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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- STATE BUILDING CODE--DISABLED
VETERAN HOME MODIFICATION ACT

Introduced By: Senators Felag, Raptakis, Burke, Tikoian, Appollonio, Euer, Britto,
Bissaillon, Ciccone, E Morgan, and DiPalma

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: Senate Housing & Municipal Government

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 23-27.3-108.2 of the General Laws in Chapter 23-27.3 entitled "State
2 Building Code" is 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~~ Except as provided in subsection (c)(iii) of this section, permit fees
17 for the construction under this chapter shall be established by the committee. The fees shall be
18 deposited as general revenues.

1 (1) **Building permit fees.** The state building official or the local cities and towns, as
2 applicable, shall charge each permit applicant an additional one-tenth percent (0.1%) levy of the
3 total construction cost for each commercial permit issued, and two-tenths percent (0.2%) levy of
4 the total construction cost for each residential permit issued. The levy shall be limited to a
5 maximum of one hundred dollars (\$100) for each of the permits issued for one-, two (2)-, three (3)-
6 , and four (4)-family dwellings. This additional levy shall be transmitted monthly to the state
7 building code office; and

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

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

20 (iii) A veteran with a disability rating from the United States Department of Veteran
21 Affairs, or the veteran's caregiver shall not be charged any building fees, including permit fees,
22 plan review or plan examination fees, inspection fees, reinspection fees, or other fees required to
23 make improvements to the residence of the veteran with a disability if the improvements are
24 required to accommodate the disability of the veteran. Nothing in this subsection changes the
25 obligation of any person to submit to the city or town applications, forms, or other paperwork to
26 obtain a building permit. A veteran or caregiver shall provide proof of a disability rating from the
27 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and attest to the fact that the improvements to the residence
28 are required to accommodate the veteran's disability.

29 (iv) A home rule ordinance may not regulate building fees in a manner inconsistent with
30 this chapter.

31 (2) **Fees for electronic permitting from other state agencies and cities and towns.** The
32 local cities and towns and any state agency utilizing an electronic permitting platform, except as
33 set forth in this section, shall charge each applicant in accordance with §§ 42-13-10, 42-17.1-46,
34 45-23-36.1, 45-24-58.1, 45-53-16, and 46-23-30 as applicable.

1 (d) Electronic permitting.

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

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

13 (3) On or before December 1, 2013, the building commissioner shall implement the
14 standard statewide process for electronic plan review, permit management, and inspection. In
15 addition, the building commissioner, through the department of business regulation, shall develop
16 a technology and implementation plan for a standard web-accessible service or system to be utilized
17 by the state and municipalities for uniform, statewide electronic plan review, permit management,
18 and inspection for building permits. The plan shall include, but not be limited to: applications;
19 submission of building plans and plans for developments and plots; plan review; permitting;
20 inspections; inspection scheduling; project tracking; fee calculation and collections; and workflow
21 and report management.

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

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

33 (f) The building commissioner shall, upon request by any state contractor described in §
34 37-2-38.1, review, and when all conditions for certification have been met, certify to the state

1 controller that the payment conditions contained in § 37-2-38.1 have been met.

2 (g) The building commissioner shall coordinate the development and implementation of
3 this section with the state fire marshal to assist with the implementation of § 23-28.2-6. On or before
4 January 1, 2022, the building commissioner shall promulgate rules and regulations to implement
5 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,
6 45-53-16, and 46-23-30.

7 (h) The building commissioner shall submit, in coordination with the state fire marshal, a
8 report to the governor and general assembly on or before April 1, 2013, and each April 1 thereafter,
9 providing the status of the web-accessible service(s) and/or system(s) implementation and any
10 recommendations for process or system improvement. In every report submitted on or after April,
11 2024, the building commissioner shall provide the following information:

12 (1) The identity of every municipality and state agencies, as applicable, in full compliance
13 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,
14 and 46-23-30 and the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this section;

15 (2) The identity of every municipality or state agencies, as applicable, failing to fully
16 implement and comply with the provisions of §§ 23-27.3-115.6, 42-13-10, 42-17.1-46, 45-23-36.1,
17 45-24-58.1, 45-53-16, and 46-23-30 and/or the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to the
18 provisions of this section, and the nature, extent, and basis or reason for the failure or
19 noncompliance; and

20 (3) Recommendations to achieve compliance by all municipalities or state agencies, as
21 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,
22 45-53-16, and 46-23-30 and the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this section.

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

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

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

32 SECTION 2. 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--DISABLED
VETERAN HOME MODIFICATION ACT

- 1 This act would prohibit the imposition of fees associated with home modifications that are
- 2 specifically required to accommodate a veteran's disability.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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