



CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE THIRD-PARTY PLANS REVIEW PROGRAM MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION TO THIRD-PARTY REVIEW PROGRAM

This manual outlines the regulations, qualifications, and procedures for Third-Party Plan Review Agencies and Third-Party Plans Reviewers for the City of Albuquerque. The City of Albuquerque's Third-Party Plan Review Agency Program allows qualified agencies and their associated reviewers to conduct plan reviews for construction projects on behalf of building permit applicants. The goal of this program is to offer applicants the option of independently contracting with an approved, qualifying agency for plan review while ensuring compliance with construction codes and the highest professional standards.

AUTHORITY FOR A THIRD-PARTY PLANS REVIEW AGENCY AND THIRD-PARTY PLANS REVIEWERS

This program is established under the 2024 Uniform Administrative Code (UAC), Section 110.4.¹ The City of Albuquerque's UAC allows applicants for "building permits shall have the option of providing for a Third-Party Plans Reviewer or Third-Party Plans Review Agency, at the applicant's expense, to perform a code compliance review of the project" provided that the agency and reviewer have been approved by the Certified Building Official.²

QUALIFICATIONS OF THIRD-PARTY PLAN REVIEW AGENCIES AND THIRD-PARTY REVIEWERS

To apply for a Third-Party Plan Review Agency with associated Third-Party Plan Reviewers, applicants must demonstrate minimum qualifications, training, experience, and reliability.³ In addition, a Third-Party Plan Review Agency must provide proof of professional liability insurance; affirm no conflicts of interest; and attest that it employs either a New Mexico licensed architect or engineer who directly oversees qualified Third-Party Plan Reviewers.

Minimum Qualifications, Training, Experience and Reliability Requirements

Qualifications for Third-Party Plan Review Agencies and Reviewers are established by the UAC and the Certified Building Official.⁴ To receive approval, the minimum requirements must be demonstrated:

1. Each Third-Party Plans Reviewer who reviews construction documents shall possess the appropriate licenses and/or certifications and expertise in order to review the type of

¹ [2024-uac-adopted.pdf](#)

² Section 110.4.

³ Section 110.4.1.

⁴ *Id.*

documents being reviewed and shall submit evidence annually that his or her license and/or certification is valid.

2. Each Third-Party Plans Review Agency shall have adequate staff with the appropriate licenses and/or certifications and expertise to review the types of construction documents that they propose to review. All approved submitted construction documents shall bear the stamp and signature of the approving reviewer for the respective discipline. Each page shall also be stamped with the supervising New Mexico licensed architect or engineer.
3. Each Third-Party Plans Review Agency shall include at least one registered architect or professional engineer licensed in the State of New Mexico who shall act as the professional in charge of the review and who shall certify the plan reviews performed by the agency. Any person working for the agency who is not so licensed shall work under the direct supervision of an architect or professional engineer who holds a current registration in the State of New Mexico.
4. Each Plans Reviewer who reviews construction documents under this section, either as a Third-Party Plans Reviewer or as a member of a Plans Review Agency, shall have an acceptable level of expertise and experience in the performance of code compliance reviews in the disciplines for which he or she is seeking certification, which shall include at a minimum: possession of a current ICC certification as a plans reviewer, or a certifying agency recognized by ICC, IAPMO or NFPA, in the discipline or disciplines in which the Reviewer is applying to perform reviews.
5. Such additional requirements, as the Building Official may impose from time to time, to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the plans reviewers and the plan reviews conducted. See *Table 1: Qualifications for Third-Party Professionals*.

Table 1: Qualifications for Third-Party Professionals

	Review Type	Required Certifications	Education	Experience
Commercial	Structural/ Architectural	ICC B3, ICC 21 and ICC 78	Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in construction, or architectural engineering	Four (4) years of experience in Quality Control, Quality Assurance, Building Inspection, Drafting, Plan Drawings, or Plan Review of Accessory Structures, Detail Designs, Shop Drawings, Residential, Commercial, or Industrial Buildings.
Commercial	Mechanical	IAMPO MPE & ICC 78		
Commercial	Plumbing	IAMPO PPE & ICC 78		
Commercial	Electrical	ICC E3 & ICC 78		
Residential	Structural/ Architectural	ICC R3 & ICC 79		

Insurance Coverage Requirements

Third-Party Plan Review Agencies are required to provide proof of a minimum of \$1,000,000 in both Commercial General Liability and Errors and Omissions coverage as part of the application packet. If any changes to insurance occurs, Third-Party Plan Review Agencies must report such change and provide proof of current coverage within 15 calendar days. Failure to maintain insurance or provide notification of changes may result in immediate removal from the program.

Conflict of Interest

Strict conflict of interest provisions are in place to ensure impartiality in plan reviews. Third-Party Plan Review Agencies and Reviewers are prohibited from conducting plan reviews for any project that agency or reviewer has an interest in.

A Third-Party Plan Review Agency or Third-Party Reviewers shall not perform plan review on a project which might present a conflict of interest due to their association with the project or to their relationship or association with other parties or individuals involved with the project, its design or construction.⁵

Non-Discrimination Notice

The City of Albuquerque is committed to equal opportunity and non-discrimination. The City of Albuquerque complies with applicable federal, state, and local civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, religion, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity, spousal affiliation or sex.

DUTIES OF THIRD-PARTY PLAN REVIEW AGENCIES AND THIRD-PARTY REVIEWERS

To be certified as an approved Third-Party Plan Review Agency or Third-Party Reviewer, the applicant shall apply through the City of Albuquerque's portal, ABQ-PLAN, and provide all necessary information and documentation to demonstrate satisfaction of the minimum qualifications, training, experience, and reliability.

The Third-Party Plan Review Agency, Professional-in-Charge, and Third-Party Reviewer shall amend a pending certification application or a certification approval to notify the Building Official of any changes in material information submitted in the application upon which the approval and certification is based, including, but not limited to, changes in personnel identified in the application or changes in licensing, registration, or certification status.

⁵ UAC Section 110.4.4.

Duty of New Mexico Licensed Architect or Engineer to Supervise Third-Party Reviewers

Each Third-Party Plan Review Agency shall include at least one registered architect or professional engineer licensed in the State of New Mexico who shall act as the “Professional- in-Charge” of the review and who shall certify the plan reviews performed by the agency. Any person working for the agency who is not so licensed shall work under the direct supervision of an architect or professional engineer who holds a current registration in the State of New Mexico. The Professional-in-Charge shall stamp each page of all plan reviews as well as sign the final report indicating that the plans meet or exceed relevant codes.

Duty to Update Application for Personnel Changes

If there is a change in professional staff, an applicant for certification or an approved Third-Party Plan Review Agency is required to notify the Certified Building Official or designee. The Third-Party Plan Review Agency and Third-Party Reviewer shall amend a pending certification application or a certification approval to notify the Building Official of any changes in material information submitted in the application upon which the approval and certification is based, including, but not limited to, changes in personnel identified in the application or changes in licensing, registration, or certification status. Such changes must be reviewed and approved by the City of Albuquerque before the Third-Party Agency’s authorization can be modified to add a Third-Party Reviewer. In the event that the Third-Party Plan Review Agency changes its Professional-in-Charge, all reviews must stop until an approved Professional-in-Charge has been established. Failure to update information, including, but not limited to personnel changes, may subject to Third-Party Plan Review Agency or Plan Reviewer to revocation.

APPLICATION FOR THIRD-PARTY PLAN REVIEW AGENCIES AND THIRD-PARTY REVIEWERS

Application Submission for Third-Party Program

Both Third-Party Plan Review Agencies and Third-Party Plan Reviewers must submit an application to participate in the Third-Party Program.

- Applications must be submitted electronically in the ABQ-PLAN portal. See *Appendix A* for application instructions.
- For Third-Party Plan Review Agency applications, the required information includes the agency details, the designated Professional-in-Charge and an affidavit acknowledging the duty to supervise the Third-Party Plan Reviewers along with a copy of the Professional-in-Charge’s credentials and up-to-date stamp, the name of Third-Party Plan Reviewers, affirmation regarding No Conflict of Interest, and proof of insurance.
- For Professional-in-Charge packets, the required information includes the name of the agency they are associated with, an affidavit acknowledging the duty to supervise the

Third-Party Plan Reviewers along with a copy of the Professional-in-Charge's credentials and up-to-date stamp, the types of reviews they are qualified to undertake, affirmation regarding No Conflict of Interest, and documentation of the required credentials and schooling.

- For Third-Party Plan Reviewer packets, the required information includes the name of the agency they are associated with, the types of reviews they are qualified to undertake, affirmation regarding No Conflict of Interest, and documentation of the required credentials and schooling.
- All businesses operating in the City of Albuquerque are required to obtain a business license.

APPROVAL AND CERTIFICATION FOR THIRD-PARTY PLAN REVIEW AGENCIES

Approval Process for Third-Party Agencies and Plan Reviewers

When approving a Third-Party Plan Review Agency and Third-Party Reviewer, the Building Official shall specify the review disciplines of the permit construction documents that the plans reviewer or plans review agency is authorized to review. Upon approval, the Third-Party Plan Review Agency shall be assigned a number.

SCOPE OF THIRD-PARTY PLAN REVIEW AGENCIES

The areas in which a Third-Party Plan Review Agency and Third-Party Reviewer may be certified may include any of the following: Architectural/Structural, Mechanical, Plumbing, or Electrical. The Energy Conservation Code requirements shall be reviewed by each of the disciplines for compliance with the applicable Energy Conservation Code requirements of the City of Albuquerque. Third-Party Plan Reviews of disciplines other than these will not be accepted, including but not limited to zoning, fire, solid waste, grading and drainage, or other non-construction reviews.

THIRD-PARTY PLAN REVIEW AGENCY CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES

The relationship established between the customer and Third-Party Plan Review Agency is an independent relationship from the City of Albuquerque. The fees paid to the Third-Party Plans Reviewer or Third-Party Plans Review Agency is independent and separate from any fees required by this code and shall be the sole responsibility of the property owner, agent, or permit applicant.

Once the permit applicant has a fully approved construction document set, the customer can submit the approved set to the City of Albuquerque. In order to accept a customer's Third-Party Review approved plan set, the customer must provide the plan set in PDF format along with the Third-Party Plan Review Approval Certificate and Report.

Third Party Plan Review Approval Certificate and Report Requirements

The Third-Party Plan Review Approval Certificate and Report shall be sealed and signed by the Professional-in-Charge and must be submitted in a PDF format.

The Certification Letter shall specify:

- Project Address
- Occupancy Use Classification
- Occupant Load
- Code Cycle
- Type of Construction
- Certificate of Occupancy Requirements
- Special Inspections Requirements
 - If the Third-Party Plan Review Agency approves plans with a condition that must be verified in the field, then that must be specifically called out in the plans. Life-safety matters are not eligible for special inspection requirements.
- Third-Party Plan Review Agency's Name and address
- Third-Party Plan Review Agency
- Discipline(s) for which the Plan Review was performed
- Name and contact information of the approved Registered Professional-in-Charge and Plan reviewers completing the review for each applicable discipline
- A statement testifying to the compliance of the disciplines plans for the project with construction documents, specifications and all regulations of the City of Albuquerque

Each page of the plan set must be stamped with the Professional-in-Charge's current stamp and initialed by the Third-Party Reviewer(s).

QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS FOR THIRD-PARTY PLAN REVIEW AGENCIES

The Certified Building Official shall periodically conduct a detailed unannounced audit of documents reviewed by a Third-Party Plan Review Agency and Third-Party Reviewer, and shall also maintain a tracking system to monitor the recommendations of the third-party plans reviewers. If the Building Official determines that plans recommended for approval by the Third-

Party Plan Review Agency or Third-Party Reviewer do not meet the requirements of the Technical Codes or that the reviewer or agency has failed to meet other requirements of this section, or any regulations promulgated there under, the Building Official is authorized to revoke the approval of the Third-Party Plans Reviewer or Third-Party Plans Review Agency upon written notice, including the reason for the revocation.

REVOCATION OF THIRD-PARTY PLAN REVIEW AGENCIES; APPEALS

If the Third-Party Plan Review Agency violates one of the provisions of the UAC, the Building Official may take action to revoke their approved status.

Notice of Revocation

The Building Official shall provide the Third-Party Plans Review Agency or Third-Party Plans Reviewer with written notice of his or her decision to remove or suspend the Third-Party Plans Review Agency or Third-Party Plans Reviewer from the Third-Party Program. The written notice shall also provide explanation for the removal or suspension. The decision shall become effective upon service of the notice as required in the UAC.

Service of Notice of Revocation

The Building Official shall affect service of a Notice of Revocation as required in the UAC Section 110.4.8.

Appeals

The Building Official's decision to deny certification, revoke certification or deny reinstatement of the certification may be appealed to the Appeals Committee within 10 days of service pursuant to Section 107 of the Uniform Administrative Code of the City of Albuquerque, but the filing of an appeal will not stay the effectiveness of the decision.