

3-25-2020



## **COVID-19 Inspection Protocols**

In response to the COVID-19 virus, Permit and Development Center inspection staff shall follow protocols identified in this document effective immediately:

### **Inspections Protocol**

- Inspectors shall not conduct inspections in rental or multi-family dwelling units, unless they are unoccupied or new construction.
- Inspectors shall not enter occupied residential structures to conduct inspections. The following can be used as alternatives for occupied residential structures:
  - Exterior inspections such as sewer & water replacements, exterior electrical installations, and other exterior work may continue to be conducted. Contractors shall maintain at least a 20-foot distance from inspection staff.
  - Interior inspections of occupied residential structures may be conducted using alternative methods such as digital photos or Facetime video calls.
- All in-person inspections at **occupied** hospitals and healthcare facilities are suspended until further notice.
  - Critical work being conducted at healthcare facilities shall be allowed to proceed. Inspectors shall work with contractors to find creative solutions to make this happen. Inspection by video, photo, or other means is supported and encouraged. Exceptions to this rule can be made if there is a direct entrance to the work area. Please use extreme caution and communicate with the Deputy Building Official for further direction.

### **Inspection requirements**

- Inspectors shall conduct inspections alone. Personnel on site shall vacate areas to be inspected until the inspector is gone. If a contractor is close enough to have a conversation with an inspector, the contractor is too close.
- Inspectors shall minimize exposure to other people on construction sites, and shall maintain a minimum 20-foot separation distance from personnel who are on site at the time of inspections.
- Inspectors may communicate with contractors using the universal thumbs up/thumbs down sign to indicate inspection results. Inspectors shall further communicate inspection results via phone or email to those not able to see the thumbs up sign and to those who get a thumbs down.

- Contractors shall minimize the number of personnel on site at the time of inspections and shall provide inspectors a 20-foot distance from any personnel who must be on site at the time of inspection.
- Inspections sites shall be ready for inspection prior to the inspector's arrival with no personnel on any of the areas where the inspector will go. No personnel shall be in contact with the inspector once they arrive until the time they leave the construction site. Results will be communicated via phone or email. Inspection results can also be found at [Search for Permits](#).
- Plumbing groundwork and sewer, water, storm inspections shall be ready with testing in place at the time of inspection. Tests shall be conducted with the inspector maintaining a 20-foot distance from others or be provided video evidence of the test. Inspectors shall not be in trenches pulling test bulbs, etc.
- Plumbing contractors are responsible to test piping and correct deficiencies. Coordinate with plumbing inspectors on how to verify/ document pipe testing, etc.
- Plumbing/Mechanical contractors are responsible for pressure testing gas lines and correcting deficiencies. Coordinate with inspectors on how to verify gas pressure tests.

### **Inspection Scheduling**

- Construction inspection scheduling remains the same. Please call the inspector's voicemail to set up a time. Inspectors are regularly checking their voicemail throughout the day.
- If you need to locate your inspector and contact information, please use the [Show Me My House](#) function on our website. You can find the link [here](#).
- Inspections will be scheduled daily, but the inspections must adhere to the inspection protocols that are listed above. This includes having the inspector be the only one at the construction site, social distancing of at least 20 feet, etc.

Additional information can be found at [dsm.city/pdc](https://dsm.city/pdc) or emailing [permits@dmgov.org](mailto:permits@dmgov.org)

### **Fire Prevention Bureau Inspections**

New construction inspection scheduling remains the same. Inspections shall be scheduled through a DMFD administrative assistant at 515-283-4222 and required supporting information can be sent to [firedept@dmgov.org](mailto:firedept@dmgov.org).

We are asking that any inspection that can be done remotely do so utilizing a video feed from the site with facetime or similar. The inspector will follow up with the inspection contact person to discuss and make these arrangements.

When that is not possible arrangements should be made to clear the area of testing of personnel not essential to the inspection to limit the group size and allow for compliance with separation guidelines. If neither of these can be met we ask the inspection to reschedule to a time when a remote inspection or limiting personnel can be arranged.

Des Moines inspections tags and inspection personnel permitting and testing is suspended, consistent with the states suspensions of similar.

Food truck owners and operators are being asked to self-inspect to the requirements of FPB policy 2016-1 and sign a copy of that policy until FPB inspections resume. (link to policy below)

[https://www.dsm.city/document\\_center/Fire/Forms%20and%20Documents/2016-1%20Mobile%20Vendors.pdf?pdf=2016-1%20Mobile%20Vendors&t=1585065894508](https://www.dsm.city/document_center/Fire/Forms%20and%20Documents/2016-1%20Mobile%20Vendors.pdf?pdf=2016-1%20Mobile%20Vendors&t=1585065894508)

New submittals should be mailed when possible. When not possible they may be dropped in the submittal basket in the vestibule of the AMT> it is not necessary to enter the AMT, consistent with city guidelines to limit traffic within public buildings. Smaller projects that meet the Wednesday walk-in service constraints may be emailed. Expanded electronic submittal processes are being explored updates to follow.