THE IMPORTANCE OF PERMITS & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

BROWARD COUNTY
BOARD OF RULES AND APPEALS

Stronger codes mean safer buildings!
About BORA

Who We Are
The Broward County Board of Rules and Appeals (BORA) was established by a special act of the Florida Legislature in 1971. The act was later incorporated into the Broward County Charter, mandating functions for the Board to perform. BORA works to ensure that Building and Fire Codes are applied uniformly.

Who Is The Board?
The Board is comprised of professionals. Some are appointed by the Broward League of Cities and others by the Board of County Commissioners. Members serve without compensation.

The Board meets monthly, or as needed, to consider proposed amendments to the Florida Building and Fire Prevention codes, to hear appeals on decisions made by Building and Fire Code Officials and to render formal interpretations on precise meanings of code sections that may currently be in dispute.

Contact Us

📞 954-765-4500  
📧 rulesboard@broward.org

2,000 copies of this public document were promulgated at a gross cost of $495 or $0.2475 per copy to provide the public with information about BORA.
SAFETY
Building permits and inspections are made to protect the present and future owners of the structure. Building permits reduce potential hazards of unsafe construction for public safety, health and welfare. Work done improperly could result in fires or other property damage. Doors and windows that do not meet code, or doors and windows installed incorrectly, could fail in hurricane force winds, exposing your home to physical damage.

SAVES MONEY
Property owners’ insurance may not cover damages caused by work done without permits. When selling a home, the owner is required to disclose any improvements made to the property and disclose if a permit was obtained and if any inspections (including the final inspection) were completed. Fines, lawsuits and other legal issues are all possible outcomes that may result from work done without permits. Any person who commences work, for which a permit is required before obtaining the Building Official’s written approval of the necessary permits, may be subject to a penalty up to 100 percent of the usual permit fee in addition to the required permit fee.

FLORIDA LEGAL REQUIREMENT
Building permits benefit individuals and the community. Individuals benefit by having access to the knowledge of the local building and fire code officials. These professionals ensure that construction projects meet minimum code requirements. The local building department can provide advice and answer questions about the property.

There is a $50 filing fee for unlimited service from the Board of Rules & Appeals to resolve your formal appeal through the entire resolution process. (CHECKS and MONEY ORDERS ONLY)
A BUILDING PERMIT IS REQUIRED WHEN:

- Constructing buildings and other structures
- Installing, replacement and/or alteration of doors, windows, fences, pools, garage doors, screen enclosures and driveways
- Relocating plumbing fixtures; replacing water heaters, sewers, water lines (within the building), gas supply systems; changing water lines from the meter to the home and installation of lawn sprinkler systems
- Installing new electrical boxes, electrical service upgrades, extending/adding wiring for new receptacles and lighting
- Installing, altering or any other major repair of any air conditioning, refrigeration, boiler, pressure vessel and other mechanical systems

BUILDING PERMITS ARE NOT REQUIRED FOR:

- Buildings and structures specifically regulated and preempted by the federal government; nonresidential farms and buildings; and chickees constructed by the Miccosukee and Seminole Tribes (ONLY when being built on reservations).
- The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil and waste piping, unless it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same for new material. As well as, the clearing of stoppages and cleaning of septic tanks.
- Electrical work regulated by Chapter 364 of the Florida Statues in single family occupancies, detached structures or townhouses, including telephones and cable wiring.
- Portable mechanical equipment such as: heating appliances, air compressors, dust collectors, ventilation equipment and cooling units.

For a complete list of when building permits are necessary, contact your local AHJ (Authority Having Jurisdiction).
There are ways to help resolve differences in building code interpretation in Broward County.

Here are steps that can help resolve building code conflicts:

1. An owner, contractor, designer or any party directly involved in building code interpretation differences contacts the municipality’s Chief Inspector about the concern.

2. The Chief Inspector or Building Official provides an interpretation of the code relative to the concern.

Quite often, the challenge ends here.

3. If the complainant is not satisfied with the AHJ’s decision, they may call upon BORA for assistance.

4. The complainant may contact BORA’s Chief Code Compliance Officer to explain the concern. Having learned one side of the concern, the Chief Code Compliance Officer contacts the jurisdiction and the Chief Inspector to learn the municipality’s position.

5. After deliberation, the Chief Code Compliance Officer provides and explanation of the relative code sections to both parties.

This has the potential to end the dispute.

6. If this does not end the dispute, then the complainant may file an appeal with BORA.

7. BORA’s staff will assist as needed in completing the appeal process.

8. At the next scheduled Board Meeting, members hear the concerns of affected parties and will make a ruling. The matter may be referred by the Board to a Technical Advisory Committee.

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Board of Rules and Appeals Direct Discipline Contacts

It is recommended that you start your discussion with the local building or fire department. Do not hesitate to contact BORA as needed to help resolve problems while they are still small or to file a formal appeal of a local or county building/fire department decision. If the issue is specified in building or fire code book language, it can be appealed.

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