



CITY OF PORTLAND  
Permitting and Inspections Department

## Permit Type Guide

Use this guide to identify the correct permit type/classification for your project. You will need to select a permit type when you apply for your permit in the Citizens Self-Service portal (CSS). Contact the Permitting and Inspections Department at [permitting@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:permitting@portlandmaine.gov) or (207) 874-8703 if you need assistance.

**Residential Construction** - Construction involving a one- or two-family dwelling structure. For condominiums or apartments located within a structure containing three or more dwelling units, or within a structure that also has a non-residential or commercial occupancy, use a Commercial Construction permit type.

- New One Family - Construct an entire new single-family dwelling.
- New Two Family - Construct an entire new two-family dwelling.
- Addition - Construct an addition to a one- or two-family property, including expanding the footprint or volume of the principal structure (dormer, deck, porch, additional floor level, or enclosed addition to an existing floor level), as well as to construct detached accessory structures.
- Alteration - Construction that is entirely within the shell of the existing structure, including interior modifications, renovations, and window or door replacements.
- Amendment - For amending an active Residential Construction permit.

**Commercial Construction** - Construction involving any multi-family (three or more dwelling units), non-residential, or mixed-use structure.

- New Commercial Structure - Construct an entire new structure for commercial, multi-family (three or more dwelling units), or mixed uses. Does not include detached accessory structures.
- Addition - Construct an addition to a commercial use, including expanding the footprint or volume of the structure (dormer, deck, porch, exterior stair, additional floor level, or enclosed addition to an existing floor level), as well as to construct detached accessory structures.
- Alteration - Construction or projects located entirely within the shell of the existing structure, including changes-of-use, interior modifications, renovations, and window or door replacements.
- Amendment - For amending an active Commercial Construction permit.

**Demolition** - Demolish a complete structure. Interior demolition is considered an "Alteration" and should be filed under Residential Construction or Commercial Construction, as appropriate.

**Legalization of Nonconforming Unit(s)** - Gain formal approval for a previously existing illegal dwelling unit, in accordance with Chapter 14, Section 4.4.6 of the City Code. A separate Residential Construction or Commercial Construction permit is required for any related construction work. Contact the Zoning division ([zoning@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:zoning@portlandmaine.gov)) if you have questions about whether your situation qualifies for legalization.

**Condominium Conversion** - Change ownership of dwelling units into condominium units, in accordance with the tenant notification requirements of Chapter 14, Section 18.4 of the City Code. A separate Residential Construction or Commercial Construction permit is required for any related construction work.

**Home Occupation** - Allows the secondary and incidental use of a residence for a home occupation, in accordance with Chapter 14, Section 6.6.2 of the City Code. A separate Residential Construction



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or Commercial Construction permit is required for any related construction work.

**Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)** - Install heating, ventilation, air conditioning system or power equipment, such as rooftop chillers, mini/multi-split heat pumps, energy recovery ventilators (ERVs), and fuel fired heating appliances.

**Tent or Stage (Temporary Structures)** - Install any temporary structure (in place for less than 180 days per year), including but not limited to a tent or stage.

**Tank** - Install or remove a fuel tank.

**Signs** - Install signage that requires permitting under Chapter 14, Article 20 of the City Code, including freestanding signs, awnings (with or without signage), wall signs, projecting signs, temporary banners, sidewalk signs, etc.

- Signage or Awning - For any sign or awning type except for portable sidewalk signs.
- Sidewalk signs - For movable sidewalk or sandwich board signs.

**Hood** - Install a commercial kitchen hood and/or exhaust system.

**Subsurface Plumbing** - Install a septic/subsurface plumbing system or any parts of a system.

**Fire** - Install alarm, sprinkler, and/or suppression systems.

- Fire Alarm - For a fire alarm system.
- Fire Sprinkler (One and Two Family) - For a One- and Two-Family fire sprinkler system.
- Fire Suppression System, Water Based - For a water-based fire suppression system.
- Fire Suppression System, Non-Water Based - For a non-water based fire suppression system.

**Other Land Use** - Site work or land alteration activities not associated with another permit type. Contact [permitting@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:permitting@portlandmaine.gov) to verify whether use of this permit type is recommended for your project.