

TITLE 5. DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
CHAPTER 23. UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE  
SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

N.J.A.C. 5:23-1

§ 5:23-1.1 Title; division into subchapters

(a) These regulations shall be known as the "Regulations for the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code" and are referred to herein as "the regulations".

(b) The chapter consists of the following subchapters:

1. "General provisions" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-1 and when referred to in subchapter 1 of this chapter may be cited as this subchapter.
2. "Administration and enforcement; process" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-2 and when referred to in subchapter 2 of this chapter may be cited as this subchapter.
3. "Subcodes" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-3 and when referred to in subchapter 3 of this chapter may be cited as this subchapter.
  - i. N.J.A.C. 5:23-3.11B contains references to the Department of Environmental Protection's rules concerning underground storage tanks, codified at N.J.A.C. 7:14B, which are jointly enforced by this Department and local enforcing agencies pursuant to this chapter.
4. "Enforcing agencies: duties, powers, and procedures" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-4 of this chapter and when referred to in subchapter 4 of this chapter may be cited as this subchapter.
5. "Industrialized/Modular Buildings and Building Components" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-4A and when referred to N.J.A.C. 5:23-4A may be cited as this subchapter.
6. "Manufactured Homes and Manufactured Home Add-On Units Not Subject to Federal Regulations" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-4B and when referred to in subchapter 4B may be cited as this subchapter.
7. "Enforcement of Federal Manufactured Home Standards" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-4C and when referred to in subchapter 4C may be cited as this subchapter.
8. "Recreational Park Trailers Subcode" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-4D and, when referred to in Subchapter 4D of this chapter, may be cited as this subchapter.
9. "Licensing of Code Enforcement Officials" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-5 and when referred to in subchapter 5 of this chapter may be cited as this subchapter.

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10. "Rehabilitation Subcode" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-6 and, when referred to in subchapter 6 of this chapter, may be cited as this subchapter.

11. "Barrier Free Subcode" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-7 and when referred to in subchapter 7 of this chapter may be cited as this subchapter.

12. "Asbestos Hazard Abatement Subcode" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-8 and when referred to in subchapter 8 of this chapter may be cited as this subchapter.

13. "Code Interpretations" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-9 and when referred to in subchapter 9 of this chapter may be cited as this subchapter.

14. "Radon Hazard Subcode" which may be cited throughout the regulations as N.J.A.C. 5:23-10 and when referred to in subchapter 10 of this chapter may be cited as this subchapter.

15. "Playground safety subcode" which may be cited throughout this chapter as N.J.A.C. 5:23-11 and, when referred to in subchapter 11 of this chapter, may be cited as "this subchapter."

16. "Elevator Safety Subcode" which may be cited throughout the rules as N.J.A.C. 5:23-12 and when referred to in subchapter 12 of this chapter may be cited as this subchapter.

17. "Optional elevator inspection program" which may be cited throughout the rules as N.J.A.C. 5:23-12A and, when referred to in subchapter 12A of this chapter, may be cited as "this subchapter."

§ 5:23-1.2 Authority

These regulations are promulgated by the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs pursuant to the authority of the "State Uniform Construction Code Act" (P.L. 1975, c.217, as amended).

§ 5:23-1.3 Intent and purpose

(a) It is the intent and purpose of the regulations:

1. To encourage innovation and economy in construction and to provide requirements for construction and construction materials consistent with nationally recognized standards.

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2. To formulate such requirements, to the extent practicable, in terms of performance objectives, so as to make adequate performance for the use intended as the test of acceptability.

3. To permit to the fullest extent feasible the use of modern technical methods, devices and improvements, including premanufactured systems, consistent with reasonable requirements for the health, safety and welfare of occupants or users of buildings and structures.

4. To eliminate restrictive, obsolete, conflicting and unnecessary construction regulations that tend to unnecessarily increase construction costs or retard the use of new materials, products or methods of construction, or provide preferential treatment to types or classes of materials or products or methods of construction.

5. To insure adequate maintenance of buildings and structures throughout the State and to adequately protect the health, safety and welfare of the people.

6. To eliminate unnecessary duplication of effort and fees in the review of construction plans and the inspection of construction.

§ 5:23-1.4 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

"Alteration" means the rearrangement of any space by the construction of walls or partitions, the addition or elimination of any door or window, the extension or rearrangement of any system, the installation of any additional equipment or fixtures and any work which affects a primary structural component.

"Billboard" means any sign which exceeds 32 square feet in area on any face, except for signs which advertise or otherwise identify activities performed upon the property on which the sign is located.

"Building" means a structure enclosed with exterior walls or fire walls, built, erected and framed of component structural parts, designed for the housing shelter, enclosure and support of individuals, animals or property of any kind. When used herein, building and structure shall be interchangeable except where the context clearly indicates otherwise.

"Building subcode official" means a qualified person appointed by the municipal appointing authority or the commissioner pursuant to the act and the regulations to enforce the provisions of the building subcode within the jurisdiction of the enforcing agency.

"Business day" means any day of the year, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays.

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"Certificate of approval" means a certificate issued pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:23-2 upon completion of work that requires a construction permit but not a certificate of occupancy.

"Certificate of compliance" means the certificate provided for in N.J.A.C. 5:23-2 and 12, indicating that potentially hazardous equipment is being maintained in accordance with the Act and this chapter.

"Certificate of continued occupancy" means the certificate provided for in N.J.A.C. 5:23-2, indicating that as a result of a general inspection of the visible parts of the building, no violations of N.J.A.C. 5:23-2.14 have been determined to have occurred and no unsafe conditions violative of N.J.A.C. 5:23-2.32 have been found, and that the existing use of the building has heretofore lawfully existed.

"Certificate of occupancy" means the certificate provided for in N.J.A.C. 5:23-2, indicating that the construction authorized by the construction permit has been completed in accordance with the construction permit, the act and the regulations.

"Change of use" means a change from one use to another use in a building or tenancy or portion thereof.

"Class I structure" means a structure not listed in N.J.A.C. 5:23-4.3A(d)1i through vi or 2ii through xxii.

"Class II structure" means a structure listed in N.J.A.C. 5:23-4.3A(d)2ii through xxii.

"Class III structure" means a structure listed in N.J.A.C. 5:23-4.3A(d)1i through vi.

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs.

"Construction Board of Appeals" means the board provided for in N.J.A.C. 5:23A.

"Construction official" means a qualified person appointed by the municipal appointing authority or the commissioner pursuant to the act and the regulations to enforce and administer the regulations within the jurisdiction of the enforcing agency.

"Construction permit" means an authorization to begin work subject to the conditions established in subchapter 2 of this chapter.

"Department" means the Department of Community Affairs.

"Effective date" means, in the case of a new rule, amendment or repeal, the date of promulgation in the New Jersey Register. The effective date of a readoption is the date of filing with the Office of Administrative Law.

"Electrical subcode official" means a qualified person appointed by the municipal appointing authority or the commissioner pursuant to the act and the regulations to enforce and provisions of the electrical subcode within the jurisdiction of the enforcing agency.

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"Elevator" or "elevator device" means a hoisting and lowering device equipped with a car or platform which moves in guides for the transportation of individuals or freight in a substantially vertical direction through successive floors or levels of a building or structure; or a power driven, inclined, continuous stairway used for raising or lowering passengers; or a type of passenger carrying device on which passengers stand or walk, and in which the passenger carrying surface remains parallel to its direction of motion and is uninterrupted. This includes, but it is not limited to, elevators, escalators, moving walks, dumbwaiters, wheelchair lifts, manlifts, stairway chairlifts and any device within the scope of ASME A17.1 (Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators) or ASME A90.1 (Safety Standards for Belt Manlifts).

"Elevator subcode official" means a qualified person appointed by the municipal appointing authority or the Commissioner, pursuant to the Act and this chapter, to enforce the provisions of any subcode specifically designated for such enforcement in N.J.A.C. 5:23-3, within the jurisdiction of the enforcing agency.

"Enforcing agency" means the municipal or State administrative entity charged with the administration and enforcement of the regulations consisting of the construction official, subcode officials and assistants thereto appointed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:27D-126 of the act and the regulations.

"Equipment" means plumbing, heating, electrical, ventilating, air conditioning, refrigerating and fire prevention equipment, and elevators, dumb waiters, escalators, boilers, pressure vessels and other mechanical facilities or installations, which are related to building services and shall not include manufacturing, production or process equipment, but which shall include connections from building service to process equipment.

"Facility" for the purpose of applying for an annual permit means exclusive of a hotel/casino, a building or group of buildings under common ownership or control and whose maintenance work is performed under the direct supervision of a maintenance supervisor.

"Fire protection subcode official" means a qualified person appointed by the appropriate appointing authority or the commissioner pursuant to the act and the regulations to enforce those portions of any subcode, specifically designated for such enforcement in N.J.A.C. 5:23-3, within the jurisdiction of the enforcing agency.

"Ground sign" means a sign mounted on the ground or on multiple pole supports with its lower edge less than 15 feet above grade measured at the longest pole.

"Group" means the classification of an occupancy (also see "Use Group").

"Health care facility" means the facility or institution, whether public or private, engaged principally in providing services for health maintenance organizations, diagnosis or treatment of human disease, pain, injury, deformity or physical condition,

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including but not limited to a general hospital, special hospital, mental hospital, public health center, diagnostic center, treatment center, rehabilitation center, extended care facility, skilled nursing home, nursing home, intermediate care facility, tuberculosis hospital, chronic disease hospital, maternity hospital, outpatient clinic, dispensary, home health care agency, home for the sheltered care of adult persons, and bioanalytical laboratory or central services facility serving one or more such institutions, but excluding institutions that provide healing solely by prayer.

1. This definition shall not be deemed to include nurses, doctors, or other staff housing not attached in accordance with minimum fire separation standards in the building subcode; administrative offices not attached in accordance with minimum fire separation standards in the building subcode; parking garages, or other such facilities for which the Federal government does not impose standards as a condition of funding.

"Hearing examiner" means a person appointed by the commissioner to conduct hearings, summarize evidence and make findings of fact.

"Lead abatement" means a process designed either to mitigate or to eliminate permanently lead-based paint hazards on a premises and includes, but is not limited to: the removal of lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust; the containment or encapsulation of lead-based paint; the replacement of lead-painted surfaces or fixtures; the removal or covering of lead-contaminated soil; and all preparation, cleanup, disposal and post-abatement clearance testing activities associated with such measures. "Lead abatement" shall not include painting, woodworking, structural renovation or other indoor or outdoor contracting services that may result in the disturbance of paint, unless it is evident from the statements and/or actions of a person or persons authorizing or performing such services that an objective of the work is the mitigation or permanent elimination of a lead-based paint hazard.

"Lead evaluation" means a surface-by-surface investigation to determine the presence and condition of lead-based paint and the provision of a report explaining the results of the investigation, including, but not limited to, hazards and recommendations for abatement.

"Maintenance" means the replacement or mending of existing work with equivalent materials or the provision of additional work or material for the purpose of the safety, healthfulness and upkeep of the structure and the adherence to such other standards of upkeep as are required in the interest of public safety, health and welfare.

"Manufactured home" means a structure with respect to which the manufacturer has filed a certification required by the Secretary of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development and which complies with the standards established under 42 U.S.C. §§5401 et seq.

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"Minor work" means construction work undertaken in existing structures, requiring no prior approvals and no plan review, not altering in any way the structural members of a building and meeting the definition set forth in N.J.A.C. 5:23-2.17A.

"Municipality" means any city, borough, town, township or village.

"Municipal Procedures Manual" means the book established by the Commissioner, effective January 1, 1984, and any subsequent revisions, detailing the steps to be followed in completing, processing and filing the standards forms, logs and reports required for administration and enforcement of the State Uniform Construction Code.

"Operative date" means the date upon which the Department and local enforcing agencies shall enforce, and all parties shall comply with, an effective rule. Unless otherwise provided in the notice of adoption published in the New Jersey Register, the effective date is the operative date.

"Ordinary maintenance" means restoration or improvement of a routine or usual nature which is done by replacing a part of, or putting together, something that is worn or broken in a building, electrical, plumbing, heating, ventilation or air conditioning system and meeting the definition set forth in N.J.A.C. 5:23-2.7.

"Owner" means the owner or owners in fee of the property or a lesser estate therein, a mortgagee or vendee in possession, an assignee of rents, receiver, executor, trustee, lessee or any other person, firm or corporation, directly or indirectly in control of a building, structure or real property and shall include any subdivision thereof of the State.

"Plans and specifications" means and includes all of the written, graphic and pictorial documents prepared or assembled for describing the design, location and physical characteristics of the elements of the project controlled by these rules and necessary for obtaining a permit. They shall be drawn to an appropriate scale. Where the plans and specifications show, describe or document features of the project not controlled by these rules, the portion(s) of the plans and specifications showing features not controlled by these rules shall not be considered to be "plans and specifications" within the meaning of this definition.

"Plumbing subcode official" means a qualified person appointed by the municipal appointing authority or the commissioner pursuant to the act and the regulations to enforce the provisions of the plumbing subcode within the jurisdiction of the enforcing agency.

"Premanufactured system" or "premanufactured construction" means an assembly of materials or products that is intended to comprise all or part of a building or structure and that is assembled off-site by a repetitive process under circumstances intended to insure uniformity of quality and material content. The term shall include, but not be limited to, manufactured homes and industrialized/modular buildings.

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"Primary function space" means a room or space housing a major activity for which the building or tenancy is intended, including, but not limited to, office area, auditorium, assembly space, dining room, bar or lounge, warehouse, factory, dwelling, care, confinement, retail, and educational spaces, but not including kitchens, bathrooms, storage rooms or other spaces supporting a primary function space. A building or tenancy may contain more than one primary function space.

"Prior approvals" means the necessary certifications or approvals issued or authorized by any Federal or State agency, or any political subdivision of the State, which are not inconsistent with this chapter and which are conditions precedent to the issuance of a construction permit or a certificate of occupancy or approval, as the case may be. Prior approvals shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Zoning;
2. Soil erosion and sediment control;
3. Highway curb cuts;
4. Water and sewer treatment works approvals;
5. Coastal areas facilities review;
6. Compliance of underground storage tank systems with N.J.A.C. 7:14B;
  - i. An approval granted by the Department of Environmental Protection or the construction official by authority of N.J.A.C. 7:14B shall be deemed to be a prior approval;
7. Educational adequacy review of public school facilities under N.J.A.C. 6A:26;
8. Pinelands review; and
9. Compliance of abandoned wells with N.J.A.C. 7:9-9.
  - i. Compliance with N.J.A.C. 7:9-9.1 shall be evidenced by a certification issued by a well driller licensed by the Department of Environmental Protection.

"Private inplant inspection agency", or "evaluation and inspection agency", means a business entity authorized pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:23-4 or 4A to approve premanufactured construction.

"Private on-site inspection and plan review agencies" means a business entity authorized pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:23-4 to act in lieu of a subcode official.

"Public school facility" means any building or part thereof used by a local, regional or consolidated board of education as a primary or secondary school.

"Pylon sign" means an elevated sign supported either by a monopole or by multiple pole supports and having its bottom edge 15 feet or more above ground level, measured

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at the base of the longest pole if there is more than one, or an elevated sign mounted on the roof of another structure.

"Reconstruction" means any project where the extent and nature of the work is such that the work area cannot be occupied while the work is in progress and where a new certificate of occupancy is required before the work area can be reoccupied. Reconstruction may include repair, renovation, alteration or any combination thereof. Reconstruction shall not include projects comprised only of floor finish replacement, painting or wallpapering, or the replacement of equipment or furnishings. Asbestos hazard abatement and lead hazard abatement projects shall not be classified as reconstruction solely because occupancy of the work area is not permitted.

"Rehabilitation" means the repair, renovation, alteration or reconstruction of any building or structure.

"Renovation" means the removal and replacement or covering of existing interior or exterior finish, trim, doors, windows, or other materials with new materials that serve the same purpose and do not change the configuration of space. Renovation shall include the replacement of equipment or fixtures.

"Repair" means the restoration to a good or sound condition of materials, systems and/or components that are worn, deteriorated or broken using materials or components identical to or closely similar to the existing.

"Small job" means construction work requiring no prior approvals and the total cost of which is under \$ 5,000. A "small job" may involve more than one trade and may require plan review.

"State sponsored code change proposal" means any proposed amendment or code change adopted by the commissioner in accordance with subsection c. of section 6 of the act as amended for the purpose of presenting such proposed amendment or code change at any of the periodic code change hearings held by the National Model Code adoption agencies, the codes of which have been adopted as subcodes under the Act. For purposes of this definition a State sponsored code change proposal may also oppose any code change under consideration by a model code agency.

"Stop construction order" means the order provided for in N.J.S.A. 52:27D-132 of the act and N.J.A.C. 5:23-2.

"Structure" means a combination of materials to form a construction for occupancy, use or ornamentation, whether installed on, above, or below the surface of a parcel of land; provided, the word "structure" shall be construed when used herein as though followed by the words "or part or parts thereof and all equipment therein" unless the context clearly requires a different meaning.

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"Subcode" means any of the national model codes, parts thereof or other codes or standards as adopted by reference in N.J.A.C. 5:23-3 or as set forth in N.J.A.C. 5:23-7, 8, 10 and 12.

"Tenancy" means an entire building, or that portion of a building or story, which is or is intended to be under the control of a single owner or tenant.

"The Code in effect at the time of permit application" means either the Code in effect on the date of submission of a complete permit application or the Code under which the original plans were reviewed and released pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:23-1.6.

"Use" means that portion of a building or tenancy which is devoted to a single use group or special use or occupancy, as defined in the building subcode, or as established by the provisions of any other subcode for the purpose of specifying special requirements applicable to that portion of a building or tenancy.

"Use Group" means the classification of an occupancy (also see "Group").

"Wall sign" means a sign mounted on the wall of another structure in a manner such that it is exposed to wind loads from one side only.

"Work area" means any entire use, primary function space or tenancy comprising all or part of a reconstruction project as delineated on the approved permit application and/or plans.

§ 5:23-1.5 Effective date

(a) The provisions of the regulations shall take effect on January 1, 1977. All construction regulations incorporated in any act of the State of New Jersey, or of any municipality presently in effect, or validly promulgated or enacted by any board, department, commission or agency thereof, shall continue in effect until January 1, 1977, and shall thereafter be superseded and of no further force and effect. Any law or regulation addressing areas for which the commissioner shall not have promulgated a subcode may continue in effect until such time as a subcode therefor is adopted.

(b) Exceptions include:

1. This section shall not apply to those aspects of the act which were capable of taking effect on the effective date of the act.

2. This section shall not apply to those parts of N.J.A.C. 5:23-4 which require the adoption of a resolution or other action prior to the effective date. Such section shall take effect upon adoption.

3. This section shall not apply to laws or regulations specifically saved by the act or the regulations.

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§ 5:23-1.6 Grace period

(a) For a period of six months following the operative date of a subcode revision, applicants may submit a complete permit application, including all prior approvals, to be reviewed under the code in force immediately preceding the subcode revision. Provided that the application is complete, the construction official and applicable subcode officials shall perform the plan review and issue construction permit(s) based on the code in force immediately prior to the operative date of the subcode revision. This grace period shall apply only to revisions of subcodes.

(b) In the case of a project under review for which a permit has not been issued on the operative date of any subcode revision, review shall continue and permits shall be issued based on the code in force immediately prior to the operative date of the subcode revision.

§ 5:23-1.7 Validity

(a) If any provision of the regulations or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the invalidity shall not effect other provisions or applications of the regulations which can be given effect, and to this end the provisions of the regulations are severable.

(b) Nothing contained in the act or the regulations shall be deemed to affect, repeal, or invalidate local zoning ordinances or the regulation or licensing of any trade or profession engaged in construction work.