

Third-Party Plans Examination and Inspection FAQ

This document is provided to answer common questions about the new third-party regulations effective October 1, 2024. If you have specific questions for a local jurisdiction, please contact the local jurisdiction. If you have specific questions for the State Fire Marshal's Office ("SFMO"), please contact Director Chris Bainbridge at Christopher.bainbridge@tn.gov.

Q. *How do I register as a Third-Party Plans Examiner or Inspector?*

A. Complete the form stack (Apply for SFMO Registry) and submit required documents [here](#).

Q. *Will a Third-Party registry be available online?*

A. A registry is available here (*link will be provided at a later date*).

Q. *How does the Third-Party process work?*

A. Under currently-adopted rule and law, the new third-party regulations only apply in exempt jurisdictions. A list of exempt jurisdictions may be found [here](#). In exempt jurisdictions, a designer or contractor may choose to use a registered third-party for plans examinations or inspections. The jurisdiction determines the documents required for submission.

For plans review, the following documentation shall be provided:

- a) The building name, the intended address, and the local jurisdiction of the structure;
- b) The third-party's name and registration number;
- c) A sworn statement under penalty of perjury by the third-party declaring that the plans comply with the applicable codes and that no deficiencies remain;
- d) A statement of the applicable codes of the local jurisdiction and the codes used to perform the plans examination;
- e) The occupancy classification of the structure; and
- f) Other information as the SFMO may require.

For inspections, the following documentation shall be provided:

- a) A copy of any building inspection report for the structure;
- b) Any approved plans and fire safety codes;
- c) The building name, location, and jurisdiction of the structure;
- d) The third-party plans inspector's name and registration number;

- e) The type of inspection conducted;
- f) A sworn statement under penalty of perjury by the third-party that states no deficiencies of the applicable codes were identified or identifies all deficiencies of the applicable code;
- g) A statement of the applicable codes of the local jurisdiction;
- h) The occupancy classification for which the structure was inspected; and
- i) Other information as the SFMO may require.

The jurisdiction then has ten (10) business days to respond to the submission. The jurisdiction's response will state whether the documents are approved, denied for noncompliance, or if more information is needed.

If the local jurisdiction does not respond within ten (10) business days, the third-party may then submit to the SFMO here (*effective October 1, 2024 link will be provided then*). The SFMO then has ten (10) business days to respond. The SFMO's response will include whether the documents are approved, denied for noncompliance, or if more information is needed.

- Q. *May a contractor proceed with work after a Third-Party submission is made?*
- A. A local jurisdiction determines whether work may proceed. Caution should be taken because work that is covered may have to be uncovered to allow access for inspection.
- Q. *If a Third-Party is used for an inspection, does the entire building project have to use Third-Parties?*
- A. If the person requesting the inspection has not hired a third-party to conduct that inspection and subsequent inspections, the third-party statute does not govern the inspection process.

If the person requesting the inspection utilizes a third-party for an inspection and all subsequent inspections, a local jurisdiction must then follow the statutory requirements for third-party inspections found at Tennessee Code Annotated § 68-120-101(k).



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