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Please Quote Ref: CBA0646/062326

PRESS RELEASE

The Central Building Authority (CBA) of the Ministry of Infrastructure, Development and Housing (MIDH) wishes to address recent public claims regarding application submissions:

1. The CBA opened its office on April 1st, 2009, with the following requirements in place:

- I. Private buildings with less than one thousand (1,000) sq. ft. and no more than one (1) storey do not require the signature of an architect or engineer; however, the technician preparing and submitting the documents must stamp and sign each page, indicating acceptance of responsibility for the accuracy and correctness of the information.

EXCEPTION: Depending on the building's complexity and use, the CBA reserves the right to require that plans and specifications for certain buildings under one thousand (1,000) sq. ft. be prepared, designed, stamped, and signed by an architect registered with the Association of Professional Architects of Belize (APAB) and/or a civil or structural engineer registered with the Association of Professional Engineers of Belize (APEB).

- II. For private buildings between one thousand (1,000) and three thousand (3,000) sq. ft., with up to two (2) storeys, the CBA requires that plans and specifications be prepared, designed, stamped, and signed by either an architect registered with the Association of Professional Architects of Belize (APAB) or a civil or structural engineer registered with the Association of Professional Engineers of Belize (APEB).
- III. For all public buildings, regardless of size, and for all buildings with three thousand (3,000) sq. ft. or more and/or more than two (2) storeys, the CBA requires that plans and specifications be prepared, designed, stamped, and signed by both an architect registered with the Association of Professional Architects of Belize (APAB) and a civil or structural engineer registered with the Association of Professional Engineers of Belize (APEB).

2. On December 2, 2022:

By Belize Building Regulations, Statutory Instrument No 157 of 2022 “the REGULATIONS” made by the Central Building Authority after consultation with the local authorities, in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by sections 9(3), 20(4) and 37 of the Belize Building Act, Chapter 131 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2020, and all other powers thereunto it enabling. (Gazetted 2nd December, 2022)

SCHEDULE Form of specifications re application for building permit.

[Section 13]

10. where an application is in relation to a building that is less than one thousand two hundred (1,200) sq. ft. – (a) drawings that are at a minimum, stamped and signed by a technician, an Associate or Student Member registered under the Professional Architects (Registration) Act or the Professional Engineers (Registration) Act; or (b) conform with any building codes deemed relevant by the Authority;

11. the plans submitted with the application may be endorsed by a technician only where the application is in relation to a conventional bungalow.

12. where a building is between one thousand and two hundred (1200) square feet and three thousand square feet and two stories high or less, the plans and specifications shall be prepared, designed, and certified by an architect or Civil or Structural engineer;

13. where a building is– (a) a public building; (b) over three thousand square feet (3000); or (c) more than two floors high, the plans and specifications shall be prepared, designed, and certified by an architect and a Civil or Structural engineer;

14. where a building is – (a) more than two floors high; or (b) more than thirty (30) feet or 9.14 meters high, verification, via structural calculations, of structural adequacy.

15. where the application is in relation to a steel structure– (a) adequate connection details, for all elements of the building; (b) structural calculations, to verify adequacy of the structure against natural disasters as may be applicable depending on the location of the property; and (c) endorsement of the plan, by a civil or structural engineer.

3. On April 20, 2026, the CBA released the following:

The Central Building Authority (CBA) hereby informs stakeholders that, effective May 1, 2026, all submitted building plans must include a formal title block in accordance with the following specifications.

For this notice, “non-complex” in relation to a conventional bungalow means a structure that is not elevated, does not have a concrete roof, and has a basic hip or gable roof with spans under 20 feet.

The title block requirements are as follows:

- Bungalow buildings up to 1,200 sq. ft.:
The submission must include the title block of the technician who prepared the drawings.
- Buildings between 1,200 sq. ft. and 3,000 sq. ft.:
Submission must carry the title block of a registered professional, either an Architect or an Engineer.
- Buildings greater than 3,000 sq. ft.:
Two professionals must endorse the submission. The drawings must include the title block of a registered professional (Architect or Engineer) and provide space within the title block to identify the second professional.

The Central Building Authority will also require the Tax TIN and will not accept any Building Plans that lack the proper Title Blocks.

The Central Building Authority (CBA) has clarified that its requirements for building permit applications have remained consistent for many years and are governed by the Belize Building Act, Chapter 131, Revised Edition 2020, and the Belize Building Regulations, 2022, No. 157 of 2022. Qualified technicians may submit applications for small, non-complex residential buildings. In contrast, larger, more complex, public, or multistory buildings must be designed and certified by registered architects and/or engineers, depending on their size and use.

IMPORTANTLY, THE 2022 BUILDING REGULATIONS EXPANDED, RATHER THAN REDUCED, THE SCOPE OF PROJECTS THAT TECHNICIANS MAY SUBMIT BY INCREASING THE MAXIMUM SIZE OF QUALIFYING CONVENTIONAL BUNGALOW APPLICATIONS FROM 1,000 SQ. FT. TO 1,200 SQ. FT.