

Plan Submission Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question: I have heard something is going on with plan review. What has changed?

Answer: The department is requiring the receipt of complete plans before scheduling the project for review.

Question: What does it mean for me?

Answer: This means plans must be complete upon submission. Once agency staff will review submittals and determine they are complete, you will receive an expected decision date. This will ensure the department can return plans to all customers within six weeks or less without compromising quality or safety.

Question: What does it mean for plans to be “complete?”

Answer: It means that the department has everything it needs to do its plan review work.

Question: How do I know if my plans are what you would consider complete?

Answer: We have posted several helpful checklists (commercial, plumbing, fire alarm/fire suppression) to assist you with ensuring your submissions are complete. Additionally, plan entry staff will contact you if there are outstanding materials or issues to resolve. If you have further questions, you may contact plan entry staff at (608) 266-2112.

Question: Submittals were handled this way 25 years ago. You moved away from this. Why are you changing back?

Answer: The change to a scheduled review was a way to provide certainty to plan submitters. At the time, we had a lower volume of work and larger staff. Over the years, the department was reorganized, and staffing levels were reduced. That led to inefficiencies and delays for some customers. Our new process will enable us to eliminate these inefficiencies and delays, provide certainty to all customers, optimize staff resources, and return plans more quickly.

Question: Earlier this year the department moved away from allowing the customer to select a specific review date. Will you be reintroducing that option?

Answer: Once plans are determined to be complete; the department will provide customers with an expected decision date. However, customers are not able to select or reserve review dates for their projects. This approach will continue to provide certainty for submitters while ensuring the department can maximize the efficiency of its limited resources.

Question: Why does the department want complete plans before scheduling a review date?

Answer: Receiving complete plans upon submission allows us to “triage” or perform a pre-review of your submittal for things that sometimes are forgotten or missed. Building this triage period into the review process gives us time to contact you and receive, prior to the review, any immediately identifiable missing information, forms, stamps, or signatures that might have been overlooked at the time you submitted. This will, in turn, reduce the need to place reviews on hold for these same missing items. This eliminates down time for review staff, enabling our team to work more efficiently.

Question: Why can I no longer pick my preferred plan reviewer?

Answer: Requesting a specific reviewer creates scheduling imbalances that underutilize some department resources while extending wait times for others. The department recognizes that some complicated or specialized projects may require significant input from a reviewer and will make every effort to assign these projects to reviewers who have the required expertise.

Question: What should I do if I have a technical question about a plan submission?

Answer: If you have a brief or simple question it may be submitted via email to DSPSSBPlanSchedule@Wi.gov. For complex questions, such as those involving projects with multiple components or those meant to determine various design options, submitters should request a preliminary plan review (by contacting plan entry staff at (608) 266-2112 which carries a separate fee.

Question: How will I know when my project will be approved so I can start construction? **Answer:** Once a complete set of plans has been submitted, you will receive an expected decision date. Should you need to begin construction sooner, you may request permission to start at the time of submittal.