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Express Permit Program

Introduced November 2023

- 15 Guided worktypes
 - Incorporating worktypes that were 100% paper
 - Scaffolding
 - Small-Scale Solar PV Systems

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Guided Worktypes

Repairs and Small Projects

- Communication Equipment
- Fence or Trash Enclosure
- Nonstructural Interior Work
- Masonry Work
- Mechanical Work
- Other (Emergency) Work
- Plumbing Work
- Reroofing
- Small-scale Solar
- Small Temporary Structure
- Window/Door Replacement

Administrative

- Administrative Change

Related to Other Permit

- Construction Trailer
- Scaffolding

Next Phase (late Spring 2024)

- Monthly Maintenance (EL/PL)
- Electrical
- Fire Alarm
- Sewer / Stormwater
- Porch Repair/Replace

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Express Permit Program Key Features

- Simple, targeted questions based on the work type
- \$25 review fee
- Licensed contractor e-acceptance
- Redesigned permit certificate
- Inspections

Area of Work Information

In this section, describe only the portion of the building or property where work will be performed under this permit. For exterior work, identify the occupancy group(s) immediately behind or below the area of work.

Occupancy Type(s)

Occupancy Type

+ Add Occupancy Group(s)

Residential units worked on *

Non-residential units worked on *

Number of interior common areas worked on *

Number of stories worked on (include basements) *

Work on accessory building? Yes No *

Exterior work? Yes No *

Work required to address fire damage? Yes No *

Specific location of work: *

CITY OF CHICAGO BUILDING PERMIT
B200005113
3601 N MILWAUKEE AVE
Permit issued 07/18/2024 to LPH, CHICAGO
Scope of Permit: REPAIR/REPLACE EXISTING MASONRY REPAIR
Attachment: 10102171 - CHICAGO CITY & MCK. (REPAIR/REPLACE EXISTING MASONRY)
Emergency Contact: [Redacted]
Other Applicants and Contractors: [Redacted]

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Contractor E-Acceptance

If the permit application is submitted by expediter or property owner:

- All licensed contractors listed on application will be notified by email of the permit application
- Each contractor must click a link in the email to review application and accept or reject (no login required)
- Permit will not issue until all listed contractors have accepted (if rejected, permit applicant can revise)

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Scenario 1

Kelly recently received the following building violations

- Replace three 9 ft window lintels
- 3' parapet wall leaning with bulging bricks beneath it
- Infilling windows without a permit

What kind of permit does Kelly need?

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Based on Scenario 1, what type of permit does Kelly need?

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Scenario 2

Alex just purchased a two-unit apartment building. The building was built in 1910, each unit has existing radiant heating system and galvanized piping throughout. Alex wants to install central air in each unit and use the existing pantry in the kitchen as the mechanical room and add combo washer/dryer units in the bathrooms. No other floor plan alterations.

What kind of permit does Alex need?

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Based on Scenario 2, what type of permit does Alex need?

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Scenario 3

The Cook County Administration Building is a 35-story office building. They would like to replace all exterior windows throughout the entire building.

What kind of permit do they need?

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Based on Scenario 3, what type of permit does Cook County need?

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Scenario 4

Jaime just bought a brick bungalow SFR in Jefferson Park. Jaime would like to replace a few missing roof shingles, replace all doors, windows, refinish floors, install new kitchen cabinets and countertop, patch, repair and replace about 950 sq ft of drywall, replace the broken furnace and condenser and replace the deteriorated rear wood porch (landing size is 10' x 5' and about 4' from grade).

What does Jaime need?

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Based on Scenario 4, what does Jaime need?

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GUIDE TO BUILDING PERMITS

Welcome

We know that behind every building permit is a homeowner or business owner's dream, an investment in the community, and the creation of jobs. Our building permit processes help to ensure that building projects in Chicago are designed and built to be safe for occupants, first responders, and the public.

The Department of Buildings is tasked with accepting applications and issuing permits for most types of construction, demolition, and repair work. In carrying out this responsibility, we are committed to being a partner, not an obstacle, for residents and business owners who are investing in Chicago.

In this *Guide to Building Permits* you will find information on different types of permits and a *Step by Step Tool* (coming January 2024) to walk you through the permit process for different project types. We hope this guide will help you to better understand the processes and requirements for getting the permits you need and completing your project efficiently, legally, and safely.



Brandon Johnson,
Mayor

Matthew W. Beaudet,
Building Commissioner

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Express Permit Program

The Express Permit Program, launched in November 2023, provides a fast, user-friendly, web-based way for homeowners, businesses, and other building owners/tenants (and the contractors who work with them) to obtain building permits needed to repair or replace existing features of a building or undertake specific small improvement projects, such as adding residential solar panels. The web interface also allows customers to check application status, pay fees, and view inspection results online 24/7.

Use these instructions to get started:

Add or Change Contractor
(Administrative Change)

Change Owner
(Administrative Change)

Communication
Equipment

Construction Trailer

Detached Frame Garage

Exterior Window or Door
Replacement

Fence or Trash Enclosure

Interior Alteration
(Nonstructural Interior
Work)

Masonry Work

Mechanical (HVAC) Work

Other Work

Plumbing Work

Post-Construction Filing
(Administrative Change)

Post-Issuance Approval
(Administrative Change)

Preparatory Demolition
(Nonstructural Interior
Work)

Removal of Unpermitted
Residential Unit Features
(Nonstructural Interior
Work)

Reroofing

Scaffolding

Small Temporary Structure

Small-Scale Solar
Photovoltaic (PV) System

Electrical-Only Permits

Electrical-only permits are currently available via an online interface for licensed electrical contractors and expeditors only. Electrical-only permits will be consolidated with the Express Permit Program in 2024.

[Learn more](#)

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Interior Alteration (Nonstructural Interior Work)

The Express Permit Program offers a streamlined way to obtain a permit for nonstructural interior alterations affecting up to 2,000 square feet of floor area for many types of spaces, including homes, offices, and stores.

Eligibility Summary

Additional terms, conditions, and limitations may apply.

Work within a single residential unit

Eligible	Not Eligible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Remodeling (nonstructural) up to 2,000 square feet, without adding, removing, or reconfiguring walls or doorways for rooms other than closets ✓ Performing electrical work, including new electrical service up to 400 amps ✓ Performing mechanical (HVAC) work, including adding new air conditioning ✓ Performing plumbing work, including adding up to 5 water supply fixture units (WSFU) of demand (example: adding a washing machine is 2 WSFU; adding a private bathroom is 4 WSFU) <p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 5px 0;">With drawings prepared by an Illinois-licensed architect or structural engineer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Remodeling (nonstructural) up to 2,000 square feet, including adding, removing, or reconfiguring walls or doorways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Performing structural work (see Terms and Conditions for definition) ✗ Installing new interior stairs ✗ Rearranging existing interior stairs ✗ Performing exterior work, such as replacement of exterior windows or doors ✗ Changing the occupancy of an existing space (example: converting a storefront to a residential unit) ✗ Converting unheated space, such as an unheated attic or garage, into living space ✗ Performing work in a space that has never been legally occupied, such as the initial buildout of a "shell" or "vanilla box"

Work within a single non-residential unit

Eligible	Not Eligible
<p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 5px 0;">With drawings prepared by an Illinois-licensed architect or structural engineer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remodeling (nonstructural) up to 2,000 square feet in a non-assembly (non-Group A) occupancy • Remodeling (nonstructural) up to 500 square feet in an assembly (Group A) occupancy • Performing electrical work, including new electrical service up to 400 amps • Performing mechanical (HVAC) work, including adding new air conditioning • Performing plumbing work, including adding up to 5 water supply fixture units (WSFU) of demand (example: adding a breakroom sink is 3 WSFU) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing structural work (see Terms and Conditions for definition) • Installing new interior stairs • Rearranging existing interior stairs • Performing exterior work, such as replacement of exterior windows or doors • Working in an educational (Group E), factory/industrial (Group F), high hazard (Group H), institutional (Group I), or storage (Group S) occupancy • Constructing or remodeling space for a new food establishment or food establishment operator • Changing the occupancy of an existing space (example: changing an office to an event space) • Performing work in a space that has never been legally occupied, such as the initial buildout of a "shell" or "vanilla box"

Work in a common area or work in more than one unit

Eligible	Not Eligible
<p style="font-size: 0.7em; margin: 5px 0;">With drawings prepared by a licensed architect or structural engineer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remodeling (nonstructural) up to 500 square feet total • Performing electrical work, including new electrical service up to 400 amps • Performing plumbing work, including adding up to 5 water supply fixture units (WSFU) of demand (example: adding a drinking fountain is 0.5 WSFU) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing structural work (see Terms and Conditions for definition) • Installing new interior stairs • Rearranging existing interior stairs • Performing exterior work • Working in an educational (Group E), factory/industrial (Group F), high hazard (Group H), institutional (Group I), or storage (Group S) occupancy • Constructing or remodeling space for a new food establishment or food establishment operator • Changing the occupancy of an existing space • Performing mechanical (HVAC) work

When is a building permit not required?

Before beginning an Express Permit Program application for interior alterations, please review:
[What Types of Work Do Not Require a Building Permit?: Interior Finishes and Furnishings](#)

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expresspermits@cityofchicago.org

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Audience Q&A Session

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