



Projects eligible for an Over-the-Counter (OTC) permit

Examples of projects you can get OTC permits for, with or without plans.

Plans not required

Over-the-Counter permits without plans include (but are not limited to):

- Re-roofing
- In-kind skylight replacement (same size and location)
- In-kind repair decks and/or stairs (less than 50%)
- Replacement windows (same size and same location)
- Replacement garage doors (same size and same location)
- In-kind minor dry rot repair
- In-kind exterior siding repair and/or replacement
- In-kind kitchen remodel (no changes to the floor plan or walls)
- In-kind bathroom remodel (no change to the floor plan or walls)
- Exploratory work to determine depth of footing, stud size/spacing, floor/roof joist size and direction. (Holes to be filled with slurry, and finishes to be replaced with the same fire resistance rating)
- Replacement of wall finishes in R-3 occupancies complying with SFEBC Section 503.11.1
- Bolting down existing foundation and/or adding plywood panels to crawl space/1st floor garage area (not complying with DBI Information Sheet IS-09)

Related

[Over-the-counter \(OTC\) permits](#)

The Department of Building Inspection reviews every building permit application for life safety and building code compliance. We provide over-the-counter review for simple permit applications. Drop-in at the Permit Center to submit your application.

Plans required

Over-the-Counter permits with plans include (but not limited to):

- Kitchen remodel (changing layout or removing walls)
- Bathroom remodel (changing layout or removing walls)
- Residential interior remodel (changing floor plans or walls)
- Repairing decks and/or stairs (more than 50%)
- New windows and/or exterior doors in new locations
- New skylights in new locations
- Decks less than 20 feet above grade that meet Planning Department setbacks
- Sign permits
- Single story non-structural commercial tenant improvement projects
- Permits to comply with the Accessible Business Entrance (ABE) program
- Installation of power door operators
- Voluntary structural strengthening

- Disability access barrier removal projects
- Small to medium projects that do not require Planning Department neighborhood notification
- Fences taller than 6 feet in side or rear yard and/or fences taller than 3 feet in front yard
- Exterior façade work, visible from street, that involves changes in finishes (for example, stucco to siding, wood to vinyl siding, and others)
- New mechanical equipment installed inside or outside the building
- Storefront security gates (excluding some preservation districts)
- Residential security gates at entry doors and/or window security bars, grills, and/or grates
- Replacement of wall finishes in occupancies other than R-3 occupancies
- New washer, dryer, and/or laundry sink hookups in new/existing areas within the existing building
- In-kind replacement of garage slab (no ceiling height changes) although note that saw-cutting SOG to repair/replace sewer lines does not require plans
- Brace and bolt per DBI Information Sheet S-09

Not Over-the-Counter permits

Projects that require [in-house review](#) include (but are not limited to):

- Change of use tenant improvements that involve Family Day Care, "E" occupancies, and Laboratory uses
- Serial permitting that continues to increase the scope of the initial remodel
- Foundation replacements and/or seismic upgrades when there is a prior permit, for further expansion, under review
- Remodels that are subject to the Slope and Seismic Hazard Zone Protection Act, Edgehill Mountain Slope Protection Area, and Northwest Mt. Sutro Slope Protection Area
- Excavation projects that expands the below grade footprint
- Extensive residential remodels that changes the gravity load carrying members
- Extensive residential remodels that requires a mandatory seismic upgrade on all levels
- Special (non-conventional) foundation systems including but not limited to: tie backs, deep foundations, and/or complex shoring systems
- Extensive commercial tenant improvements that changes the gravity load carrying members
- Tower Crane installation permits

Last updated November 4, 2022

Department

[Department of Building Inspection](#)



City and County
of San Francisco

[Jobs with the City](#)

[Contact us](#)

[About this website](#)

[Disclaimer](#)

[Privacy policy](#)

