



# Design Professional Guide: Stamp & Signature Requirements



July 1, 2020

## WHAT REQUIRES SIGNATURE OF A CALIFORNIA PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER OR CALIFORNIA REGISTERED ARCHITECT?

All plans submitted for permit are required to be signed by either a California Professional Engineer or California Registered Architect, except as follows:

### 1. Sections 5537 and 6737 of the California Business & Professions Code:

These sections of the Business & Professions Codes provide the following exceptions for building plans that have been designed in accordance with the Building Code requirements of Division IV of Chapter 23 for conventional light wood-frame construction and tables of limitation for wood frame construction as adopted by the local jurisdiction.

An unlicensed person may prepare plans, drawings or specifications for the following:

- 1.1. Single family dwelling not more than two stories and basement in height.
- 1.2. Multiple dwellings containing no more than four dwelling units and not more than two stories and basement in height; maximum of four dwelling units on any lot.
- 1.3. Garages or other structures appurtenant to single-family dwelling or multiple dwellings not more than two stories and basement in height.
- 1.4. Agricultural and ranch buildings unless the Building Official deems that an undue risk to the public health, safety or welfare is involved.

If any portion of any structure exempted by these sections, deviates from the requirements for conventional light wood-frame construction or tables of limitation for wood frame construction found in Division IV of Chapter 23 of the Building Code as adopted by local jurisdiction, then the building official **shall require** the preparation of plans, drawings, specifications or calculations for that portion by, or under the direct supervision of, a professional engineer or registered architect. The documents for that portion shall bear the stamp and signature of the licensee who is responsible for their preparation.

### 2. Sections 5538 and 6745 of the California Business & Professions Code:

These sections of the California Business & Professions Code does not prohibit any person from furnishing plans for any of the following:

- 2.1. Nonstructural store fronts, interior alterations or additions, fixtures, cabinet work, furniture, or other appliances or equipment.
- 2.2. Any nonstructural work necessary to provide for their installation.

An unlicensed person may not prepare plans for those alterations that will change or affect any components of the structural system or safety of the building or its occupants.

Except as specifically noted above, here are some examples of projects that require plans to be prepared, signed and stamped by a California Professional Engineer or California Registered Architect:

- New buildings, additions to existing buildings
- Projects with interior or exterior structural alterations
- Interior alteration with an occupancy change
- All Group A (Assembly) Occupancies
- All Group E (School and Day Care) Occupancies

- All Group F (Factory and Industrial) Occupancies
- All Group H (Hazardous) Occupancies
- All Group I (Institutional) Occupancies
- All Group R, Division 1, 2 or 6 Occupancies
- Projects with mixed occupancies
- Interior alteration with walls and partitions over 5 feet 9 inches in height or ceiling work which cover a floor area greater than 3,000 square feet, for Groups B, S-1, S-2 or M Occupancies,
- Storage racks over 8 feet in height
- Remodeling projects that creates or alters 1-hr fire rated corridors, fire rated occupancy separations or area separation walls,
- Alteration which changes the means of egress (exit) requirements
- Tanks and vessels
- Nonstructural component or equipment attached to building requiring design per Section 1632.1,
- Remodeling Projects in high-rise (having floors over 75 feet in height) building,
- Lateral force resisting systems utilizing poles embedded in the ground,
- Any project deemed by Building Official to require design by a California Professional Engineer or California Registered Architect.

### **WHAT REQUIRES WET STAMP?**

Title sheet of the calculations, specifications, reports and every sheet of the plans prepared by a registered architect or professional engineer shall bear the seal or stamp (with the expiration date of the license) and signature of the architect or engineer at each (including initial) submittal. Signature and stamp are required on every sheet of the plans, and on the first page or cover sheet of the calculations, specifications and reports.