

## WHEN DO I NEED A CERTIFICATE OF FINAL COMPLETION (CFC)?

A Certificate of Final Completion (CFC) is a document that attests that a building is safe and sound for human occupancy.

A **Certificate of Final Completion** is required for all:

- new buildings
- horizontal or vertical additions to existing buildings
- changes in occupancy classification
- changes in the number of dwelling units
- legalization of an existing illegal use or occupancy
- removal of an existing illegal use or occupancy
- correction of all code violations necessary to clear a Director's Order of Abatement
- correction of all code violations cited in a Physical Inspection Report
- seismic upgrades under the jurisdiction of the Seismic Safety Section

## WHEN WOULD I NEED A TEMPORARY CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY (TCO)?

A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy ("TCO") is normally issued to property owners who request permission to occupy their property before all work allowed under a building permit has been finished; and for which a CFC is required.

Provided that all life/safety and disabled access work has been completed and provided that no substantial hazards exist, a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy ("TCO") will be issued by the Department of Building Inspection when only "finish" work remains.

## WHAT TYPES OF COMPLAINTS ARE HANDLED BY THE BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION?

The following types of complaints are handled by the Building Inspection Division:

- Construction or alteration work in progress without a permit
- Unauthorized changes of occupancy in a non-residential property and illegal units in residential properties

- Unauthorized changes in the use of a non-residential property
- Unsafe conditions in dwellings, non-residential buildings and construction sites, which endanger the occupants or the public
- Excavation without shoring
- Work exceeding the scope of an active permit

Upon verification of a complaint relative to violation(s) of the San Francisco Building or Mechanical Codes, a building inspector will issue to a property owner a Notice of Violation that will:

- Identify the violation(s)
- Instruct as to actions that will remedy the violation(s)
- Give a deadline by which the violation(s) must be remedied

## HOW DO I COMPLY WITH A NOTICE OF VIOLATION (NOV)?

Within the timeframe that is set on a **Notice of Violation**, a property owner must:

- Apply for and obtain a building permit to abate all the violation(s) listed on the Notice of Violation
- Perform the work to abate all the violation(s); phone the Building Inspection Division prior to covering up any work performed to schedule all necessary inspections (separate plumbing and/or electrical permits may be required)
- Phone the Building Inspection Division and schedule a "final" inspection when all work required on the Notice of Violation has been completed

## WHAT ARE THE INSPECTORS' OFFICE HOURS AND WHEN ARE THEY AVAILABLE TO PERFORM INSPECTIONS?

District Building Inspectors may be contacted at (415) 558-6570, Monday through Friday, except legal holidays, between 7:30 AM and 8:30 AM and between 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM. You may also visit a building inspector between these hours at 1660 Mission Street, 3rd floor.

District building inspectors are available to perform inspections Monday through Friday between 9:00 AM and 2:30 PM.



Department of Building Inspection  
1660 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103-2414



Want a DBI Pro to brief your community / organization on permits and inspection issues? Please contact us at 415-558-6089 or DBICommunityOutreach@sfgov.org and we will make it happen.



## What You Should Know About

# The Building Inspection Division



Department of Building Inspection  
1660 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

General Information (415) 558-6088  
Code Questions (415) 558-6205  
Fax (415) 558-6401  
[www.sfgov.org/dbi](http://www.sfgov.org/dbi)

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## WHAT IS THE BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION (BID)?

The Building Inspection Division (BID) is the service area within San Francisco's Department of Building Inspection that enforces the provisions of the San Francisco Building and Mechanical Codes.

These Codes contain minimum standards to safeguard life or limb, health, property and public welfare.

These Codes also regulate the design, construction, alteration, repair, maintenance, moving or demolition of buildings in order to insure the safe use of such buildings in San Francisco.

## WHAT SERVICES DOES THE BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION PROVIDE?

The Building Inspection Division provides two main services:

**Inspection Services** . . . to insure that new construction or alterations to existing structures are being safely done and according to the minimum standards provided by the Building and Mechanical Codes.

**Investigation of Complaints** . . . to encourage property owners to maintain their buildings in a safe manner according to the minimum standards provided in the Building and Mechanical Codes. (See What Types of Complaints are Handled by BID)

Other services provided by the Building Inspection Division are:

- Pre-application inspections
- Off-hours inspections
- Ordinance inspections required for alteration projects
- Time extensions for building permits
- Inspections for police and fire permits

## WHAT IS A BUILDING PERMIT OR RENEWAL OF EXPIRED BUILDING PERMIT?

A building permit is a document issued by the Department of Building Inspection that allows or "permits" the owner of a property to construct a new building or to repair or alter an existing building.

In very many instances especially for clear, straightforward work like kitchen and bathroom

remodeling, a building permit application can be reviewed and issued "over the counter."

However, if plans are required for your job, a building permit will be issued to a property owner or his/her agent once the Plan Review Services of the Department of Building Inspection has reviewed and approved plans and a permit application for construction or alteration at a property or site.

## WHEN IS A BUILDING PERMIT NEEDED?

Almost all construction or alteration to buildings requires a permit.

If you are uncertain about the need for a permit, please call the Department of Building Inspection's Public Information Counter for further assistance at (415) 558-6088.

## WHAT IS A "JOB CARD"?

A "job card" is a record of inspections of your work made by the district building inspector, who will make notes on it and sign it each time he or she visits your job site.

The "job card" is given to you when you are issued a building permit. It should be kept on the job site at all times until work is completed.

The "job card" is an important record of the Department of Building or Inspection's "signing off" on your completed work. When your job is finished and your work is "finalized", you should keep the "job card" along with your building permit with your permanent records on your property.

## HOW DO I REVISE MY PERMIT?

If you have a permit for specific approved work and you want to revise the permit to include additional work on the same job, you must bring your revised plans to the Department of Building Inspection and file a new permit application. (A copy of the previously approved plan shall be included for reference purposes.)

When these revised plans are approved, you will be issued a new permit and another "job card" for the additional work you want to do.

## HOW DO I EXTEND MY PERMIT?

If you cannot start or complete your job within the timeframes that are set on your building permit, you must complete a permit extension form and pay a fee before the start or completion dates of your original building permit expire.

If an extension of start work is needed, you need to file for an extension before the end of 90 calendar days from the issuance date. Only a one-time extension is allowed.

If an extension of the expiration date is needed, you need to file for an extension to complete work before the expiration date. Only a one-time extension is allowed.

## HOW DO I RENEW MY PERMIT?

If your building permit has expired, you may renew it by filing a new permit application on the 3rd floor with the original permit application attached to it. On the new permit application you must state a cost estimate for the value of remaining work to be done. Bring your job card to show the progress of inspections in support of the stated remaining value. The permit fee will be based on this estimate.

After issuance of the new permit, the estimated remaining value will be verified and signed off by the district building inspector. However, if the district building inspector determines that the remaining work has been under-valued, a "Correction Notice" will be issued for a new building permit to increase the valuation of the remaining work.

## DO I NEED TO RENEW MY PERMITS SEPARATELY?

Yes. A building permit must be filed for every expired building permit.

## AT WHAT POINT DO I NEED TO CALL AN INSPECTOR WHEN I HAVE A PERMIT?

If the words "contact district inspector at start of work" are stamped on the back of the building permit application, you must call the district building inspector before you begin work. Otherwise, each phase of the work must be inspected before it is covered up.

Required "OK to cover" inspections include, but are not limited to: prior to pouring concrete; under floor inspections; framing inspections prior to sheetrocking; inspection of T-bar ceilings; exterior lath, sheetrock nailing; and final inspection.

## WHEN DO I NEED MY SPECIAL INSPECTIONS DONE?

If a special inspection for certain work is called for on a building permit, the property owner must employ the special inspector.

Special inspections are in addition to those inspections performed by the Building Inspection Division.

The property owner must supply the Plan Review Services with special inspection compliance reports for their approval, before a job will be "finalized" by the district building inspector.

If you have any questions about the details or extent of a required special inspection, you should call the plan examiner/engineer assigned to your project. If there are any field problems with your special inspection, you should call your district building inspector.

## HOW DO I SCHEDULE AN INSPECTION?

You may contact the Inspection Services at (415) 558-6570 between 7:30 AM and 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except legal holidays, to schedule an inspection.

## HOW DO I GET A "FINAL"?

When all work on your job has been completed and inspected, contact Inspection Services at (415) 558-6570 for a "final" inspection.

Before calling for a "final" inspection, be sure that all required plumbing, electrical, mechanical, fire, health, special inspections, and any other required agencies have been signed-off on your "job card," and that your permit is current and active (not expired or past completion date.)