



St. Mary's County
Department of Land Use and Growth Management
Frequently Asked Questions

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FAQ #33: Do I Need an Architect?

Do I need an Architect to draw my commercial construction plans?

In accordance with revision (effective Oct. 1, 2021) to Maryland Business Occupations and Professions Article 3-103 (d)

- (1) A person may not be required to employ a licensed architect in connection with the alteration or repair of an existing building or structure in a municipal corporation if the alteration or repair:
- (i) Does not adversely affect the structural system of the building, including foundations, footings, walls, floors, roofs, bearing partitions, beams, columns, joists, or the mechanical, electrical, or plumbing systems; and
 - (ii) 1. Complies with the Maryland Rehabilitation Code and does not exceed \$25,000 in estimated costs, including labor and materials for alterations or repairs limited to:
 - A. Minor interior alterations or cosmetic or similar repairs; and
 - B. Fixtures, cabinet work or furniture; or
 - 2. Does not exceed \$10,000 in estimated costs, including labor and materials, for alterations or repairs limited to:
 - A. Storefronts, facades, or similar replacements;
 - B. Exterior stairways, landings, decks, or ramps;
 - C. Joists; or
 - D. A mechanical, electrical, or plumbing system.
- (2) Any work performed under this subsection shall be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Maryland Building Performance Standards set forth in Title 12, Subtitle 5 of the Public Safety Article.
- (3) The exclusion provided for in this subsection shall be used only once per building or structure in a 12-month period.
- (4) A building permit issued under this subsection:
- (i) shall contain an affidavit signed by the person who has submitted the permit stating that the repair or alteration is in compliance with this subsection; and
 - (ii) may not be amended or revised in any way to cause the alteration or repair to exceed the maximum amount in total costs authorized under paragraph (1) of this subsection, including labor and materials.

- (5) Any building permit issued under this subsection that contains technical submissions that fail to conform to the requirements of this subsection shall be invalid.
- (6) 3-103 (e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (d) of this section, a code official* may require that architectural documents for alterations or repairs of existing buildings or structures be signed and sealed by a licensed architect if the code official* determines that the signature and seal of a licensed architect is necessary to provide conformity with the Maryland Building Performance Standards or to otherwise provide for the health and safety of the public.
- (7) * Maryland Business Occupations and Professions Article 3-101 (d) “Code official” means a public official responsible for the review of building permit documents or the issuance of building permits.