



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

17-03 Designer Identification Requirements on Submittals

Background

The City of Carmel, consistent with State law, requires that, with some exceptions, 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, with some exceptions plans 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/seal and sign all design documents in accordance with this Guidance.

Exemptions to stamp/seal and signature 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/seal and signature of a licensed engineer or architect may nevertheless be required.

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

1. Single family dwellings of wood frame construction not more than two stories and a basement in height;
2. Multiple dwellings with not more than four dwelling units of wood frame construction not more than two stories and a basement in height;
3. Garages and other structures appurtenant to buildings described above, of wood frame construction and not more than two stories and a basement in height.
4. 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 any alterations to any buildings necessary for the installation of fixtures, cabinet work, furniture, appliances or equipment as long as the alterations do not affect the structural safety of the building or initiate accessibility upgrades as required by the building code.

Architects (BPC § 5536.1)

1. All persons preparing or being in responsible control of plans, specifications, and instruments of service for others shall sign those plans, specifications, and instruments of service and all contracts therefor, and if licensed under this chapter shall affix a stamp, which complies with subdivision (b), to those plans, specifications, and instruments of service, as evidence of the person's responsibility for those documents. Failure of any person to comply with this subdivision is a misdemeanor punishable as provided in [Section 5536](#). This section shall not apply to employees of persons licensed under this chapter while acting within the course of their employment.
2. For the purposes of this chapter, any stamp used by any architect licensed under this chapter shall be of a design authorized by the board which shall at a minimum bear the licensee's name, his or her license number, the legend "licensed architect" and the legend "State of California," and which shall provide a means of indicating the renewal date of the license.
3. The preparation of plans, specifications, or instruments of service for any building, except the buildings described in [Section 5537](#), by any person who is not licensed to practice architecture in this state, is a misdemeanor punishable as provided in [Section 5536](#).

Civil, Structural and Geotechnical Engineers (BPC § 6735)

1. All civil (including structural and geotechnical) engineering plans, calculations, specifications, and reports (hereinafter referred to as "documents") shall be prepared by, or under the responsible charge of, a licensed civil engineer and shall include his or her name and license number.
2. Interim documents shall include a notation as to the intended purpose of the document, such as "preliminary," "not for construction," "for plan check only," or "for review only."
3. All civil engineering plans and specifications that are permitted or that are to be released for construction shall bear the signature and seal or stamp of the licensee and the date of signing and sealing or stamping.
4. All final civil engineering calculations and reports shall bear the signature and seal or stamp of the licensee, and the date of signing and sealing or stamping.
5. If civil engineering plans are required to be signed and sealed or stamped and have multiple sheets, the signature, seal or stamp, and date of signing and sealing or stamping, shall appear on each sheet of the plans.
6. If civil engineering specifications, calculations, and reports are required to be signed and sealed or stamped and have multiple pages, the signature, seal or stamp, and date of signing and sealing or stamping shall appear at a minimum on the title sheet, cover sheet, or signature sheet.

Electrical Engineering (BPC § 6735.3)

1. All electrical engineering plans, specifications, calculations, and reports (hereinafter referred to as "documents") prepared by, or under the responsible charge of, a licensed electrical engineer shall include his or her name and license number.
2. Interim documents shall include a notation as to the intended purpose of the document, such as "preliminary," "not for construction," "for plan check only," or "for review only."
3. All electrical engineering plans and specifications that are permitted or that are to be released for construction shall bear the signature and seal or stamp of the licensee and the date of signing and sealing or stamping.
4. All final electrical engineering calculations and reports shall bear the signature and seal or stamp of the licensee and the date of signing and sealing or stamping.
5. If electrical engineering plans are required to be signed and sealed or stamped and have multiple sheets, the signature, seal or stamp, and date of signing and sealing or stamping shall appear on each sheet of the plans.
6. If electrical engineering specifications, calculations, and reports are required to be signed and sealed or stamped and have multiple pages, the signature, seal or stamp, and date of signing and sealing or stamping shall appear at a minimum on the title sheet, cover sheet, or signature sheet.

Mechanical engineering documents (BPC § 6735.4.)

1. All mechanical engineering plans, specifications, calculations, and reports (hereinafter referred to as "documents") prepared by, or under the responsible charge of, a licensed mechanical engineer shall include his or her name and license number.
2. Interim documents shall include a notation as to the intended purpose of the document, such as "preliminary," "not for construction," "for plan check only," or "for review only."
3. All mechanical engineering plans and specifications that are permitted or that are to be released for construction shall bear the signature and seal or stamp of the licensee and the date of signing and sealing or stamping.
4. All final mechanical engineering calculations and reports shall bear the signature and seal or stamp of the licensee and the date of signing and sealing or stamping.
5. If mechanical engineering plans are required to be signed and sealed or stamped and have multiple sheets, the signature, seal or stamp, and date of signing and sealing or stamping shall appear on each sheet of the plans.
6. If mechanical engineering specifications, calculations, and reports are required to be signed and sealed or stamped and have multiple pages, the signature, seal or stamp, and date of signing and sealing or stamping shall appear at a minimum on the title sheet, cover sheet, or signature sheet.

Licensed Land Surveyors (BPC § 8761)

1. Any licensed land surveyor or civil engineer authorized to practice land surveying may practice land surveying and prepare maps, plats, reports, descriptions, or other documentary evidence in connection with that practice.

2. All maps, plats, reports, descriptions, or other land surveying documents shall be prepared by, or under the responsible charge of, a licensed land surveyor or civil engineer authorized to practice land surveying and shall include his or her name and license number.
3. Interim maps, plats, reports, descriptions, or other land surveying documents shall include a notation as to the intended purpose of the map, plat, report, description, or other document, such as "preliminary" or "for examination only."
4. All final maps, plats, reports, descriptions, or other land surveying documents issued by a licensed land surveyor or civil engineer authorized to practice land surveying shall bear the signature and seal or stamp of the licensee and the date of signing and sealing or stamping.
5. If the land surveying document has multiple pages or sheets, the signature, seal or stamp, and date of signing and sealing or stamping shall appear, at a minimum, on the title sheet, cover sheet or page, or signature sheet, unless otherwise required by law.
6. It is unlawful for any person to sign, stamp, seal, or approve any map, plat, report, description, or other land surveying document unless the person is authorized to practice land surveying.
7. It is unlawful for any person to stamp or seal any map, plat, report, description, or other land surveying document with the seal or stamp after the certificate of the licensee that is named on the seal or stamp has expired or has been suspended or revoked, unless the certificate has been renewed or reissued.

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 a copy of the seal or stamp 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 seal/stamp and signature on the sheets prepared under their responsible charge.

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, City business license #, contact information, and the location of the property.

Where the unlicensed designer is the owner of the property described in the Exemptions section above, they are not required to provide a business license number but are required to provide their name, contact information, and location of the property on each sheet of the plans.