/signature?

A wet signature and stamp are required on the title sheet of the plan, and on the first page or cover sheet of the calculations, specifications and reports. The remaining sheets of the plans may bear an original electronic seal and signature of the architect or engineer as long as their wet stamp and signature are on the documents as described above. Each licensed design professional contributing to the plans shall provide their stamp and signature on the sheets prepared under their responsible charge.

Design limitations for professionals:

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

- *Architects* – May design any building of any type except the structural portion of a hospital (HSC Sec. 15048 and BPC Sec. 5500.1 and 6737).
- *Landscape Architects* – May not “practice, or offer to practice architecture or engineering in any of its various recognized branches (BPC Sec. 5615)
- *Civil Engineers* – May design any building except hospitals and schools (HSC Sec. 39148, BPC Sec. 5537.5, 6731, and 6735, and Education Code Sec. 39148).
- *Structural Engineers* – No limitations. May design any building of any type (BPC Sec. 6637.1, 6731, and 6736).

Unlicensed designers

When an unlicensed designer under contract to, or under the employment of the owner or owner’s agent, produces plans, specifications, calculations and/or reports for a project meeting one or more of the exemptions specified in this guidance, that designer shall provide on each sheet of their documents, their name, signature, City business license #, contact information, and the location of the property. Where the unlicensed designer is the owner of the property described in the exceptions section above, they are not required to provide a business license number but are required to provide their name, signature, contact information, and location of the property on each sheet of the plans.