



Building Department
Planning and Development Division
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519-426-5870 x 6016

Building Department Protocol during COVID-19 “Effective April 20, 2020”

Further to recent events surrounding COVID-19, our level of service delivery has been reviewed and we have established this protocol to maintain service levels at the same time ensuring the safety of staff and customers.

This protocol will be effective Monday April 20, 2020 and will remain in effect through until the Emergency Order has been lifted.

Permit Applications

Building applications can be submitted electronically to permits@norfolkcounty.ca.

1. Accept documents via electronic basis only.
2. Suspend receipt of payments for building permit application. Mail in payments will be accepted where fees have been determined. Otherwise, fees will be collected at a later date.
3. Permits will continue to be reviewed and issued electronically by staff in the normal course.

Important Note:

Please be advised that the issuance of a permit is subject to all other restrictions and prohibitions under the law. The issuance of a permit does not imply that construction can be carried out in contravention of any Act, Regulation and/or provincial order prohibiting construction deemed non-essential. It is recommended that you seek legal opinion to determine whether the project is deemed essential under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA) and its Regulations, as amended, before proceeding with construction. Please further note that Inspections will only be carried out on construction projects deemed essential under the EMCPA and its Regulations, as amended.

Inspections

1. All inspection requests through our phone line 519-426-5870 Ext 4677 (INSP) or email inspection@norfolkcounty.ca will be received by the Division Assistant and entered as usual.
2. If an inspection is required, the Division Assistant will enter the inspection and the inspections will be assigned as usual procedure.
3. In addition to inspections which can be conducted outdoors, on-site inspections will be conducted for “unoccupied” buildings only in the following circumstances:
 - The building **must** be completely vacant at time of inspection; however, if in the opinion of the Inspector it is required, the contractor/owner will be permitted to attend; and
 - The inspector **must** maintain physical distancing of at least **two (2) metres** if anyone else is in attendance; and
 - The inspector will call the contractor/owner prior to arrival for the inspection; and
 - Upon arrival, if more than the contractor/owner is on site, if so prearranged, the inspector will decide whether to wait for the site to be vacated or terminate the inspection and reschedule; and
 - If someone other than those permitted is found to be on site during inspection, the inspection may be discontinued.

Note:

Other options to on-site inspections may be considered on a case by case basis if required, and only where approved by the Chief Building Official (e.g. P.Eng reports, remote inspections, photos, videos etc.)

Occupancy Inspections

Inspectors are not to enter any building where at least **two (2) meter** distancing cannot be maintained due to the presence of trades, workers, limited available space, or other factors. Where technically feasible, virtual inspections using remote video may be considered. All physical inspections of “occupied” buildings are suspended until further notice.

Note:

At all stages of inspections, Inspectors are to communicate clearly with contractors/owner that work cannot progress past a required inspection stage if inspection has not taken place.

Drawings Review on Site

To minimize risk, Inspectors will review drawings in detail while off site to enable them to only check specific items during site inspection. Physical drawings are not to be handled on site by Inspectors unless deemed necessary to perform inspection in which case hand washing and/or sanitizing is to occur immediately after contact. Instead digital drawings should be accessed on laptops or handheld devices where possible.

Physical Distancing

Inspectors shall advise anyone they are meeting with that physical distancing of **two (2) metres** is to be maintained at all times. Site interaction is to be minimized to only critical communications. It is up to each Inspector to make that decision in the field. Sites that are clearly in contravention of physical distancing may be reported to authorities having jurisdiction (i.e. MOL) and the Chief Building Official. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/construction-site-health-and-safety-during-covid-19>