Zoning Permit Extensions

How long is a zoning permit valid?

Per Philadelphia Zoning Code, Section 14-303(10):

- If construction is required, the construction must begin within three (3) years of the date of permit issuance for a by-right permit, or three (3) years of the date of the decision from the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBA).
- If no construction is required, the use must be established within six (6) months of the date of permit issuance for a by-right permit, or six (6) months of the date of the decision from the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBA).
- A conditional zoning approval (see Section 14-303(6)(c)) shall be valid for a period of one year after the date the conditional zoning approval was granted.

For more information, please review Code Bulletin Z-1901.

Can a zoning permit be extended?

Per Philadelphia Zoning Code, Section 14-303(10)(d), the Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) and the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBA) have the authority to extend a Zoning Permit or approval. Approvals granted under the same application (variance, special exception, conditional approval, permit) are eligible for a single extension.

When can an extension be applied for?

A permit extension may be applied for no sooner than three (3) months prior to the expiration unless otherwise approved by the department.

If a permit is extended, how long is the permit valid for?

The permit is valid for one (1) year from the original expiration date of the permit or ZBA approval. The date of the application to extend does not affect the expiration date.

What should I do if the expiration date listed in the online database does not correspond to the laws set forth under the Philadelphia Zoning Code, Section 14-303(10)?

The laws set forth under the Philadelphia Zoning Code, Section 14-303(10) as stated on the permit document governs and supersedes the dates on any electronic data record. If you have any questions on a status of a particular permit, please submit through online help form.

How do you obtain a permit extension?

If the permit that you wish to extend is eligible for extension:

A. In-person:

- For by-right permits issued or ZBA approvals granted on or before March 13, 2020 (Legacy Permits):
  1. Complete a Zoning/Use Registration Permit application.
     a. In the “Scope of Request” section, select the same scope of work as the original permit you wish to extend (i.e. New construction; signs; etc).
     b. In the “Project Summary” section, indicate that you are applying for a permit extension and provide the permit number of the permit you wish to extend.
2. Provide a letter detailing reason for the extension and planned construction schedule. If the original permit was granted by variance, this letter should be addressed to the ZBA.

3. Submit the application in person at the L&I Permit and License Center and pay the extension fee.

- **For permits issued after March 13, 2020:**
  1. Complete the [Amendment or Extension to Issued Permit application](#) form.
  2. Provide a letter detailing reason for the extension and planned construction schedule. If the original permit was granted by variance, this letter should be addressed to the ZBA.
  3. Submit the application in person at the L&I Permit and License Center and pay the fee.

**B. Online via eCLIPSE:**

- **For by-right permits or ZBA approvals issued on or before March 13, 2020 (Legacy Permits):**
  1. Log-in to your eCLIPSE account.
  2. Apply for a Permit and select the same type of permit as the original permit (i.e. New construction; sign, etc.).
  3. Complete the application details and upload a letter detailing reason for the extension and planned construction schedule. If the original was granted by variance, this letter should be addressed to the ZBA.
    
    **Note:** When applying online, instead of plans, you must upload the letter.
  4. Submit the application and pay the standard filing fee.

- **For permits issued after March 13, 2020:**
  1. Log-in to your eCLIPSE account and navigate to the “My Activities” section for Issued permits associated with your account.
  2. Under the “Amend Permit”, click the “Amend Permit” button under the subheading.
  3. Upload the following information:
    a. A detailed description of the request.
    b. A letter detailing reason for the extension and planned construction schedule. If the original was granted by variance, this letter should be addressed to the ZBA.
    c. A completed “online permit amendment form”.
  4. Submit the application and pay the fee.

**What is the fee associated with a permit extension?**

The permit extension fee of $50 is due at the time of application submission to L&I.

**Note:** Extensions to legacy permits filed in-person or by virtual appointment will be subject to a $50 extension fee. Extensions to legacy permits paid online will be subject to a standard filing fee of $100.

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**Disclaimer:**
This interpretation, policy or code application is intended to provide guidance to staff for consistency of review and is subject to change without notice. Application of this interpretation, policy or code application to specific projects may vary. There may be other ways to comply with the Code. If so, you are not required to use this method. You may want to investigate other options or consult with a professional identifying an equally code compliant solution.