



Covid-19 Response Inspection Flexibility

Purpose of the rules:

This rule is intended to provide local jurisdictions additional flexibility to employ available staff to perform inspections and plan reviews. Local building officials are required to use their reasonable discretion to determine if individual staff possess the necessary experience to perform a plan review or inspection, despite not having the required current and valid state certification. The rule also provides additional clarity that local building inspection programs are able to employ any other innovative or creative solution that is appropriate for their jurisdiction to ensure that plan reviews and inspections can continue in a manner that is safe for staff and the public.

Citation:

Adopt: OAR 918-098-4000

This rule becomes effective March 20, 2020.

History:

The challenges facing local building inspection programs from the ongoing Covid-19 response are unprecedented and beyond the scope contemplated by the current rules regarding plan reviews and inspections. The division wants to ensure the local inspection programs have as many tools available to them to provide important building inspection services that contribute to the health and safety of building occupants, while keeping staff and members of the public safe during this response.

Effect of the rules:

This rule provides additional tools for local inspection programs to provide plan review and inspection services.

Contact:

If you have questions or need further information, contact Richard Rogers, Chief Building Official, at 503.378.4472, or richard.rogers@oregon.gov.



OAR 918-098-4000
Inspections During COVID-19
Emergency

(1) The purpose of this rule is to provide greater flexibility to building departments to meet demand and provide services to Oregonians during the COVID-19 emergency without compromising safety.

(2) Notwithstanding OAR 918-098-1015, 918-281-0020, and 918-695-0400, a person with an Oregon Inspector Certification and a code certification issued by the Building Codes Division may perform inspections and review plans beyond the scope of work for their code certification if both of the following conditions are met:

(a) The relevant building official determines the person has the skills necessary to perform the specific inspection or plan review without compromising safety; and

(b) The relevant building official authorizes the person, in writing, to perform the inspection or plan review.

(3) Consistent with ORS 455.020 and the discretion granted to building officials, nothing in OAR Chapter 918 should be construed to limit the ability of building officials to employ creative solutions and technology in service delivery, including but not limited to the use of virtual inspections, drones, electronic signatures, pictures, granting of written request to reconnect an electrical installation pursuant to ORS 479.570 and OAR 918-311-0070, or any other solution designed to provide service delivery while maintaining safety.

(4) Authorizations under (2) are only valid while this rule is in place. No authorization under (2) may be in effect beyond the effective date of this rule.

Statutory Authority: ORS 455.020, 455.030, 455.720

Statutes Implemented: ORS 455.720