

City of Tempe
Community Development Department, Development Services Division

Registered Design Professional Required

Plans and other design and construction documents submitted to the Community Development Department for projects requiring a building permit shall be stamped (sealed), signed and dated by a registered design professional¹.

Exceptions: Plans and construction documents for the following types of projects are generally not required to be designed and sealed by a registered design professional:

1. **Detached single-family dwelling, duplex or townhome (New, remodel or addition to)** complying with all of the following:
 - The use and construction conforms to the prescriptive requirements of the IRC⁴,
 - Any structural design, calculations and details demonstrate conformance with accepted engineering practices for any non-prescriptive construction and
 - Trusses and other engineered structural components are designed by an engineer registered in Arizona
2. **Commercial⁷ – New Construction** complying with all of the following:
 - Building is a maximum of 2 stories and 30 feet in height above grade,
 - Building area measured at the outside surface of exterior walls is 3,000 square feet or less,
 - Design occupant load is 20 persons or less as defined in the IBC³, and
 - Structural members span 20 feet⁶ or less
3. **Commercial⁷ – Additions and Alterations:**
 - Additions and alterations are subject to the same limitations as noted above for New Construction, except the area limit may be exceeded by a one-time addition having a gross floor area of 1,500 square feet or less (measured at the outside surface of exterior walls), and intended for storage use only
4. **Commercial⁷ – Tenant Improvements:**
 - Construction of walls or reconfiguration of spaces within the same existing occupancy classification limited to Group A, B, E, F, M, R, S or U as defined in the IBC³,
 - Changes of occupancy group within the same or to a lesser hazard category than the current use, as defined in the IBC³ or IEBC⁵,
 - Changes to fire-rated construction or to the number of exits from the space that are not required by the IBC³
 - Changes in designed occupant load within an existing occupancy group (no increase < 100 occupants)
5. **Residential or Commercial – Miscellaneous:**
 - Freestanding walls, fences or combination thereof, not exceeding 6'-0" in height above adjacent grade
 - Retaining walls which are not over 4'-0" in height measured from the bottom of the footing to top of the wall, provided the wall is not supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II or III-A liquids
 - Electrical design and installation of service equipment, distribution panels and sub-panels where:
 - Not a series-rated designed system, or
 - 300 Amperes or less for 120/240 volts, single phase circuits and fault current is 10,000 AIC or less, or
 - 225 Amperes or less for 120/208 volts, 3 phase circuits, and fault current is 10,000 AIC or less or
 - Not serving a hazardous occupancy or location as defined in the NEC² or IBC³, or
 - Not serving a hospital or other health care facility having surgical operating rooms

The Building Official is authorized to require that plans be prepared by a registered design professional for a project, or waive the requirement, when warranted by the scope of the work proposed.

Footnotes:

1. Registered Design Professional: Architect, Engineer or other professional discipline registered or licensed to practice in the State of Arizona, and performing professional services within the scope of their registration or license.
2. NEC: National Electrical Code as amended by the City of Tempe.
3. IBC: International Building Code as amended by the City of Tempe.
4. IRC: International Residential Code as amended by the City of Tempe.
5. IEBC: International Existing Building Code as amended by the City of Tempe.
6. A span greater than 20 feet is permissible where the structural member and those structural elements necessary to carry the design loads down to and including the foundation, are designed by a registered design professional.
7. Commercial buildings exclude detached single-family dwellings, duplexes and townhomes as described in Exception #1.