



COBB COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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Cobb County Permitting for Private Professional Providers Overview and Policy

On May 6, 2019, Governor Kemp signed into law 2019 House Bill 493 (HB 493) known as the Private Permitting Review and Inspection Act. The Act goes into effect July 1, 2019, amending Chapter 2 of Title 8 of the Official Code of Georgia. The provisions of O.C.G.A 8-2-26 allows for professional engineers or architects to review certain plans related to building and development if specific conditions are met which are only related to their area of expertise. Cobb county must inform a permit applicant if a plan review cannot be provided within thirty (30) days or an inspection within two (2) business days. The applicant has the right under the new law to hire, at their own expense, an independent third-party provider. These provider(s) must be licensed, insured, and approved by the county before they can be retained as a third-party inspector or reviewer, and all certified work must be under oath and affidavit. The County will provide plan review and inspections on all permits, regardless of Private Professional Provider review. While it is allowed under HB493 for Private Professional Providers to inspect or provide plan review for foundations, framing, electrical, plumbing, and heating, it remains up to the county to issue the final certificate of occupancy; county employees may re-inspect any structure prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. This law does not apply to the construction of hospitals, ambulatory health care centers, nursing homes, jails, penal institutions, airports, buildings that impact national or state homeland security, or high-rise structures. Electing to hire a Private Professional Provider may change the fee structure from the county, but it does not waive the fee structure.

To comply with HB 493, Cobb County has established the following policy for prequalification:

To be qualified within Cobb County as a Private Professional Provider or third party provider you must submit via email to HB493application@cobbcounty.org the following documents: state professional license, business license, wet seal, valid driver's license, business insurance, resume or CV, and samples of work. Specific requirements for insurance can be found on the Cobb County Community Development website. All applicants must be an officer of their business or have a notarized letter from the President of their company giving permission to act on the company's behalf. Once all documents have been submitted, they will be reviewed by the Chief Building Official to be either approved or denied. Applicants who have been approved will be listed on the Cobb County website as an approved provider, unless they elect to opt out of the website listing.

If a permit applicant chooses to hire a third-party provider for either plan review or a specific area of inspection, the following process will be applied:

The permit applicant must come to the office in person to sign an affidavit allowing third-party inspections or plan review on their project. No work can begin until the permit is officially issued. The applicant will be directed to the appropriate department, and will be provided a routing sheet. A routing sheet clearly defines what approvals must be obtained related to the permit. This may require approvals from the following reviewers; water and sewer, stormwater management, fire marshal, health department, DOT, zoning, erosion control, site plan. Once all the required documents have been submitted by the permit applicant and approvals have been obtained by various reviewers listed on the routing sheet, the applicant

may submit these documents to Cobb County Plan Review. Cobb County will review the application, and the applicant will receive written notification within five (5) business days informing whether the application is complete.

At that point, Cobb County has thirty (30) days to complete the plan review process or provide written deficiencies. Pursuant to HB493, the applicant has the right to hire a private plan review professional; however, it is the policy of Cobb County to also complete a plan review internally before a permit can be issued. Once this is complete, the applicant will be directed to the permitting department to have the permitting status changed to "issued," and an inspections checklist will be provided.

Private Professional Providers may be utilized during the inspection process providing they are approved by Cobb County and only provide inspections within their area of expertise. Third party inspection reports must be submitted within one (1) day of the inspection via email to thirdpartysubmit@cobbcounty.org. Failure to submit on time may result in an automatic denial. The county reserves the right to conduct any follow up inspections before work can progress, and has two (2) days to do so under state law before work shall be covered. All costs related to a Private Professional Provider are the responsibility of the applicant, and are not required to receive a permit. Cobb County will still perform all inspections necessary for citizens to obtain required permits.

Once all inspections have been completed and approved, the Chief Building Official will approve the release of the Certificate of Occupancy or Letter of Completion. This cannot be performed by a third-party.

The Mission of Cobb County Development and Inspections Division is to improve the built environment through building safety and code enforcement providing improved safety, health, and welfare of citizens and public. Cobb County will continue to conduct all plan reviews, and maintains the right to perform all inspections as deemed necessary.

The Cobb County Building Inspection Department as the local government, the local building official and their building code enforcement personnel shall be immune from liability to any person or party for any action or inaction by a fee owner of a building, or by a private provider or its duly authorized representative, in connection with the building code inspection services authorized in O.C.G.A 8-2-26.