



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES

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BUILDING DIVISION POLICY #18 PROCEDURE FOR Permitting a Residential Structure Built Without a Permit

PREVIOUS POLICY

Administrative Bulletin #1

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline a procedure for the legalization of an existing residential structure under the code cycle that was in effect at the time it was constructed.

APPLICABILITY

Detached one- and two-family dwellings and appurtenant structures.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Standardize the procedure to allow the permitting and legalization of residential structures built without a permit and provide a list of the required documentation to be submitted with the permit application.

AUTHORITY

The authority for this procedure is contained in the Mendocino County Code ("MCC") Title 18 – *Building Regulations* Chapter 18.04.025 – *California Codes Adopted*, and the California Building Code ("CBC") Section [A] 104.

Senate Bill No. 1226 Chapter 1010

Health and Safety Code section 17958.12

PROCEDURE

1. Provide a site plan, floor plan(s) and exterior elevations of the structure. All drawings must be drawn to a standard architectural or engineering scale.
2. Provide a stamped signed letter by a California licensed Architect or Engineer, the letter shall include a determination as to what year the structure was built and what specific materials / construction methods that were used to determine the year built. It shall also include the code cycle that was in effect at the time of construction and whether the structure is in compliance with that code cycle or list the deficiencies and proposed corrections to meet the code cycle that was in effect. Once the permit is issued, corrections shall be made and inspected by Mendocino County and certified by the design professional that has prepared the letter.

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3. ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS: Provide a letter from a California licensed electrician including license # and signature. The letter shall document that the structure was inspected and tested and is in compliance with the code that was in effect at the time it was constructed or list the corrections required to comply. Once the permit is issued, corrections shall be made and inspected by Mendocino County and certified by the electrician that has prepared the letter.

4. PLUMBING SYSTEMS: Provide a letter from a California licensed plumber including license # and signature, the letter shall document that the structure was inspected and tested and is in compliance with the code that was in effect at the time it was constructed or list the corrections required to comply. Once the permit is issued, corrections shall be made and inspected by Mendocino County and certified by the plumber that has prepared the letter.


5. MECHANICAL SYSTEMS: Provide a letter from a California licensed mechanical contractor including license # and signature, the letter shall document that the structure was inspected and tested and is in compliance with the code that was in effect at the time it was constructed or list the corrections required to comply. Once the permit is issued corrections shall be made and inspected by Mendocino County and certified by the mechanical contractor that has prepared the letter.

6. Fire and Smoke alarms shall be installed to meet current code requirements for locations. There are no exceptions.

7. Even with approval letters noted elsewhere in this Policy, it may be necessary to remove finishes to expose items for verification. The building inspector conducting the inspection will make determinations in the field as to items that will need to be exposed.

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

Policy Approved:  Date: 2/6/2026
Richard Angley, Chief Building Official

Policy Approved:  Date: 2/5/2026
Julia Krog, Director Planning and Building Services