



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Jan H. Gardner
County Executive

DIVISION OF PLANNING & PERMITTING

Department of Permits & Inspections

Steven C. Horn, Division Director
Gary W. Hessong, Director

To: All Contractors, Citizens and Customers of the Department of Permits and Inspections

From: Gary W. Hessong, Director, Department of Permits and Inspections

Subject: Modified Plan of Services Due to COVID-19

Date: March 31, 2020

Effective Date: Immediately and Until Further Notice

In response to the communicable nature of the Covid-19 Virus, and with regard to the health and safety of our citizens, employees, customers and contractors, the Frederick County Department of Permits and Inspections has updated a modified plan of services until further notice, as follows:

Permit Application Submittal and Processing

The office of the Department of Permits and Inspections will remain closed to the public. All permitting and licensing services will only be handled by our eServices platforms (electronically). This includes all building, plumbing, electrical, fire and grading applications and permits. Processing and administrative staff will only be working remotely and will not be working at our offices at 30 North Market Street. Paper applications and plans will not be accepted, including any resubmittals or revisions to permits or applications previously submitted outside of our eServices platforms. All applications for permits and licenses will only be accepted via our Infor online permitting software by using the public portal <https://planningandpermitting.frederickcountymd.gov>, accommodations will be made for applicants to electronically file resubmissions and revisions via email or electronically through the portal. Major Grading and Storm Water Management applications requiring the submission of original documentation such as letters of credit, performance bonds and check processing, and the submission of SWM as-builts and related documentation may schedule arrangements for submission by contacting Emily Pearl at EmPearl@FrederickCountyMD.gov.

Payment of all fees can be made via the online portal. Processing and administrative staff will be working and will be communicating by phone and email on a daily basis during normal business hours of Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 am until 4:00 pm.

Plan Review Services

Plan reviews will only be done through our eServices platforms, Infor and Avolve (ProjectDox), and correspondence of plan review letters and comments will continue to be sent out by email directly to our applicants and professionals and/or can also be downloaded via the designated electronic platform. Our plans review staff will be working remotely and will not be working at our offices at 30 North Market Street. Plan review staff will be communicating by email on a daily basis during normal business hours of Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 am until 4:00 pm.

Inspection Services

On site face to face inspections will be limited to only those that cannot be completed by one of the following methods and will be at the discretion of the inspection staff. The listed alternatives are in order of what is acceptable and will be at the discretion of the inspection staff who will make the determination of acceptability of each method and may be on a case by case basis.

(1) Photo or real time video conferencing with inspection staff (for example facetime, etc.) by the permit holder or the licensed contractor for proof of completeness of required inspections. Photos and video conferencing will be coordinated with following inspection staff:

- Building: Steve Blickenstaff at sblickenstaff@frederickcountymd.gov or at 240-674-2396
- Plumbing: Steve Oden at soden@frederickcountymd.gov or at 240-674-2683
- Electrical: Mike Scheller at csheller@frederickcountymd.gov or at 240-397-3002
- Fire: Kimberly Connor at kconnor@frederickcountymd.gov or at 240-674-6190
- Grading/SWM: Eric Dodson at edodson@frederickcountymd.gov or at 301-748-7263.

Photos and video must be clear and must provide accurate depictions of the scope of work under review. Measurements for clearances or proper distances, elevations, etc. must be depicted with a legible measurement implement (ie: a tape measure) shown in the image. Images will need to include identifiable landmarks or indicators that provide reference to the subject property or project and the precise inspection location. Larger sections or portions of the project being inspected may require a video submission to verify the completeness of the scope of work.

(2) Self certification of residential work permitted and completed by a licensed contractor only when approved by the above inspection staff. This option is limited to residential plumbing, electric and fire (sprinkler) work and must follow a form approved by the County.

(3) Third party certification of non-residential work permitted and completed by a licensed contractor. This option is limited to non-residential building, plumbing, electrical and fire and must be submitted by a registered professional or as approved by the County.

In the cases where it is determined that one of the above methods cannot be completed, then a face to face inspection by a County inspector will need to be coordinated. This inspection will need to be conducted with limited personnel on the site and appropriate precautions in place with all hand washing, hand sanitizing, social distancing and public interaction protocol adherence. Hand sanitation and any other required PPE for the inspector must be available at the work site prior to commencement of the inspection.

The County will attempt to continue “following day” inspections (request by noon and inspection will be completed the following day) however it cannot be guaranteed. Inspection requests will be handled in the order they are received and it is likely that some inspections will take several days to complete as many will require review of documentation by the County. Inspections can continue to be requested through the portal at <https://planningandpermitting.frederickcountymd.gov> or by emailing Permits@FrederickCountyMD.gov. The permit holder can only proceed with further work associated with the permit after the pass/failure response has been provided. County inspection staff will continue to enter inspection results as they have been into Infor eServices mobile platform and applicants will continue to receive notification of the Pass/Fail result automatically by email as the current process allows.

These inspection procedures are only allowed on a temporary basis and they are not meant as a substitution for required inspections under normal circumstances. Any inspections conducted during this time will be recorded as being completed under these terms. As in all cases, the Contractor and the property owner shall be responsible for code compliance. If a subsequent inspection reveals noncompliance of a prior issue, then corrections may be needed at the direction of the County. Failure to identify a noncompliance issue shall not constitute a waiver of the County’s ability to enforce the County Code or the scope of issued permits and approvals. If any portion of the permitted scope of work inspected in this manner comes under future scrutiny or produces any sort of questionable construction or is found defective, the County assumes no additional liability beyond what is defined in the currently adopted Building Code and the Contractor carries all normally assumed and assigned liability as defined by Code, Profession and Licensing.

We greatly appreciate your time in complying with this notification, and also your patience during this modification in services. We hope you understand that we are looking out for the best interest of the health and safety of everyone while also doing our best to continue services.