

New Building Codes for Philadelphia

Effective Monday, October 1, 2018, new construction codes go into effect throughout Pennsylvania. For Philadelphia, the 2018 International Codes will apply to all non-residential construction. (The 2015 International Residential Code with state-modifications will apply for residential construction.)

After years of debate in the PA General Assembly, the stagnant state of code adoption in Pennsylvania came to an end when Governor Wolf signed House Bill 409 on October 25, 2017 to become [Act 36 of 2017](#). The Act makes significant changes to the PA Uniform Construction Code's code review and adoption process. Those provisions took effect immediately.

The most important amendment for those involved in construction in Philadelphia was the authorization for the City to adopt by ordinance the 2018 International Codes for commercial construction. Philadelphia must follow the remainder of Pennsylvania for residential construction.

Philadelphia's Department of Licenses & Inspections worked with the Philadelphia Fire Department and City Council to develop ordinances for the 2018 International Code adoption. Those ordinances will be/were signed by the Mayor, making Philadelphia the only jurisdiction in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be utilizing a single edition (2018) of the International Codes to regulate all construction requirements for all buildings and occupancies other than those regulated by the International Residential Code.

Along with the new codes, Act 36 revised the process for applying the previous code to design and construction contracts for permit applications, and limited this period to six (6) months. This means that, beginning **Monday, April 1, 2019**, all permit applications submitted for new buildings or renovations to existing buildings must be reviewed under the new codes. Refer to the [Code Bulletin](#) for additional details about the implementation of the new codes.