



Permit & Development Center

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You must submit plans for a new or replacement deck or porch before a building permit can be issued. The plans will be examined by a plan examiner to ensure they conform to the State of Wisconsin's Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) and Milwaukee's building and zoning codes.

Plan evaluation

Here are some items a Plan Examiner reviews when evaluating porch and deck plans:

- Decks 24" or more above ground level must be equipped with guardrails as specified in the [State of Wisconsin building code](#). Stairs leading to decks must comply with the building code.
- Porches and decks in the front yard must comply with front and side setbacks for the house. **Front setbacks** are determined by measuring the adjacent property's existing setbacks along with maximum or minimums set by the zoning code. Typically decks/stoops less than 12" above grade in the front yard need not comply with setbacks.

Submitting plans

Walk-in service is available for the review of deck and porch plans.

You need to bring the following materials when you apply for a building permit:

1. Two copies of a certified survey of your property OR a scaled drawing or site plan that shows where the deck or porch will be located.
2. Two sets of plans for the deck or porch, drawn to scale, that show:
 - a. The size and height of the deck or porch
 - b. The type of construction (beam size and spans, size and spacing of joist, decking material, etc.)
 - c. Footing size and placement
 - d. Steps, guardrails, railings, etc.
 - e. Cost of deck or porch

Fees are based on the cost of materials and labor to build the project, excluding the cost of HVAC, electrical, plumbing, furniture, equipment, and decorating cost. [Click here](#) for current plan review and permit fees.

Associated permits

If your project involves installing a new *service door or patio door* to access the new deck, that work must be included on your deck or porch permit. If you need to demolish an old porch you may also be required to take out a *demolition permit*.