



# Coaching Appointments

## Commercial Building Code

B-100

City of Tacoma • 747 Market Street, Room 345, Tacoma, WA 98402

Coaching appointments for commercial building code are optional meetings intended for prospective tenants, design professionals, and builder/contractors. The appointment provides an opportunity to ask questions about how your project will need to comply with applicable building codes for permitting. You should request this meeting before you apply for your building permit. This meeting may help identify the options you have to move forward with your project. Once you have an agreement on your options with your Building Reviewer, you can proceed with completing your drawings for a complete building permit application with confidence. This may help you avoid issues or changes later, when they can be more expensive. You should come prepared with a full description of your scope of work and any specific questions you have regarding the code. You should have a basic understanding of building code and the applicable zoning and off-site improvement requirements. This meeting is not a substitute for hiring a professional for your project.

### Why do I need to schedule an appointment?

Commercial projects tend to be complex and often require additional time and information to review, which is why your plans and scope of work are important to provide when you schedule your appointment. This will allow staff time to prepare to answer questions and have a more efficient use of your time at the meeting.

### Can I see any building reviewer?

Yes, in most cases, you may schedule an appointment to see any building code reviewer. However, if you are working on a project and request feedback at different times during submittal and review, we recommend and encourage project conversations with the same reviewer for consistency on that particular project. A request to meet with a specific reviewer may have a shorter or longer wait time depending on that reviewer's availability. If you request to see a different reviewer who is not familiar with the project, he/she may have little or no history on what was previously discussed and must re-learn your project proposal. This may raise new questions and ultimately slows down your project review.

Be sure to keep your own notes of any final code interpretations or agreements, with the Building Reviewer's name and date of your Coaching appointment. Then, submit these notes for reference along with your drawings and other required documents with your building permit application.

### Before you schedule an appointment.

- ✓ By phone, email, or walk-in services:
  1. Check with a Land Use Planner that the proposed use is permissible and does not require any Land Use discretionary permits.
  2. Check with a Site Development reviewer if you are proposing any paving, gravel, parking lot striping, road work, sanitary sewer work, food/beverage production or service, marijuana-related businesses, or other exterior work outside the building.
- ✓ Review the applicable codes and Tip Sheets that relate to your project.
- ✓ Prepare necessary drawings and specific questions you have related to building/fire code.

### What information will I need to provide to schedule an appointment?

- First and last name
- Address of project site
- Full description of project / scope of work
- Phone number (mobile preferred)
- E-mail address
- Specific questions related to building/fire code
- Associated permit numbers, if any
- Depending on project type and questions:
  - Site Plan
  - Floor Plan
  - Drawing Details
  - Associated Calculations

## **How do I schedule an appointment?**

- Option 1: Submit an online request form available at [TacomaPermits.org](http://TacomaPermits.org).
- Option 2: Request in-person at Planning and Development Services.

## **Can I have my plans reviewed and approved at my appointment?**

Plans for minor work that is not associated with a change of use may be able to be reviewed during your appointment. Your engineer will discuss their review of your plans and provide clarification to questions you provided when you scheduled your meeting. If your scope of work and the plans can be reviewed during the appointment, it is possible that a permit can be issued immediately following your appointment.

If at the end of the appointment additional information or other approvals are needed, you will be provided guidance on next steps. If your plan cannot be approved during the appointment but has all the necessary components to begin review, the plan may be assigned a permit file number for staff to continue review outside of the meeting. Typical review will be 2 weeks or less for small projects that are not a change of use and do not involve site work. Projects requiring more complex reviews (such as structural) may take 4-6 weeks to complete a first review.

## **What happens if I need to cancel my appointment?**

Please contact your reviewer by email or phone if you need to cancel. He/she can assist with rescheduling for the next available date.

In the event that your appointment needs to be canceled due to extenuating circumstances (such as staff illness or emergency), you will be contacted by the email address or phone number that you provided when you scheduled the appointment. All efforts will be made to reschedule your appointment as soon as possible for the next available time.

## **What if my project is related to another permit?**

If your permit is related to another permit (such as, deferred submittal, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, demolition), you may be required to schedule an appointment with the staff who reviewed the original or "parent" permit. If an appointment was scheduled with a different reviewer, you may be rescheduled to a different date/time and will be notified by phone or email.

## **Do I need to hire a professional to prepare my plans?**

We strongly recommend that a design professional is hired to prepare your plans. Many projects will require a stamp and signature by a professional designer, architect, or engineer who is licensed in the State of Washington (i.e. projects with a valuation of \$50,000 or more, multifamily buildings of 5 units or more, buildings of over 4,000 sf, or if required by the Building Official).

## **Additional Resources**

### [Tip Sheets](#)

- B-102 Tenant Improvements
- G-105 Restaurants
- G-136 Parking Lot Changes
- G-139 Demolition Permits
- G-205 Drawings
- G-230 Electronic Plan Review
- G-565 Marijuana-Related Businesses

**For more information, contact: City of Tacoma Planning and Development Services**  
**<http://www.tacomapermits.org>, (253) 591-5030**