

To: Department of Buildings Staff and Customers

From: Grant Ullrich, Deputy Commissioner for Code Development

RE: Procedures for Optional Use of 2019 Chicago Construction Codes

Date: December 15, 2019

Overview and Authority

On April 10, 2019, the city council adopted major revisions to the City of Chicago's requirements for building construction and rehabilitation and added five new titles to the Municipal Code of Chicago. These provisions, known as the "Chicago Construction Codes," began phasing in on June 1, 2019. Titles 14B (the 2019 Chicago Building Code) and 14R (the 2019 Chicago Building Rehabilitation Code) became optional for permit applications started on or after December 1, 2019. The new codes will be mandatory for most permit applications started on or after August 1, 2020. This memorandum describes procedural requirements for electing use of the new codes during the transition period.

For the purpose of applying the requirements in this memo, a building permit application is started when the \$300 permit fee deposit is paid; a geotechnical/OUC review is started when the application is complete and ready for distribution to utilities.

Beginning a Permit Application in the Dynamic Portal

Permit applications must be started in the Dynamic Portal. The City of Chicago is in the process of replacing this system and menu choices will not be updated to reflect the new code during the transition period. The replacement system is expected to come online in late 2020.

The following information must be entered correctly in the Dynamic Portal to generate an application number and allow payment of the application deposit fee and zoning fee:

- The **Review Process** (standard plan review, self-certification, developer services)
- The **Scope of Work** (new construction or renovation/alteration)
- The **Location of Work** (street address and PIN numbers)
- The **Building Area** (enter the floor area determined in accordance with the Chicago Zoning Ordinance)
- The **Description of Work** (which must include "2019 BUILDING CODE" or "2019 REHAB CODE", as applicable, at the end of the description).
- The **Permit Applicant** (the property owner or someone authorized by the property owner to obtain a building permit, such as a tenant.)
- The **Design Professional of Record** (architect/engineer)
- Any **Expediter** working on the project.
- Zoning-related information must be entered accurately.

For other building-related data fields, you may enter any value, as long as the correct information is provided on the PDF application uploaded to Project Dox.

When known, the following will also need to be entered into the Dynamic Portal, consistent with the information provided on the copy of Form 400 uploaded to Project Dox:

- General Contractor, Mason Contractor, Electrical Contractor, Plumbing Contractor, and Expediter, as applicable.

Other contractor types (such as ventilation or refrigeration) may be provided but are no longer required for permitting or inspections.

Alternative Permit Application Form

All permit applicants seeking review under the 2019 Chicago Construction Codes must download and complete the "alternative" Building Permit Application (Form 400). This form is available on the Department's web site (<http://www.chicago.gov/buildings>), on the Permit Forms page under "Standard Plan Review." A link to the Permit Forms page is at the top of every page on the Department's web site. Form 400 should be completed, per the instructions on the form, and uploaded to Project Dox *instead of* the form generated by the Dynamic Portal.

The Department expects to continue refining the design of Form 400 during the transition period, so please check the Permit Forms web page for newer versions when starting a new application.

A separate electrical permit application is NOT required when using Form 400.

Marking Construction Documents

In order to facilitate plan review and field inspections, the first page, all index sheets, and all pages with tabular code compliance information (code matrices, etc.) must be labeled in bold 24-point type: "**2019 CHICAGO BUILDING CODE**" or "**2019 CHICAGO BUILDING REHABILITATION CODE**" as applicable.

Calculations to support code determinations, such as allowable height and area, occupant load, and egress capacity, must be shown on the construction documents to facilitate plan reviews and inspections.

Standard Plan Review

The Department of Buildings conducted initial training for plan review and permitting staff during the fall of 2019 and is ready to begin reviewing permit applications for compliance with the 2019 Chicago Construction Codes through the Standard Plan Review process.

For a successful review, please follow the instructions above for uploading Form 400, marking the construction documents, and including relevant calculations on the construction documents.

Developer Services Permit Program

The following consultant reviewers working under the Developer Services Permit Program have completed additional training and are authorized to conduct reviews under the 2019 Chicago Construction Codes:

- AECOM
- The Code Group
- V3 Companies of Illinois
- Globetrotters Engineering
- Primera Engineers, Ltd.
- Rada Architects

When using the Traditional Developer Services program, you must discuss use of the new code during the intake meeting with your Project Administrator.

When using the Direct Developer Services program, you must discuss use of the new codes during your introduction meeting with the Building Commissioner or her representative.

Self-Certification Permit Program

Amendments to the Self-Certification Permit Program Rules are pending that will allow self-certification professionals who have been trained by the Department on use of the new codes to self-certify under the new codes. The Department expects these rules will be effective January 1, 2020. More than 400 self-certification professionals completed this training earlier this month.

As noted below, self-certification projects that require a Structural Peer Review Report may not use the new codes until February 2020, as structural peer reviewer training for use of the new codes will not be completed until the end of January.

Structural Peer Review

The Department will be offering training on the new code for existing structural peer reviewers in late January 2020. Only structural peer reviewers who complete this training may complete structural peer review reports based on the new codes. The cover of structural peer review reports must be labeled in the same manner as required for construction documents.

Geotechnical / OUC Reviews

For DOB geotechnical / OUC reviews submitted for review after January 1, 2020, the Department will assume the project will be permitted under the new codes and require new-code-related information as part of the geotechnical / OUC submission. Project-specific waivers of this requirement, where it can be established by the applicant that the project will be permitted under the old code, may only be granted by the Commissioner or a Deputy Commissioner after a written request.

Other Review Activities

Other departmental reviews, including occupancy placards and the solar express program, will continue to be conducted under the old code. The Department will announce a date in spring 2020 when applications for existing facility occupancy placards may be submitted under the new codes.

Deferred Provision: Special Inspections

As authorized by ordinance, the Department is deferring the effective date of Chapter 14B-17 (Special Inspections) until it can develop additional paperwork and procedures. The Department anticipates these requirements will become effective in late spring 2020. Designers and contractors are encouraged to become familiar with these requirements before they go into effect.

Accessibility-related Provisions

The accessibility-related provisions of the new codes are in effect for all projects with permit applications submitted on or after December 1, 2019. Accessibility reviews for all projects will be conducted under the accessibility-related provisions of the new codes. For more information, contact the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities.

Residential Sprinklers

The ordinance which adopted the new codes also amended the old code (Section 15-16-030(p)) to require an automatic sprinkler system in any new construction residential building with 4 or more dwelling units, effective January 1, 2020.

Questions and Comments

Questions and comments about implementation of the 2019 Chicago Construction Codes can be sent to DOBCommissioner@cityofchicago.org.

To receive information about upcoming training and educational opportunities related to the new codes, subscribe to the Department's email distribution list at <http://www.chicago.gov/buildings>.