

Highlands Residential Project Close Out & Obtaining your Certificate of Occupancy

[CLICK HERE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS AND HOUSING WEBSITE FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION](#)

Use this checklist as a guide to help plan for the closing of your construction project and obtain your Certificate of Occupancy. It is the responsibility of the Owner/Developer/Contractor to comply with all regulations and local ordinances, request and obtain all required final inspections, and provide all necessary documentation to the Construction Official prior to certificate issuance. Anticipating required documentation and inspections is the key to the timely issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

PLANNING SHOULD START AT LEAST FOUR WEEKS IN ADVANCE OF REQUESTING FINAL INSPECTIONS

- Upon the start of your finishing work you should start your planning to close out the construction project. Paying attention to your progress and focusing on the critical stages listed below will help avoid delays in obtaining final approvals. **THE CONSTRUCTION OFFICIAL WILL NOT ISSUE A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY UNTIL ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION IS RECEIVED AND PRIOR APPROVALS ARE MET.**
- Start to assemble all documentation required. Listed below are 3 commonly missed documents. [CLICK HERE FOR A RESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY CHECKLIST](#). This CHECKLIST will help you assemble most documents required, and expected to be submitted. New structures & additions require the following documentation:
 - 🔗 [Framing Checklist](#)
 - 🔗 [Air Barrier & Insulation Checklist](#)
 - 🔗 [Duct Tightness Report \(See Bulletin 22-1\)](#)
- Structures with elevators require special attention. You must arrange to have your final inspection performed by a licensed agency and certified by your Licensed Design Professional.
 - 🔗 See the [RESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY CHECKLIST](#) for more details on documents required.
- Construction projects disturbing more than 5,000 ft.² of soil are subject to soil conservation regulations. You must coordinate with [Freehold Soil Conservation District](#) to obtain your Compliance or Exemption Letter.
- Obtain all FINAL inspections required under the [Uniform Construction Code](#) (UCC).
- Immediately upon completion of your project and after all your final inspections have passed, you should submit your [Application for Certificate of Occupancy](#).
- Affordable Housing Fee:** If your project was subject to an affordable housing assessment fee, you should have already completed an [Affordable Housing Development Form](#) and paid a 50% deposit on the estimated fee. **Final payment is now due**, which should be made to the **Department of Buildings & Housing**.
- Final As-built Surveys are Required. A final as-built survey, signed and sealed by a licensed professional and dedicated to the property for which the survey has been prepared for, must be submitted to the Construction Official for all new construction, and must include the following:

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| 1. Be site specific | 11. All walls, including elevation of Top-of-Wall and Bottom-of-Wall |
| 2. Address | 12. Accessory structures |
| 3. Block/Lot/Qualifier | 13. Fences |
| 4. Location of all utility services | 14. Easements |
| 5. Foundation location | 15. On premises drainage |
| 6. Building height | 16. Lot lines |
| 7. Zoning setbacks | 17. Any other pertinent data showing final as-built conditions of the property |
| 8. Lot coverage | 18. Be scaled appropriately to be legible. |
| 9. Driveways | |
| 10. Pools | |

- ❑ [Contact the Zoning Officer](#) and request that a FINAL ENGINEERING GRADING INSPECTION be conducted. New Construction, Additions, and Accessory Structures that exceeded 500 square feet required a grading plan and review and thus requires a final engineering approval. [Ord. § 21-65.9C](#)
- ❑ The Borough Engineer will contact the Zoning Officer upon completion of the FINAL ENGINEERING GRADING INSPECTION and submit a report to the Zoning Officer. The Developer will be notified by the Zoning Officer of any deficiencies. [Ord. § 21-108](#)
- ❑ The applicant's or developer's engineer must certify in writing that all improvements have been constructed and installed and are operating in accordance with the approved plans and amendments. This can be accomplished by including this certification as part of the final as-built survey. [Ord. § 21-108](#)
- ❑ [Projects in Floodplains](#): A Final Elevation Certificate prepared by a licensed professional will be required.
 - ☞ If the project is in a V Zone or Coastal A Zone, a V Zone/breakaway wall certification, prepared by a licensed design professional, will be required.
 - ☞ If the grade level (floor within the floodplain) is greater than six (6) feet in height, a [Non-Conversion Agreement](#) must be filed and recorded with the County Clerk and provided to the Construction Official.
- ❑ [Projects in Steep Slopes](#): If your project required a Steep Slope Permit, you must [Contact the Zoning Officer](#) and request that a FINAL ENGINEERING GRADING INSPECTION be conducted. *The inspection fee deposit account shall remain for two years after complete stabilization.* [Ord. § 21-84B.G](#)
- ❑ **Projects part of a subdivision**: Projects of this nature will also involve Escrow Accounts and Performance Guarantees. Special considerations and planning are required in order to establish the require Maintenance Guarantee and plan for the return of any excess escrow funds.
 - ☞ [Ord. § 21-62](#) requires a Maintenance Bond prior to the release of any funds. The closeout procedures for deposits and escrows are regulated by N.J.S.A. 40:55D-53.2d and [Ord. § 21-108](#)
 - ☞ A final bill from the Borough Engineer for outstanding fees will be submitted to the Land Use Board Secretary. Pursuant to ordinance, the Borough Engineer and the Board shall review the maintenance bond; it shall be reviewed by the Borough Attorney as to form, sufficiency and execution and approved by the Borough Council.
- ❑ All communications regarding Escrow Accounts and Performance Guarantees should be directed to the [Land Use Board Secretary](#).

[§ 21-62 MAINTENANCE GUARANTY](#)

Upon completion of all improvements and prior to release of the performance guaranty, the applicant shall file a maintenance guaranty bond amounting to fifteen (15%) percent of the cost of all improvements to guarantee that the completed improvements will be maintained for a stated period not to exceed two (2) years. The Borough Engineer and the Board shall review the maintenance bond; it shall be reviewed by the Borough Attorney as to form, sufficiency and execution and approved by the Borough Council.

The Borough Council will not accept any road or improvement into the municipal system until the maintenance period expires or until after the deficiencies are repaired and then only if it is in the same condition as when certified.

- ❑ Click here for the Borough's [ESCROW ACCOUNT & PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE WORKFLOW](#). This Guide provides guidance on projects that involve escrow accounts and performance guarantees. **NOTE: It is the responsibility of the applicant monitor all expenses and fees paid to Borough professionals.** However, at the applicant's written request and at his cost, an account of the expenses or fees paid by him for professional services shall be provided. Borough professional shall submit vouchers for all services to be assessed against an escrow account, which vouchers shall state the hours spent, the hourly rate and the expenses incurred. [Ord. § 21-108A.7](#)