


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 24, 2020

TO: CODE ADMINISTRATION CUSTOMERS

FROM: GREGG FIELDS, DIRECTOR 
DEPARTMENT OF CODE ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT: RESIDENTIAL VIRTUAL BUILDING INSPECTIONS

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide updates and changes to the current building inspection process due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic. To follow CDC guidelines, we are suspending in-person interior inspections for existing occupied residential dwellings (both single family and multi-family) until further notice. The suspended inspections apply only to interior inspections of occupied residential dwellings. Our teams will continue to perform in-person residential exterior inspections and inspections for new construction. All commercial inspections will be conducted in-person unless the inspector determines there is an unsafe condition. The inspector will return when it is considered safe to do so.

This virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. Eliminating and reducing in-person activities helps us better protect our customers and City staff. In lieu of in-person inspections, we will offer virtual inspections using a video call on a smart phone or tablet.

Requirements:

- All applicable building-related inspections may be considered for virtual inspections, however, based on the complexity of the project it may not be possible to conduct virtually.
 - Inspection complexity will be determined by the City inspection team.
 - For inspections deemed too complex for virtual inspection, the City will accept third-party inspections per our current policy.
 - Third-party inspector must be state certified and approved by the City before performing the inspection. For more information contact Pete.Mensing@alexandriava.gov.
- Customers must have a smartphone or tablet connected to WiFi or 4G wireless service.
- Google Duo (all devices), Microsoft Teams (all devices), or FaceTime (Apple OS devices) are required to host the video call.
 - Please inform your inspector of which applications you have when scheduling the inspection.

Process

1. Schedule your inspection online using our APEX Customer Self Service portal. Inspections are scheduled at least one day in advance. Be sure to include the following information.
 - Contact and phone number
 - Include which mobile applications you have for video call
 - Requested time of inspection
2. Contact your inspector the morning of the inspection to setup an estimated time for the virtual inspection.
 - Login to our APEX Customer Self Service portal to check who your assigned inspector(s) are
 - Call your inspector between 7am and 8am on the day of the inspection to coordinate a time window for the inspection
3. Prepare for your inspection
 - Verify all work is complete
 - Ensure you have the required tools for the inspection readily available. For example, a tape measure, screwdriver, GFCI tester, ladder, and/or flashlight.
 - Make sure your mobile device is fully charged and has a reliable internet connection (WiFi or 4G wireless service)
4. Performing virtual inspection
 - Accept the video call initiated by inspector
 - Follow directions of inspector
 - For example, depending on type of inspection it may start outside or on the top floor and work down.
 - Make notes of any items that require correction
 - The inspector will let you know the outcome of the inspection at the end of the video call
5. Inspection results
 - Comments will be entered into the system and be available online through APEX
 - Inspection results will also be emailed to all contacts on the permit