
Builder Licensing

What's Changing?

Beginning December 1, 2017, new requirements will be in effect for residential builders in Alberta. All residential builders will be required to have a provincial builder's licence in order to construct new homes.

After consulting with Albertans earlier this year, amendments were made to the *New Home Buyer Protection Act* to establish licensing requirements for residential builders. Legislation and regulations will come into force December 1, 2017.

Builder licensing will apply to anyone constructing new homes, including condominiums and large multi-family homes, as well as renovations that impact more than 75% of a home's footprint.

Key Dates

December 1, 2017 - Program requirements come into effect. Provisional licences are issued to existing builders in good standing.

March 31, 2018 - All builders, including those with a provisional licence, are encouraged to submit their licence application before this date.

May 1, 2018 - Provisional licences expire. All builders must apply for a licence in order to obtain new building permits and to build new homes in Alberta.

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Home Builder Frequently Asked Questions

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Q. How do I apply for a builder licence?

- Starting December 1, 2017, all applications will be online through the New Home Buyer Protection System.

Q. What are the licensing fees?

- An initial application costs \$600
- Each renewal application costs \$500

Q. How long is the licence valid?

- The licence is valid for one year from the date of issue, unless otherwise stated by the Registrar

Q. How will I know if I am eligible for a provisional licence?

- Builders must be in good standing and must have built at least two homes in Alberta in the last two years in order to be eligible for a provisional licence
- Eligible builders will receive an email from the New Home Buyer Protection Office. The email will be sent to the administrative user identified in their builder profile

Q. If I receive an email about a provisional licence what do I need to do to get the licence?

- There is no application needed. Simply follow the instructions on the email, click on the survey link, and respond to the survey
- Ensure your builder profile is updated, CORES is updated and that the information in CORES aligns with the information in your builder profile

Q. How long is a provisional licence valid?

- A provisional licence will be valid until May 1, 2018

Q. What happens after my provisional licence expires on May 1, 2018?

- All builders will need to apply for a licence in order to obtain building permits.
- It is recommended that builders submit their licence application before March 31, 2018 in advance of the construction season.

Q. What information will I need to provide to apply for a builder licence?

- Provide basic business contact information, as well as contact information for directors
- Identify all associated building companies

- Demonstrate backing by one of the seven warranty providers in Alberta
- Provide information about fraud history, building-related court proceedings, and compliance record with safety and consumer protection legislation
- Provide information about any undischarged bankruptcies, or any arrangements under the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act* that have not been fully satisfied

Q. What is the safety and consumer protection legislation that I will be asked about?

- *New Home Buyer Protection Act*
- *Safety Codes Act*
- *Condominium Property Act*
- *Fair Trading Act*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
- Similar legislation of another province or country

Q. Are there different classes of licence?

- Yes. There are two classes of licence: Developer and General Contractor.

Q. Who is a licensed developer?

- An individual or organization involved in constructing complex residential buildings that are more than four units and more than three storeys in height. This is where the Alberta Building Code requires involvement of a coordinating registered professional
- A licensed developer is not a land developer

Q. What can a licensed developer do?

- Arrange for construction of a new home on land they own or land that someone else owns
- Construct, arrange for or manage the construction of a complex residential building requiring a coordinating registered professional
- The Alberta Building Code requires that complex residential buildings must have a coordinating registered professional who is responsible for the integrity and completeness of design and field review of a project.

Q. What is a complex residential building?

- Residential homes larger than 600 m², more than 3 storeys, and more than 4 units
- Other residential homes may require a coordinating registered professional if the complexity of the building requires it, which is typically determined by a building safety codes officer during plans review.

Q. Who is a licensed general contractor?

- A general contractor is involved with constructing residential buildings that are one to four units and less than three storeys in height. This is where the Alberta Building Code does not require involvement of a coordinating registered professional.

- General contractors can be hired by a licenced developer to construct complex residential buildings.

Q. Who is exempt from builder licensing requirements?

- Owner Builders constructing their own home are not required to apply for a builder licence but will need to apply to the Registrar for an Owner Builder Authorization.
- Some charitable organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity, are exempt from builder licensing. The focus of builder licensing is regulating those in the business of being a builder.

Q. Do builder licensing requirements apply to renovations?

- Only when a residential construction project requires new home warranty coverage will the renovator need to have a builder licence. All other renovation activities would not fall within the scope of builder licensing.

Q. Is builder licensing in place in other provinces?

- Yes. Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia have builder licensing programs in place.

Q. Where can I go for more information, or help with my licence application?

- You can contact our office by emailing builderlicensing@gov.ab.ca or calling 1-866-421-6929 
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