

Understanding the building consent process

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Councils grant building consent applications when they are confident your proposed work will meet the requirements of the Building Code.

If the application:

- is incomplete, they will ask you for the missing information
- is complete, it will be accepted for review.

From the point your council receives your complete application, it has 20 working days to process your application (as set out in the Building Act). How long it actually takes within that 20 days can vary and might depend on:

- whether you make a good application (easily understood and accurate)
- the complexity of your project.

Your application might also be reviewed by building officials with specific skills and knowledge, such as building, plumbing and drainage, structural and resource management.

Request for more information

You will receive a request for information (RFI) letter if more supporting information is required once your application is underway. Your application will be suspended while you get the information and the suspension period will not count as part of the 20 days (it's sometimes referred to as "stopping the clock").

If you do need to provide additional information, you might be charged an additional fee for it to be reviewed or assessed. Try to avoid delays or extra costs by making a good application in the first instance.

[The building process diagram \(https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent/#diagram\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent/#diagram)

Amending your plan

If your plans change and you need to amend your consent after it has been granted, your council can again take up to 20 days to process the request.

You will be charged a fee to review or assess the amended plan.

It's a good idea to thoroughly review your plans at this stage, to avoid delays and additional costs.

[Making changes to your plans \(https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/build-to-the-consent/making-changes-to-your-plans/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/build-to-the-consent/making-changes-to-your-plans/)

New Zealand Fire Service notification

The council has to notify the New Zealand Fire Service about some building projects, particularly if there is to be an alteration, change of use or subdivision that affects a building's fire safety systems. This can include building work on a specified system related to fire safety, such as a

sprinkler system or fire walls.

The Fire Service has 10 working days to advise of any specific fire-related requirements, such as ensuring means of escape. Your application will not be suspended during this time and the council can grant your application if it doesn't receive any information from the Fire Service within the time period.

Start and end dates

You need to start your building work within 12 months of receiving your building consent, or your consent will lapse.

If you need an extension, talk to your council before the 12 month timeframe is up. If the consent has lapsed and you still want to do the work, you will have to re-apply for a consent.

You have two years to complete your building work, starting from the day the consent is granted, unless you agree otherwise with your council.

Within the two years (or at the end of an agreed period), your council has to decide whether to grant a code compliance certificate or take another regulatory path.

Paying fees

You will need to pay all fees as requested to avoid your project being delayed or your consent application declined.

Local councils

Will have specific information related to your region.

Find your local council (<http://www.localcouncils.govt.nz>)



New Zealand Government

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