



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES

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Building Policy 09. Permit Status, Expiration & Reinstatement

Previous Policies

This consolidated policy replaces and supersedes the following prior policies and memoranda:

- Building Memo 04: Permit Status Definitions, October 1, 2025
- Building Memo 12: Inspection Requests and Scheduling with Expired Permits, December 29, 2023
- Building Policy 04: Procedure for Building Application and Permit Extension or Reinstatement, October 23, 2025

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear, consistent framework for:

- Defining building application and permit statuses;
- Managing permit expiration, extension, reinstatement, and lapse;
- Clarifying when inspection may be scheduled in relation to expired permits;
- Ensuring consistent staff application of statutory timelines and procedural requirements.

This policy supports transparency for applicants and ensures uniform implementation across permit tracking systems, staff workflows, and public-facing portals.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply and shall be used consistently by staff and within the permit tracking system:

- **Active:** An application or permit that is in good standing with the division and within the statutory timeframe for completion.
- **Admin Review:** Plan reviews by the Building Division, Planning Division, and Environmental Health Department are complete, and all divisions/departments have "approved" noted in the review table. (The review table is an internal structure that allows staff to track the progress of plan reviews). Balance due for final fees are to be verified by staff before notifying the applicant that the permit is ready for issuance. Once the applicant is notified, status is switched to ready for applicant.
- **Approved:** Plan review by the assigned division/department has been officially accepted as satisfactory and the status in the review table will be marked with "approved". (The review table is an internal structure that allows staff to track the progress of plan reviews). Should all divisions/departments approve their plan reviews, the permit status will be updated to "admin review".

When a project is supported by a sewer and water district, a full plan review is not required by the Environmental Health Department. In such cases, Environmental Health will continue to use the "approved" status in the review table upon confirmation of the availability of said services.

- **Awaiting Outside Agency:** Outside Agency review is still needed; to be provided by the applicant. Applicant action required.

- **Cancelled:** Permit application has been cancelled per the request of the applicant.
- **Conditionally Approved:** The permit for the project can be issued, but there are conditions that are required to be met prior to the permit being finalized by a Building Inspector. Applicant action required.
- **Correction Letter:** Plan reviews by the Building Division, Planning Division, and Environmental Health Department are complete (not necessarily approved), and at least one division/department has "corrections" noted in the review table. (The review table is an internal structure that allows staff to track the progress of plan reviews). A correction letter is sent to the applicant. Applicant action required.
- **Deferred Submittal:** A deferred submission of plans for fire sprinklers, solar, or trusses has been turned in to the Planning and Building Services Department, and plan review by the Building Division has begun.
- **Denied:** An application for a grading exemption or pond exemption has been denied.
- **Expired:** When the permit application or permit expires. Applicant action required.
- **Extended:** When an application or permit is nearing expiration, the applicant can contact the Department and request a 6-month extension of the expiration date. Applicant action required.
- **Finalized:** All inspections are completed and have been approved; the permit is final and complete.
- **Hold:** A submission that has been deemed incomplete/is missing required materials or a check has been returned and payment could not be processed. Applicant needs to provide complete/missing materials, or payment for permit continuation. Applicant action required.
- **Issued:** Final payment for the permit has been received, signatures from the applicant and the Planning and Building Services Department have been applied, and relevant paperwork has been supplied to the applicant with instructions for proper posting and inspection notification; construction/development can begin. Applicant action required.
- **Lapsed:** A building application or issued building permit has expired, and due to statutory limitations, is deemed no longer eligible for reinstatement by the Department.
- **Ready for Applicant:** Plan reviews by the Building Division, Planning Division, and Environmental Health Department, as well as Outside Agency reviews (if applicable) are complete, final fees have been applied, and the applicant has been notified that the permit is ready for issuance upon final payment from the applicant. Applicant action required.
- **Reinstated:** An issued permit that had previously expired but has since been approved for reinstatement, allowing the project to continue with construction activities and all required inspections.
- **Revision:** When revisions need to be made to plans on an approved/issued permit that has not received a final inspection. Applicant action required.
- **Under Review:** All application materials have been supplied and entered into TRAKiT. Plan reviews by the Building Division, Planning Division, and Environmental Health Department are in progress.
- **Void:** Incorrect or unnecessary creation of a permit record that now needs to be removed from the permit software tracking system.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Provide consistent definitions and application of permit statuses.
2. Clarify statutory timelines for permit validity, extension, and reinstatement.
3. Ensure fair and transparent procedures for expired permits.
4. Support efficient inspection scheduling while maintaining compliance.

Authority

The authority for this policy is contained in:

- Mendocino County Code (MCC) Title 18, Chapter 18.04
- California Building Code (CBC) Section 105
- MCC Section 18.23.140

Policy

1. Permit and Application Validity Periods

- Building permit applications are valid for one (1) year from the date of submission.
- Issued building permits that are not processed as Class K are valid for one (1) year from the date of issuance.
- Each approved inspection extends the issued permit's validity for an additional one-year (365 days) period, except for Class K permits.
- Class K permits are valid for three (3) years from date of issuance pursuant to MCC Section 18.23.140.

2. Extensions

2.1 Application Extensions

Application Extensions are valid for one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the expiration date of the Application.

The Division may extend the Application timeframe for completion without cost to the applicant if:

- The Application is active, **AND**
- The Application has been in the Division's or another jurisdictional authority's review process, without requiring applicant action, for more than one hundred eighty (180) consecutive days during the life of the Application, **OR**
- An emergency declaration or natural disaster impacts the Division's ability to process the Application or the applicant's ability to participate in the application process, **OR**
- The Division made an error that directly or indirectly impacts the Application or application process, **OR**
- The Application has been pursued in good faith as determined by the Building Official, **AND**
- The Division has documented in writing the justifiable cause demonstrated to extend the Application as part of the Application record.

The applicant may request an Application extension of the timeframe for completion if:

- The Application is active, **AND**
- The request is made in writing, preferably on the appropriate Department issued form, **AND**

- The request demonstrates justifiable cause to extend, including but not limited to; hardship(s) or delays outside of the applicant's control related to the professionals providing services, such as agents, architects, or contractors, **AND**
- A payment of the required fee(s) as established by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors ("BOS") adopted Master Fee Schedule.

2.2 Permit Extensions

Permit extensions are valid for one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the expiration date of the permit.

The submittal of revisions to active permits, shall extend the permit one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the submittal of the revisions, unless the CBO determines the permit was not pursued in good faith.

The Division may extend the permit timeframe for completion without cost to the applicant if:

- The permit is active, **AND**
- The permit has been in the Division's or another jurisdictional authority's revision review process, without requiring applicant action, for more than one hundred eighty (180) consecutive days during the life of the issued permit, **OR**
- An emergency declaration or natural disaster impacts the Division's ability to process a revision or conduct the necessary inspections or the applicant's ability to participate in the permit process, **OR**
- The Division made an error that directly or indirectly impacts the permit or permit process, **OR**
- The permit has been pursued in good faith as determined by the Building Official, **AND**
- The Division has documented in writing the justifiable cause demonstrated to extend the permit as part of the permit record.

The permit holder may request a permit extension of the timeframe for completion if:

- The permit is active, **AND**
- The request is made in writing, preferably on the appropriate Department issued form, **AND**
- The request Demonstrates justifiable cause to extend, including but not limited to: hardship(s) or delays outside of the applicant's control related to the professionals providing services, such as agents, architects, or contractors, **AND**
- A payment of the required fee(s) as established by the BOS adopted Master Fee Schedule.

3. Reinstatement

3.1 Application Reinstatement*

An expired application may be reinstated if:

- The application has been expired for less than three (3) years or has a vested interest, **AND**
- No building code cycle update invalidates the plans, **AND**
- The request is submitted in writing, **AND**
- All required fees are paid.

An approved reinstatement activates the application for one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the issuance by the Division.

3.2 Permit Reinstatement*

An expired permit may be reinstated if:

- Approved by the Chief Building Official, **AND**
- The permit has been expired for less than five (5) years or has a vested interest, **AND**
- No building code cycle update invalidates the plans, **AND**
- All required fees are paid.

An approved reinstatement activates the permit for one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the issuance by the Division; inspections may resume.

*The Chief Building Official reserves the right to grant exceptions to this policy within their authority to do so, and to make determinations for situations that are not captured within this policy.

4. Lapsed Permits

Permits or applications deemed lapsed are no longer eligible for reinstatement and require a new application and plan review.*

An application lapses once it has reached three years (1,095 calendar days) from its original expiration date.

An issued permit lapses once it has reached five years (1,825 calendar days) from its original expiration date.

*The Chief Building Official reserves the right to grant exceptions to this policy within their authority to do so, and to make determinations for situations that are not captured within this policy.

5. Inspection Scheduling with Expired Permits

When an inspection is requested on an active permit and there are expired permits on the same parcel:

- If the expired permit applies to the same structure, it must be reinstated prior to scheduling inspections.
- If the expired permit applies to an unrelated structure, the applicant shall be notified, but inspections on the active permit may proceed.

6. Requests Related to Code Enforcement

Permits issued to legalize previously unpermitted construction may be subject to alternate timelines established in coordination with Code Enforcement, including shortened timeframes for final inspection approval.

7. Denial of Reinstatement

If reinstatement is denied due to conditions that cannot be remedied (such as a building code cycle update invalidating plans), the permit or application status shall be changed to Denied, and a new submittal will be required.

This policy is effective as of the date of the signatures below.

Policy Approved: 
Richard Angley, Chief Building Official

Date: 03-08-2026

Policy Approved: 
Julia Krog, Director

Date: 03-13-2026