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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- STATE BUILDING CODE

Introduced By: Senators Britto, Bissaillon, McKenney, Ciccone, Urso, Raptakis, and Appollonio

Date Introduced: January 30, 2026

Referred To: Senate Housing & Municipal Government

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 23-27.3-108.2 and 23-27.3-108.2 of the General Laws in Chapter

2 23-27.3 entitled "State Building Code" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **23-27.3-108.2. Duties of the state building code commissioner.**

4 (a) The state building code commissioner shall have the authority to enforce and perform
5 the duties required by the state building code, chapter 27.3 of this title, and all codes referenced
6 therein and adopted thereunder, and all other provisions of the general laws and public laws insofar
7 as such powers and duties relate to building codes and building inspection; provided, however, that
8 for the purposes of this section structures constituting tents and/or membrane frame structures as
9 defined in this state building code and any regulations promulgated hereunder shall be subject to
10 an annual certification process to be established by the state building commissioner in conjunction
11 with the state fire marshal and shall not be subject to recurring permit and fee requirements as
12 otherwise required by this code.

13 (b) The state building code commissioner shall work to standardize building code
14 interpretations across the state with input from the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns and
15 ensure consistent enforcement of the code throughout the state.

16 (c) **Permit fees.** Permit fees for the construction under this chapter shall be established by
17 the committee. The fees shall be deposited as general revenues.

18 (1) **Building permit fees.** The state building official or the local cities and towns, as
19 applicable, shall charge each permit applicant an additional one-tenth percent (0.1%) levy of the

1 total construction cost for each commercial permit issued, and two-tenths percent (0.2%) levy of
2 the total construction cost for each residential permit issued. The levy shall be limited to a
3 maximum of one hundred dollars (\$100) for each of the permits issued for one-, two (2)-, three (3)-
4 , and four (4)-family dwellings. This additional levy shall be transmitted monthly to the state
5 building code office; and

6 (i) Fifty percent (50%) of this additional levy on residential permits and one hundred
7 percent (100%) of this additional levy on commercial permits shall be used to staff and support the
8 purchase or lease and operation of a web-accessible service and/or system to be utilized by the state
9 and municipalities for uniform, statewide electronic plan submission, review, permit management,
10 and inspection system and other programs described in this chapter. This portion of the fee levy
11 shall be deposited as general revenues.

12 (ii) Fifty percent (50%) of this additional levy on residential permits shall be transferred to
13 the department of labor and training and shall be deposited into the contractor training restricted
14 receipt account, which shall be exempt from the indirect cost recovery provisions of § 35-4-27.
15 Subject to appropriation by the general assembly, these funds shall be used to provide residential
16 contractor training grants for programs that shall include, but are not limited to, minority business
17 enterprises and state local building officials.

18 (2) **Fees for electronic permitting from other state agencies and cities and towns.** The
19 local cities and towns and any state agency utilizing an electronic permitting platform, except as
20 set forth in this section, shall charge each applicant in accordance with §§ 42-13-10, 42-17.1-46,
21 45-23-36.1, 45-24-58.1, 45-53-16, and 46-23-30 as applicable.

22 (d) Electronic permitting.

23 (1) For purposes of this section, “electronic permitting” means the use of computer-based
24 tools and services through a platform which automates and streamlines the application and permit
25 process to include, but not be limited to, task-specific tools for applications, submission of plans,
26 checklists, reports and other documents, reviews, permitting, scheduling, review and project
27 tracking, comments from staff and committees, fee calculation and collection; and workflow and
28 report management

29 (2) On or before July 1, 2013, the building commissioner shall develop a standard statewide
30 process for electronic plan submission, review, permit management, and inspection. The process
31 shall include, but not be limited to: applications a uniform application; submission of building plans
32 and plans for developments and plots; plan review; permitting; inspections; inspection scheduling;
33 project tracking; fee calculation and collections; and workflow and report management.

34 (3) On or before December 1, 2013, the building commissioner shall implement the

1 standard statewide process for electronic plan submission, review, permit management, and
2 inspection. In addition, the building commissioner, through the department of business regulation,
3 shall develop a technology and implementation plan for a standard web-accessible service or
4 system to be utilized by the state and municipalities for uniform, statewide electronic plan
5 submission, review, permit management, and inspection for building permits. The plan shall
6 include, but not be limited to: applications a uniform application; submission of building plans and
7 plans for developments and plots; plan review; permitting; inspections; inspection scheduling;
8 project tracking; fee calculation and collections; and workflow and report management.

9 (4) The building commissioner shall implement the standard statewide process for
10 electronic permitting to be utilized pursuant to this section and §§ 23-27.3-115.6, 42-13-10, 42-
11 17.1-46, 45-23-36.1, 45-24-58.1, 45-53-16, and 46-23-30. In addition, the building commissioner
12 shall develop a technology and implementation plan for a web-accessible service or system to be
13 utilized by the state and municipalities for these purposes and shall cause the purchase or lease and
14 operation of a web-accessible service and/or system to be utilized by the state and municipalities
15 for electronic permitting (“electronic permitting platform”).

16 (e) All electronic permitting fees collected by the state building code office shall be
17 remitted to the department of business regulation, which funds shall be used to staff and support
18 the purchase or lease and operation of a web-accessible service or system to be utilized by the state
19 and municipalities for electronic permitting.

20 (f) The building commissioner shall, upon request by any state contractor described in §
21 37-2-38.1, review, and when all conditions for certification have been met, certify to the state
22 controller that the payment conditions contained in § 37-2-38.1 have been met.

23 (g) The building commissioner shall coordinate the development and implementation of
24 this section with the state fire marshal to assist with the implementation of § 23-28.2-6. On or before
25 January 1, 2022, the building commissioner shall promulgate rules and regulations to implement
26 the provisions of this section and §§ 23-27.3-115.6, 42-13-10, 42-17.1-46, 45-23-36.1, 45-24-58.1,
27 45-53-16, and 46-23-30.

28 (h) The building commissioner shall submit, in coordination with the state fire marshal, a
29 report to the governor and general assembly on or before April 1, 2013, and each April 1 thereafter,
30 providing the status of the web-accessible service(s) and/or system(s) implementation and any
31 recommendations for process or system improvement. In every report submitted on or after April,
32 2024, the building commissioner shall provide the following information:

33 (1) The identity of every municipality and state agencies, as applicable, in full compliance
34 with the provisions of §§ 23-27.3-115.6, 42-13-10, 42-17.1-46, 45-23-36.1, 45-24-58.1, 45-53-16,

1 and 46-23-30 and the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this section;

2 (2) The identity of every municipality or state agencies, as applicable, failing to fully
3 implement and comply with the provisions of §§ 23-27.3-115.6, 42-13-10, 42-17.1-46, 45-23-36.1,
4 45-24-58.1, 45-53-16, and 46-23-30 and/or the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to the
5 provisions of this section, and the nature, extent, and basis or reason for the failure or
6 noncompliance; and

7 (3) Recommendations to achieve compliance by all municipalities or state agencies, as
8 applicable, with the provisions of §§ 23-27.3-115.6, 42-13-10, 42-17.1-46, 45-23-36.1, 45-24-58.1,
9 45-53-16, and 46-23-30 and the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this section.

10 (i) The building commissioner shall assist with facilitating the goals and objectives set forth
11 in § 28-42-84(a)(9).

12 (j) The state building code commissioner shall serve as the executive secretary to the state
13 building code standards committee.

14 (k) In addition to the state building code commissioner's other duties as set forth in this
15 chapter, and notwithstanding the same, the state building code commissioner and the
16 commissioner's staff shall assume the authority for the purposes of enforcing the provisions of the
17 state building code in a municipality where there is no local building official or alternate as detailed
18 in § 23-27.3-107.2, or where there are no local building inspectors.

19 SECTION 2. Chapter 42-14 of the General Laws entitled "Department of Business
20 Regulation" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

21 **42-14-20. Uniform electronic permitting.**

22 (a) In conjunction with implementing electronic permitting for construction permits and
23 development applications pursuant to §§ 23-27.3-115.6, 45-23-36.1, and 45-24-58.1, the state
24 building commissioner shall, with the assistance of the office of regulatory reform, adopt and
25 implement electronic permitting for any other category of state or local permit authorized under
26 state law and that the commissioner deems to significantly impact the expediency of construction
27 and development. The commissioner shall develop a schedule identifying state and local permits
28 to migrate to electronic permitting under this section.

29 (b) For purposes of this section, "electronic permitting" means use of computer-based tools
30 and services that automate and streamline the application process to include, but not be limited to,
31 task-specific tools for: applications; submission of plans; completed checklists and checklist
32 documents; reports; plan review; permitting; scheduling; project tracking; staff and technical
33 review committee comments; fee calculation and collection.

34 (c) The state building commissioner pursuant to the provisions of § 23-27.3-108.2 may

1 promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this section.

2 (d) For any category of permit designated to migrate to electronic permitting, the state
3 agency or local municipality issuing the permit shall charge each applicant an additional one-tenth
4 of one percent (0.001%) of the total application fee for each application submitted. This additional
5 amount shall be transmitted monthly to the state building office at the department of business
6 regulation and shall be used to staff and support the purchase or lease and operation of one web-
7 accessible service and/or system to be utilized by the state and municipalities for the uniform,
8 statewide electronic submission, review and processing of permit applications as set forth in this
9 section.

10 (e) All acts, requirements, filings, and documents necessary to comply with the permit
11 process for a category of permits designated by the state builder commissioner to migrate to
12 electronic permitting shall be conducted by means of electronic permitting according to the
13 timetable set forth by the commissioner unless granted a further extension at the commissioner's
14 discretion.

15 (f) The department of business regulation shall reimburse annual fees and costs associated
16 with compliance with this program in accordance with procedures established by the department.

17 (g) All departments, offices, boards and agencies of the state shall cooperate with the state
18 building commissioner and furnish such administrative and staff support, advice, information,
19 documents and otherwise, data and data analysis and other support as may be necessary or desirable
20 to implement this section.

21 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- STATE BUILDING CODE

- 1 This act would require the state building commissioner to implement electronic permitting
- 2 for any category of state or local permit authorized under state law to significantly impact the
- 3 expediency of construction and development.
- 4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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