



# Development Services

## Service First Bulletin # 303

### THIRD-PARTY PLAN REVIEW AND INSPECTION PROCESS

#### PURPOSE

This Service First Bulletin (SFB) is intended to inform customers of the process for requesting approval and utilizing an approved/registered third-party agent. This change is intended to align the Development Services Department (DSD) permitting processes with Texas House Bill 14 and allow applicants to hire their own independent plan review and inspection agents. This process is effective September 1, 2023, and only affects permits submitted on or after this date. Permits submitted prior to this date would not qualify for the use of an approved/registered third-party agent.

#### SCOPE

Texas House Bill 14 went into effect September 1st, 2023, and now allows applicants to hire their own third-party agents to perform document review or inspections associated with a development including plat review, plan reviews, and development permits. An owner or an authorized agent may hire and contract with an approved/registered third-party agency if DSD fails to “Approve”, “Conditionally Approve,” or “Deny” a plat, plan review, or inspection after 15 days of the currently established State mandated 45-day “Shot Clock.” House Bill 14 allows owners and authorized agents to hire and contract with an approved/registered third-party agent once the permitting “Shot Clock” reaches 60 days without City action.

The Department has established [Plan Review Performance Goals](#) based on the complexity, size, and occupancy classification of permit applications to ensure the State mandated performance requirement of 60 days to “Approve,” “Conditionally Approve,” or “Deny” a development related permit application/document is met or exceeded. DSD Performance Goals and Metric outcomes are reported monthly and are set to communicate the expected plan review turnaround timelines and to ensure compliance with State Law.

## QUALIFYING THIRD-PARTY AGENTS

The Building Official is responsible for administrating the City of Dallas adopted Codes to ensure safe and sustainable buildings meet the minimum safety requirements. In addition, the Building Official processes all permit applications, plat applications, plan reviews, related inspections, and any registration programs to ensure compliance. Applicants seeking to become an approved DSD third-party agent shall submit a registration application and meet the established policies, experience minimums, qualifications, professional education, accreditation, licensing, insurance standards, quality control, documentation, and agreements set by the Building Official. Please visit DSD's Third-Party Agent Service First Bulletin which outlines registration requirements.

If the Department fails to meet the new 60-day review and inspection times mandated by State Law, an applicant or authorized agent may submit to the Building Official any development document reviewed or inspected by any of the following approved/registered agents:

- Third-Party Agent employed/contracted by the City to perform plan review or inspections
- Third-Party Agent from another political subdivision approved by the Department
- Texas Licensed Professional Engineer

## SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS AND FEES

Owners or authorized agents shall notify the Building Official in writing if they secure the review or inspection services of an approved/registered third-party agent. All third-party plan review and inspection fees are the owner's responsibility, shall be initiated and contracted by the owner, and shall be paid directly to the approved/registered third-party agent by the owner.

**Note:** Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners Licensing Law Section 1301.255(e) "Adoption of Plumbing Code" prohibits the direct inspection contract between an owner and a third-party plumbing inspection agent. An approved/registered agent shall perform all third-party plumbing inspections contracted directly through the City of Dallas and must be paid by the City.

The applicant or any person whose work is subject to the application may not perform a review or inspection. All third-party approved/registered agents shall submit final documentation with the following notes, "Approved/Reviewed for Compliance" or "Approved/Inspected for Compliance". These statements shall mean the review or inspection service performed by an approved/registered third-party agent meets all the minimum and most current City of Dallas Code and Code Amendments. In addition, it means that all deficiencies found during the performance of the technical review/inspection process were corrected and brought into compliance. When an owner

or authorized agent elects to utilize an approved/registered third-party agent, the responsible third-party agent shall provide written notice to the Building Official of all review and inspection results associated outcomes within 15 days of rendering services.

DSD will not assess fees associated with plan review (or inspections) if an owner utilizes a third-party agent to perform these services. However, DSD will charge the “permit” and “inspection” fees as applicable. The City will not be held responsible for any refunds or payments to a third-party agent, engineer, architect, contractor, consultant, inspector, developer, or applicant for fees paid by or to a third-party agent. DSD currently has approved the following third-party agents, which may be utilized if the Department fails to meet the new HB14 60-day requirement. Please check the link below: [https://dallascityhall.com/departments/sustainabledevelopment/DCH%20documents/approved-third-party-plan-review/Third-Party\\_Registered\\_Vendors.pdf](https://dallascityhall.com/departments/sustainabledevelopment/DCH%20documents/approved-third-party-plan-review/Third-Party_Registered_Vendors.pdf)

## **SUMMARY**

The Department seeks responsive customer service, consistent permit delivery, and quick permit turnaround times. In addition, the Department seeks to comply with all applicable State Laws and is committed to communicating new processes and procedures with its customers. If you have any questions or concerns related to this Bulletin, please feel free to email the Director at [buldingofficial@dallas.gov](mailto:buldingofficial@dallas.gov)

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