

FAQ:

I have a porch on my property. What kind of permits do I need to enclose the porch?

Background:

A porch is defined by the zoning code as a covered but unenclosed projection from the main wall of a building that may or may not use columns or other ground supports for structural purposes ([14-203\(242\)](#)). If a porch is enclosed, it is considered an alteration and a change in the exterior dimensions of the structure.

The Administrative Code states that a zoning permit is required for the construction, erection, removal, demolition, or change in exterior dimension of any structure ([A-301.1.5](#)).

The Administrative Code states that a building permit is required for the altering, modifying, repairing, or improving a structure. ([A-301.1.1](#)).

Answer:

If exterior walls are constructed to enclose the porch, the exterior dimension of the building is altered; both zoning and building permits are required.

Additional Notes:

- Enclosing a porch will not alter Gross Floor Area as defined by [14-202\(4\)](#).
- Per [Table 14-701-6](#), porches may encroach into the required front setback in RSA-5, RSA-6, and RM-1 districts. If a porch is enclosed, it is no longer a porch and is therefore now part of the primary structure which may affect the setback of the structure. This will be considered when reviewing the zoning permit application.
- Additional permits may be required for any other work associated with a porch enclosure, such as electrical or mechanical work.

Questions?

Call 311 or (215) 686-8686 (if outside Philadelphia) or submit an online form via <http://www.phila.gov/li/get-help>.

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.

