

City of Philadelphia



(Bill No. 260393)

AN ORDINANCE

Amending Subcode “A” (The Philadelphia Administrative Code) of Title 4 of The Philadelphia Code (The Building, Construction and Occupancy Code), by revising and clarifying certain provisions; making corrections for compliance with the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code Act; and making technical changes; all under certain terms and conditions.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. Subcode “A” of Title 4 of the Philadelphia Code, entitled “The Philadelphia Administrative Code,” is hereby amended as follows:

SUBCODE "A" (THE PHILADELPHIA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE)

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CHAPTER 2 ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY

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SECTION A-203 APPROVAL

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A-203.3 Alternative Materials and Equipment

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A-203.3.2 Research reports: Supporting data, where necessary to assist in the approval of materials or assemblies not specifically provided for in the technical codes, shall consist of valid research reports from approved sources.

A-203.3.2.1 Evaluation services. Materials, product, and methods of construction that were evaluated as meeting subcodes of the Building Construction and Occupancy Code by the ICC Evaluation Service, Inc. or by an evaluation service accredited under [the "General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification Systems" issued by the ISO (ISO Guide 65)] *ISO/IEC 17065:2012, “Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services” (or equivalent)*, are approved for use. The use shall conform with the evaluation.

City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 260393 continued

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A-203.3.2.2 Testing laboratories. Materials, equipment and devices bearing the label or listed by a testing laboratory or quality assurance agency accredited by the International Accreditation Service, Inc. or another *recognized* agency [accredited under the "Calibration and Testing Laboratory Accreditation Systems – General Requirements for Operation and Recognition" issued by ISO (ISO Guide 65)] *under ISO/IEC 17025:2017, “General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories” or equivalent*), are approved for use if:

1. The testing laboratory or quality assurance agency deemed the material as meeting standards required by the Building Construction and Occupancy Code, and

2. The scope of accreditation is applicable to standards required by the Building Construction and Occupancy Code.

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CHAPTER 3 PERMITS

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SECTION A-301 APPLICATION FOR PERMIT

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A-301.1.1 Building permits: A building permit is required for the following activities:

* * *

8. Site clearing, grubbing, or earth disturbance [of any land in excess of 5,000 square feet] *of land area of 5,000 square feet or more*. No building permit shall be issued unless an erosion control plan has been approved for the site pursuant to applicable state and local stormwater-management requirements.

9. *Earth disturbance exceeding 1,400 sq. ft. on slopes greater than 15% within the Steep Slope Protection Area, as defined in §14-704(2), or exceeding 500 sq. ft. within the Wissahickon Watershed Overlay, as defined in §14-510, except on sites designated as Category 5 on the associated Impervious Coverage Map.*

[9.] 10. Construction in the right of way as required by Title 11 of The Philadelphia Code. The provisions of this Title 4 shall apply to the issuance of a building permit. No such permit shall be issued without the approval of the Streets Department.

City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 260393 continued

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[10.] 11. Excavation exceeding a depth of five (5) feet below adjacent [grade, excluding digging, trenching, or boring for utilities or geotechnical exploration, unless otherwise required by regulation.] grade.

Exception: This provision shall not apply to the following activities, unless otherwise required by regulation:

1. *Digging, trenching, or boring performed for utilities or geotechnical exploration.*

2. *Excavation for accessory structures or appurtenances serving a one- or two-family dwelling, provided the work is located more than ten (10) feet from an existing building on an adjacent lot and is demonstrated to the Department to have no potential impact on any existing building.*

3. *Excavation for sign structures, provided the work is located more than ten (10) feet from an existing building and is demonstrated to the Department to have no potential impact on any existing building.*

4. *Minor work that is demonstrated to the Department to have no potential impact on any existing building.*

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A-301.2 Permits not required: * * *

A-301.2.5 Zoning and use registration permits: A zoning or use registration permit shall not be required for the following activities:

* * *

10. Sheds, playhouses, pergolas, and similar structures accessory to one- or two-family dwellings, provided the structure is located in the rear yard and does not exceed [120] 130 square feet and 15 ft. in height.

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SECTION A-302 PERMITS

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A-302.12 Partial Completion and Abandonment of Work.

A-302.12.1 Completion Requirement. The permit holder shall complete the full scope of work authorized under the permit.

City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 260393 continued

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A-302.12.2 Partial Completion. Work that is partially completed under a permit that subsequently expires pursuant to Section A-302.2 shall require the submission of a new permit application. The new application shall serve to:

- 1. Legalize the partially completed work;*
- 2. Obtain approval for any remaining work; or*
- 3. Authorize demolition or removal of partial construction to restore the site to its original condition.*

New permit applications shall be subject to all requirements in effect at the time of submission. Construction exposed to weather or that has sustained damage may require certification of a Pennsylvania-licensed professional engineer or replacement, as determined by the Department.

A-302.12.3 Site Maintenance and Safety. Where there is partially completed work under a permit that subsequently expired, the permit holder shall ensure that the site is maintained in a safe and secure manner and complies with all applicable requirements of the Building Code and any additional protection requirements established by the Department.

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SECTION A-305 CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

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A-305.2 Contents. *

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A-305.2.1 Building permits. * * *

A-305.2.1.6 Requisite approvals. The following approvals of departments and agencies of the City of Philadelphia and/or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania shall be required before a building permit may be issued:

* * *

[10. Commerce Department. Commerce Department approval is required for permits related to piers, wharves or other harbor structures pursuant to Section 18-103 of The Philadelphia Code.]

[11. Philadelphia Department of Public Health approval is required for buildings connected to an on-lot sewage disposal system or private well.]

City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 260393 continued

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10. Philadelphia Department of Public Health approval is required prior to permit issuance for buildings connected to an on-lot sewage disposal system and for dust control measures associated with clearing, grubbing, or earth disturbance of any land in excess of 5,000 square feet. Acceptance of water quality from a private well is required prior to final permit approval.

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A-305.2.2 Demolition permits. * * *

A-305.2.2.4 Requisite approvals. The following approvals shall be required before a demolition permit may be issued:

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5. Philadelphia Water Department approval of stormwater management where the area of disturbance *equals or exceeds* 5,000 square feet.

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A-305.2.7 Excavation permits.

A-305.2.7.3 Requisite approvals. The following approvals shall be required before an excavation permit may be issued:

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2. Philadelphia Water Department approval of stormwater management where the area of disturbance *equals or exceeds* 5,000 square feet.

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CHAPTER 4 INSPECTIONS

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SECTION A-402 PERMIT INSPECTIONS

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A-402.8 Inspection requests: It shall be the duty of the holder of the permit or their duly authorized agent to notify the code official when work is ready for inspection. It shall be the duty of the permit holder and contractor to provide access to and means for inspection of such work for any inspections that are required by this code or the technical codes.

A-402.8.1 Notice of start: [The code official or inspection agency having jurisdiction shall be contacted by the permit holder or his designee at least 24 hours prior to the start of work under a permit. The code official or the inspector having jurisdiction may perform an initial

City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 260393 continued

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inspection of the site to ensure all site safety protections are in place.] *The permit holder, or their authorized designee, shall notify the code official or inspection agency having jurisdiction not less than twenty-four (24) hours and not more than fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the start of work authorized under a permit. If work does not commence within fourteen (14) days following the initial notice, the permit holder shall notify the code official or inspection agency of the delay and provide an updated anticipated start date.*

A-402.8.1.1 Definition: Start of Work. For the purposes of this code, the start of work shall be defined as the initiation of any construction, alteration, or other activity explicitly authorized by the issued construction permit. This includes any physical work that falls within the permitted scope of construction, alteration, or installation covered under the permit.

A-402.8.1.1.1 Activities solely associated with site preparation shall not constitute the start of work. This includes but is not limited to the installation of site safety protections; grading, clearing, or other preparatory activities that are exempt from permitting; and the installation of erosion and sediment control measures or other environmental protections.

A-402.8.1.1.2 When grading, clearing, or other preparatory work requires a permit and such work is specifically included within the scope of an issued building permit, the commencement of that permitted preparatory activity shall be considered the start of work for the purposes of this section.

A-402.8.1.2 Initial Inspection. Prior to the start of work, the code official or inspection agency having jurisdiction may conduct an initial inspection to verify that all required site safety protections, erosion and sediment controls, and other required preparatory measures are properly installed and maintained.

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CHAPTER 5 VIOLATIONS

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SECTION A-506 CODE VIOLATION NOTICES (CVN)

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A-506.2 Remittance amount. The amount required to be remitted in response to a code violation notice is the amount indicated in Section 1-112 of The Philadelphia Code, unless otherwise specified.

City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 260393 *continued*

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Exceptions: The amount required to be remitted shall be as follows for violation of the following provisions:

1. Section [F-1008.2] *F-1104.28* (door operations). . . . One hundred dollars (\$100)
2. Section [F-1009] *F-1032* (egress maintenance). . . . One hundred dollars (\$100)

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CHAPTER 6 PENALTIES

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SECTION A-601 FINES

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A-601.2 Fines for Class II offenses: Notwithstanding Section A-601.1, any person who violates any of the following provisions shall have committed a Class II offense and be subject to the maximum fine set forth in subsection 1-109(2) of The Philadelphia Code:

1. Section [F-106.4] *F-106.5* (Rendering equipment inoperable);
2. Section [F-106.4.1] *F-106.5.1* (Fire Department notification);
3. Section [F-104.2.2] *F-106.5.1* (Obstructing operations);
4. Section [F-106.7] *F-106.8* (Obstructions);
5. Section F-307 (Open Burning and Recreational Fires);
6. Section [F-308.5] *F-308* (Open-flame devices);
7. Section [F-901.4.6] *F-901.8* (Changes to fire protection equipment);
8. Section F-901.7 (Systems out of service);
9. Section [F-915] *F-106.2* (Periodic Testing Of Fire Protection Systems);
10. Section [F-1027] *F-1032* (Maintenance of the Means of Egress);

City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 260393 *continued*

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A-601.3 Fines for Class III offenses: Notwithstanding Section A-601.1, any person who violates any of the following provisions shall have committed a Class III offense and shall be subject to the maximum fine set forth in subsection 1-109(3) of The Philadelphia Code:

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2.1. Section [B-1704.15] *B-1705.1.1.1* (Special Inspections of Special Cases);

* * *

5. Section [F-105.8.1] *F-105.7.1* (Transportation of Explosives);

6. Section [F-106.6] *F-106.7* (Overcrowding);

7. Section [F-105.6.15] *F-105.7.1* (Explosives);

7.1 Section [F-1011] *F-1104.16* (Fire Escapes);

8. Section [F-2703.3] *F-5003.3* (Release of Hazardous Materials);

9. Section [F-3301.1.3] *F-5601.1.3* (Fireworks);

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CHAPTER FEES

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SECTION A-901 GENERAL

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A-901.11 Administrative fees: Fees for items that require the Department to provide non-routine or personalized administrative services, shall be as follows. The Department is authorized to revise such fees or establish fees by regulation for any other similar services to cover the costs of program administration. The fee for services that are provided shall be in addition to any permit or license fee set forth in this Chapter or as required by an Act of the Commonwealth.

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For processing a permit reinstatement request [\$50] \$300

City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 260393 continued

Certified Copy

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SECTION 2. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be effective July 1, 2026.

Explanation:

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted.

Italics indicate new matter added.

City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 260393 continued

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Bill, Passed by the City Council on June 4, 2026. The Bill was Signed by the Mayor on June 12, 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth McCollum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Elizabeth" and last name "McCollum" clearly distinguishable.

Elizabeth McCollum
Chief Clerk of the City Council