



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES & INSPECTIONS

Construction Services Division  
Municipal Services Building - Concourse Level  
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102

**EZ PERMIT STANDARDS**

**ALTERATIONS**

For alterations to an Existing  
One-Family Dwelling.

Revised 12/23 (IRC-2018)

**EZ Permit Standards: Alterations**

Obtain permits for alterations and renovations of an Existing One Family Dwelling without submitting plans by meeting the Conditions and Limitations below. (Deviations will require submission of plans to the Department.)

**Special Flood Hazard Area: If the subject property is located within a Special Flood Hazard Area (Floodplain), additional documentation may be required.**

**Conditions**

- The structure must be the primary occupancy of the owner of record. Proof of residency must be demonstrated through a PA or Municipal identification card. Non-owner-occupied buildings can obtain an EZ Permit with a licensed PA Engineer performing an inspection at the property. The Engineer should prepare a detailed report to include the full scope of work proposed, the location of work and report on the structural conditions of the structure.
- Work must fully comply with the requirements of the 2018 International Residential Code (IRC) and the 2018 International Existing Building Code (IBC).
- Historically designated buildings require prior approval from the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Additional documentation and plans may be required.
- An existing building, existing means of egress and existing levels of protection **MAY NOT** be altered such that the building becomes less safe than its existing condition.
- A minimum ceiling height of 7 ft. must be maintained for habitable rooms.
- No new floor openings permitted. Stair reconstruction is only allowed in existing stair frame openings.
- The work **MAY NOT** include the removal, alteration or relocation of any load-bearing components of the structure, including joist framing.
- Basement alterations are **PROHIBITED** unless the basement is an existing, habitable space with code compliant ceiling heights and means of egress. Photographs and a signed statement from the owner affirming compliance must be submitted with the permit application.
- Basement alterations **MAY NOT** include the creation of sleeping units.
- Structural alteration or repair is expressly **PROHIBITED** under this permit. Prohibited structural work includes but not limited to any modification to exterior walls, party wall, floor/roof framing and foundations, including underpinning, excavation and removal of foundation slab.
- Separate permits are required for plumbing and electrical work and the installation of heating/cooling appliances.

**Work May Include:**

- Removal of plaster from existing walls and ceilings and removal of non-bearing partitions.
- Installation of gypsum wall board (5/8" Type X required if exterior walls are not masonry.)
- New floors. Sheathing must be lumber sheathing as follows:
  - Minimum 5/8" thickness (where existing joist spacing  $\leq$  16" on center)
  - Minimum 11/16" thickness (where existing joist spacing  $>$  16" OC and  $\leq$  24" OC)
- Installation of partition walls (see Maintaining Minimum Area, Light and Ventilation). New framing must be not less than 2" nominal thickness (1" x 2" furring strips may be used over interior masonry walls).
- Application of stucco or vinyl siding to exterior walls.
- Replacement of doors and windows in existing openings. (Permit not required for this unless Historically Registered.)
- Replacement of roof covering.
- Installation/alteration of ductwork and extension/alteration of fuel gas piping.



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**Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

Hard-wired, interconnected smoke detectors and CO alarms in or just outside each bedroom and smoke detectors in common areas of each floor including basement must be installed where existing plaster or drywall has been removed and/or new drywall is being installed. Combination smoke and CO alarms are recommended.

**Water-Resistant Gypsum Backer Board**

In all areas subjected to repeated damp conditions and moisture accumulation such as bathtub and shower compartments, water-resistant gypsum backer board complying with ASTM C630 must be used.

**Maintaining Minimum Area, Light, and Ventilation**

When installing any partitions, minimum room areas, window areas and ventilation, must be maintained as follows:

- Habitable rooms (except kitchens) must be a minimum of 70 sq. ft. (with a minimum of 7 ft. in one dimension).
  - Kitchens shall maintain a minimum clear passageway of not less than 3 ft between counter fronts and appliances, or counter fronts and walls.
- Habitable rooms must have a minimum window area of 8% of the floor area, and the window must have a minimum open area to the outdoors of 4% of the floor area.
  - Bathrooms must have a minimum of 3 sq. ft. of window area (1/2 of which shall be openable) **or** mechanical light and ventilation that is exhausted directly to the outside.
- All stairways shall be provided with a means to illuminate the stairs, including any landings. Wall switches shall be located at each floor level.

AP# \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_