

**TO: ALL BUILDING DIVISION PERSONNEL**

**FROM: DOUG WISE**  
**BUILDING DIVISION DIRECTOR**

**PREPARED BY: BUILDING DIVISION**

**SUBJECT: PERMIT VALIDITY, DURATION, AND CHANGES**

**PPM #: PB-O-078**

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**ISSUE DATE**  
**June 1, 1992**

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**EFFECTIVE DATE**  
**October 13, 2020**  
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**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide detail on the duration of a building permit, recite procedures to renew permits that are no longer active, give guidelines for re-authorizing work left incomplete from a previous permit, and resolving problems from old permits without routine Final Inspections.

**UPDATES:**

Future updates to this PPM are the responsibility of the Director of the Building Division, Deputy Building Official, Assistant Deputy Building Official, or Codes Product & Training Supervisor, under the authority of the Director of the Building Division.

**AUTHORITY:**

Palm Beach County Construction Permit Fee Schedule, Ordinance 2009-038, as amended; Palm Beach County Unified Land Development Code, Article 10.D.1, as amended; Section 105, Palm Beach County Amendments to the Florida Building Code, as amended.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Active (Valid):** The status of a permit during which construction progress occurs, and inspections can be made. Documented extension requests may be accepted for consideration while a permit is active. No financial advantage results in the assessment of Building Division permit fees for an extension versus a renewal.

**Construction Progress:** The occurrence of physical, onsite activity to place components of a permit structure in place for Building Division inspection.

**File Activity:** An administrative action on a permit that is allowed for certain events, and may allow a time extension to the next inspection, based upon the applicant responding in a timely manner on requests for additional information during the revision process, or if specifically requested by the permit holder while a permit is active. File activity, such as delay in receipt of special threshold

inspector reports, may allow the granting of an extension. All extensions based upon file activity are subject to approval by the building official.

**Inactive (Invalid):** The status of a previously-active permit during which no legal construction progress or inspections may be performed. This status results from the lapsing of the active period.

**Printed (typed):** Administrative action preparing a permit by printing of a permit card or merging of a template for customer download, following approval of all required agency reviews and all requirements applicable to the application being met.

**Issuance (active status):** The date of permit issuance is the date that all fees due on the permit are paid in full and the permit is picked up by the customer, placing the application/permit into active status.

**Last Action:** The last activity date recorded in the Building Division Permit Tracking System on an active permit. The “last action date” is used to calculate permit status as active or not. “Last action” shall include the issuance of a new permit or a valid inspection (Fail or Pass) on an active permit.

**Renewal (Re-validation):** An action taken in response to a permit holder’s written request to restore an Inactive permit to Active status. No change in status occurs until necessary code design updates and inspections, if required, under Section 6 (below) are completed, and fees due are paid.

**Revision:** A modification of design detail on the building or structure on an active permit that requires County review. This may include several changes in the proposed construction, such as a reduction in building dimensions, or changing an architectural or engineering detail that affects the structural work or a component, but revisions specifically exclude substitution of a new floor plan, or relocation to a different parcel under the same permit.

**Valid Inspection:** A field inspection by Building Division Inspectors or Authorized Inspectors to verify construction complies with the applicable code governing the work prior to the work proceeding and/or concealment. A valid inspection may be passed, passed with qualification, or it may fail with corrections required. No general information visit, General Inspection, or apparent unprepared or unrecognized inspection request shall be considered a valid inspection.

## **POLICY:**

Initially, a permit becomes active for six months upon issuance (see Definitions). After all the fees are paid and required documents are received, then construction may begin and inspections may be requested.

Following each valid inspection (Pass or Fail), the active permit status continues for six months from the last valid inspection date.

While a permit is active, an extension of the active status may be resulted in the ePZB automated system, without an inspection, based on specific events of file activity. Examples of such include the payment for a revision that affects the construction process currently underway, or a change of contractor. Also, an extension to the next projected inspection stage may be requested on an active

permit, while it is active, by submission of documentation that construction progress has continued throughout the active permit period, but will not reach the next needed inspection stage within six months of the previous last action date. However, extensions do not negate the assessment of code-prescribed fees. Any extension of a permit before all rough inspections are approved requires payment of any increased Building Division permit fees and/or Impact Fees that may have occurred, in addition to the fee for extension itself.

Failure to keep a permit active within the time limits above shall result in the permit becoming inactive, six months after the date of last action. Renewal of a formerly-active permit to active status shall require an application for renewal, and payment of renewal fees, plus it shall require any incremental increase in Impact Fees and/or Building Permit fees that may have increased. Fees may also be assessed, if it is deemed by the Building Division staff to be necessary to evaluate the age and condition of previously-permitted work, and/or the current code compliance of original plans. Fees for a General Inspection of each trade, and design revision fees, shall be paid when required, prior to the permit renewal being affected. In restoring a formerly-active permit to active status, action shall be taken to ensure that all existing work is structurally sound, all remaining work fully complies with current codes; and all renewal fees, including incremental Impact Fees, Building Permit fees, and other applicable fees, are paid before updating the permit status to active.

Requests to close inactive permits shall be addressed in accordance with PPM PB-O-126.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Data Processing shall issue each permit upon approval of all required reviews. The applicant shall be notified that the permit and any reviewed plans are being held for pick up at the Cashier or are available for download as applicable via the “Printed” status shown on County Web Portal. The initial, six-month active period begins at permit issuance. If a “Printed” application is still awaiting payment of fees due, six months after the date, the application becomes void, and the related application materials are subject to destruction.
2. Upon payment of all required fees to the Cashier, the permit document and any construction plan documents are provided to the applicant either physically or through the Web Portal. Thereafter, onsite inspections may be made during the active life of the permit. Meeting the requirements of the Construction Lien Law (if applicable) and the assessment of any additional fees are other criteria that may affect the continued ability to call for inspections.
3. The permit document may contain warning information to the permit holder concerning the six months of active duration of the permit calculated from the last action date.
4. Each valid inspection (pass or fail), special or threshold inspection, shall be a new date of last action to start another six months of active status for the permit.
5. Failure to keep a permit shall result in the permit going into inactive status, six months after the last action date. After six months of inactive status, the Building Official may require removal of the incomplete construction, per Chapter 1 of the Palm Beach County Amendments to the Florida Building Code.

6. An applicant seeking renewal of an inactive permit on an incomplete building or structure (including swimming pool/spa) shall apply for renewal via completion and submittal of the renewal request form to the Building Division Permit Center. A review fee shall be assessed and an application receipt with tracking number shall be provided to the applicant. Upon payment of the Permit Renewal review fee, a file search and computer analysis of past activities and approved work-in-place is performed. This fee shall not guarantee renewal.

Depending upon the characteristics of the incomplete work and inactive permit, design review may be required, if a code revision has been adopted, affecting the remaining work. A General Inspection (one per trade) may be required to determine what repair work may be necessary to restore old work to code-compliant condition. Repairs considered to be major by an Inspector shall require a design revision submission, prepared by an architect or professional engineer. These reviews, inspections and revisions, if necessary, will result in the assessment of additional fees.

Additional actions and associated fees may be required or generated by a Change of Contractor, any increases in Impact and/or Building Permit Fees, and a new Notice of Commencement shall be required if the Owner changes, or the previous Notice of Commencement is more than one year older than the last action.

A certified, reviewed set of construction plans shall be provided by the applicant for future field inspection use. Directions to the Records Division (561-233-5160) shall be provided, if an applicant must purchase copies of original plan sets to supply with the renewal application.

Upon compliance with the prerequisites and payment of all required fees, the permit renewal shall be processed and completed, or critiques sent back to the applicant.

7. An applicant seeking an extension on a permit shall meet specific criteria of making slow, continual construction progress toward the next inspection, but only during active status. The applicant shall request the extension via a detailed letter with documentation of substantial progress, addressed to the Building Official or designee, referencing the permit number and explaining why the extension is being requested.

Permit extensions shall require payment of any incremental Impact Fees and any incremental Building Division permit fees that have occurred since the issuance date of permit, plus the extension fee. Single-family dwellings may not be subject to incremental Impact Fees if all rough inspections have been passed in accordance with the Palm Beach County Unified Land Development Code.

No extensions shall be granted for lack of progress due to personal (financial) hardship. As a courtesy, denial of such requests shall include information on how inactive permits may be reactivated.

8. Requests from customers for renewal or closure of un-finaled, inactive permits on residential systems, minor, or component work, where NO IMPACT FEES are due, and inspection records confirm ONLY a Final Inspection is required, shall be processed in accordance with PB-O-126.



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**Supersession History**

1. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 01/92
2. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 11/92
3. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 12/99
4. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 03/00
5. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 10/00
6. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 11/00
7. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 03/01
8. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 06/01
9. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 07/01
10. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 06/02
11. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 02/03
12. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 04/03
13. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 05/03
14. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 06/04
15. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 09/04
16. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 11/04
17. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 04/12
18. PPM# PB-O-078, issued 10/20